

Audrain County Health Department Issues Mask Advisory

With the recent spike in COVID-19 positive cases in Audrain County, the Audrain County Health Department (ACHD) is issuing a Mask Advisory in an effort to stem the tide of rising cases. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance has shown that wearing a mask can greatly reduce the risk of infection from the COVID-19 if residents follow proper mask protocol and wear a mask when social distancing is not possible.

“Audrain County residents are resilient and strong,” ACHD Administrator/CEO Craig Brace stated. “They are willing to do the right thing when called upon in support of their families and neighbors. We will get through this together as we comply with public health protocols.”

Brace stressed this is not a mandate to wear a mask.

“This is an advisory to curb the spread of COVID-19 in our community,” he clarified. “We are doing this because we are concerned about the health and well-being of our community of Audrain County and, with that recent spike, we are encouraging residents to follow public health guidelines.”

CDC guidance found on their web site (www.cdc.gov) points to how wearing a mask can cut down on the spread of the disease. “Masks are recommended as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice,” according to the CDC. “This is called source control. This recommendation is based on what we know about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, paired with [emerging evidence](#) from clinical and laboratory studies that shows masks reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth. COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), so the use of masks is particularly important in settings where people are close to each other or where social distancing is difficult to maintain.”

Social distancing is still another way to help cut down on your risk of exposure. ACHD and CDC recommend staying six feet or more away from others when in public to reduce the possibility of spreading the virus and, remembering to wash your hands with soap and water as often as you feel is necessary.

ACHD Board Chair Dr. Kathleen Weaver echoed Brace’s remarks and the CDC’s guidance.

“A vaccine is near,” she said. “Don’t let your guard down during the upcoming months. We must remain diligent to practice mask wearing in public, social distancing, hand washing and avoiding crowded areas in order to keep our families, communities and businesses safe and strong.”

For more information on how to keep you and your loved ones safe, please visit the CDC web site at www.cdc.gov and the ACHD web site at www.audraincountyhealth.org. Remember, if you have any questions about possible exposure to COVID-19 or just in general, you can call the ACHD at 573-581-1332 or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at 1-877-435-8411.