



Klickitat County Emergency Operations Center



199 Industrial Way, Goldendale, WA 98620

KlickitatEOCPIO@GMail.Com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Klickitat County Health Department, Klickitat County Department of Emergency Management, local hospitals and medical clinics, and First Responders are working together to prepare for the COVID-19 disease. Communication has been ongoing, between the Health Department and Emergency Management, for over two weeks. The County's Emergency Operations Center was activated to Level-2 (partial activation) on March 3rd and is working to ensure that local stakeholders have access to all relevant information in these preparation efforts.

Medical professionals are learning more about COVID-19 every day. Important updates will be shared, as available. Here is what we currently know:

- COVID-19 Prevention strategies (similar to the flu):
 - Stay away from people who are ill, especially if you are 60 and older or have underlying health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or a weakened immune system.
 - Wash your hands, regularly throughout the day, for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water. If you can't access warm water, use a hand sanitizer solution composed of at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth without having washed your hands, first.
 - Clean/disinfect surfaces regularly
 - Cover your cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow, or into a tissue—then discard that tissue
- If you are ill:
 - Stay home if you are sick (this protects your community and helps prevent the spread of any illness)
 - Call your doctor if you have symptoms like cough, fever, or other respiratory problems
 - **Notify the hospital or clinic of your illness BEFORE entering the building and potentially exposing others**
 - **Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs.**
 - If you are having a medical emergency, call 911

In Klickitat County, both hospitals and medical clinics are working closely with our local Public Health Department. Our current process is to refer cases to the Public Health Department to determine the medical necessity for testing. We anticipate that commercial testing will become increasingly available in the future.

- Based upon limited availability of test kits, nationally, tests should be reserved for persons with significant respiratory symptoms and appropriate history
- Testing does not impact or influence medical treatment or patient outcome
- Commercial testing will need to be paid for by the individual - it is unknown, right now, if insurance will cover costs

COVID-19

- Some people with the virus may not show symptoms
- Carriers may be contagious for 14—21 days.
- May cause mild illness in some people—who will make a complete recovery
 - Typical symptoms
 - Cough
 - Fever
 - Runny nose
 - Headache
 - Sore Throat
 - Feeling unwell
- Older persons, especially with underlying medical conditions, may be more susceptible to the illness
- Mortality rates are suspected to be 1—3.4%

Klickitat Valley Health is actively working with community partners to ensure our readiness both internally and externally. KVH staff have received training and are prepared to respond to COVID-19. We are updating our website and Facebook page regularly with relevant information, please visit www.kvhealth.net and/or facebook.com/klickitat-valley-health.

NorthShore is participating with state and local public health authorities to coordinate a regional response. We are closely monitoring and checking for updates. It's important to note that the Gorge has not yet had a case of the new coronavirus. That doesn't mean there is no risk. We need to be ready for the possibility that it will spread to the Gorge. The magnitude of the epidemic in the U.S. will depend in large part on the effectiveness of public health measures now being put in place.

The Klickitat County Department of Emergency Management's (KCDEM) mission is to provide robust disaster planning, mitigation, training, exercises, response, recovery, multi-agency support and coordination, and public outreach through various emergency management programs and the Emergency Operations Center. KCDEM encourages everyone to be Two Weeks Ready. Additional information about preparedness, signing up for Emergency Notifications and KCDEM programs can be found at <http://klickitatcounty.org/249/Emergency-Management>. Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Klickitat County 911 Dispatch/Emergency Management](https://facebook.com/Klickitat%20County%20911%20Dispatch/Emergency%20Management).