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## Public Service Announcement

May 8th, 2020, at 5:00 PM

### Face Masks are Essential to Managing COVID-19

**KLICKITAT COUNTY RESIDENTS-** As we begin the phased in approach to reopening our county, we can all be a part of the solution that keeps it open. The upcoming weeks and months are only going to be successful if we are unified in the efforts to stop the spread. The question that remains unknown is the effects that will come from reopening our county. The models all suggest that the virus will again increase in our population and ultimately take more lives from us especially within the most vulnerable populations.

In order to safely participate in the activities that we all enjoy, we can each make changes that will reduce the risks to ourselves and others. One of those changes is wearing a face mask. Researchers around the world have been conducting studies and creating models that show what kind of impact wearing masks could ultimately have in our society. Researchers at the University of Cambridge report that their models show a significant impact on the spread of COVID-19 if 80% of the population were to wear masks while in public compared to a minimal impact if only 50% were to wear a mask in public.

In the United States wearing a mask previous to COVID-19 seemed highly stigmatized. However this pandemic has created a whole different view on how susceptible to a new disease we really are. Wearing a mask has shown to be the most effective when worn by an infected person and minimally effective at protecting the non-infected. The difficulties with only asking the infected to wear a mask is that this virus has shown to be asymptomatic for some as well as being contagious before symptoms do appear for others. Wearing a mask is not a perfect solution which is why wearing a mask by itself will not eliminate the disease. Practicing proper hygiene methods and maintaining physical distance is still crucial to the solution. However wearing a mask while in public will help and it is something simple that we can all do that will allow us to be a part of the solution for getting and keeping our county open and all of us as safe and healthy as possible.

**Be a Part of the Solution**

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