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For immediate release

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First COVID-related death in Sioux County and Fourth in Dawes County brings Panhandle total deaths to 16

The first COVID-related death in Sioux County and fourth in Dawes County have been reported. A Sioux County male in his 90s and a Dawes male in his 80s, bring the total deaths in the Panhandle to 16.

“We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of these two gentlemen. We wish their families and friends peace and comfort during their time of loss,” expressed Kim Engel, Panhandle Public Health District Director.

There has been significant conspiracy around COVID-related deaths and we ask people to please remember any deaths announced are someone’s loved one, be respectful to everyone’s situation in these incredibly tough times.

“As a CEO of a hospital in this area, we encourage everyone to stand together in support of healthcare workers caring for families in our communities and especially those who have lost loved ones during the pandemic,” said Lori Mazanec, CEO of Box Butte General Hospital.

Please continue all of the important precautions to protect you, your loved ones, and your community from the spread of COVID. Wear a mask when possible, stay at least six feet away from others, monitor for any symptoms, and stay home if you are not feeling well. Please practice these safety tips out of an abundance of kindness and humility for others.

Panhandle Public Health District, Region 21, 22, and 23 Emergency Management, and Scotts Bluff County Health Department are working as a unified command on this evolving situation. Essential updates will be regularly communicated to the public and community partners.

The Panhandle COVID dashboard is updated weekdays at 4:30 pm MT and available at www.pphd.org. For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website www.pphd.org.