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For immediate release

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No single intervention is perfect at preventing disease spread

One additional COVID-related death is being reported in the Panhandle, a Scotts Bluff County male in his 60s recently passed away. This brings the total deaths in the Panhandle to 50.

“We share our deepest condolences with the family and friends of this gentleman,” said Paulette Schnell, Director of Scotts Bluff County Health Department. “As a community, it’s critical we continue taking every precaution against the COVID virus for our most vulnerable.”

What does swiss cheese have to do with the COVID pandemic response effort? It’s important to recognize that no single intervention is perfect at preventing disease spread.

When you think of swiss cheese, it has various holes but what if there are enough layers of prevention measures being taken that those holes don’t align and ultimately keep people safe.

Personal Responsibilities:

- Physical distancing
- Staying home if you are sick
- Masks
- Frequently washing your hands and coughing into your elbow/sleeve
- Avoiding touching your face

Shared Responsibilities:

- Fast and sensitive testing and tracing
- Ventilation, outdoors, air filtration
- Government messaging & financial support
- Quarantine & Isolation
- Vaccines

Each of these measures, or layers for that matter, has imperfections or holes. However, multiple layers improve the success of the response effort. When we say, “we are all in this together,” we are not just being cheesy, it’s because we mean it!

It takes each and every one of us making safe and informed choices not just for ourselves and family members but the overall community as well.

- Avoid the Three Cs:
 - Avoid Crowded Places – Avoid gathering in groups where you cannot maintain 6-feet of distance from others
 - Avoid Close Contact – Wear a mask over your nose and mouth or maintain 6-foot distance when you are spending more than 15 total minutes with people you don't live with
 - Avoid Confined Spaces – Avoid enclosed spaces with poor ventilation

Unified Command confirms 370 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Monday, November 23. Recoveries are available on the Panhandle dashboard at www.pphd.org. The investigations are underway, all close contacts will be quarantined.

All Ages: 370	
County	Cases
Banner	2
Box Butte	33
Cheyenne	56
Dawes	15
Deuel	5
Garden	6
Grant	1
Kimball	10
Morrill	14
Scotts Bluff	220
Sheridan	7
Sioux	1
Under Investigation	0

Exposure Type	
Community	20%
Close Contact	25%
Travel	0%
Under Investigation	55%

March 2-November 27, 2020

- Total Tests Conducted: 26,334
- Positive: 5,839
- Cumulative Positivity Rate: 22.2%
- Recovered: 3,379
- Active Cases: 2,410
- Deaths: 50

- **Active Hospitalizations: 71**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 369**
- **Last week's positivity rate: 42.6%**
- **Last week's cases: 743**
- **Doubling time (November 1-24): 23 days**

Testing information and access for the Panhandle area:

- You can sign up for the following free testing at [Testnebraska.com](https://www.testnebraska.com) or 402-207-9377:
 - Box Butte General Hospital in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 9-10am
 - 212 East 24th Street
 - **Chadron** Community Hospital: Mondays & Fridays, 7-9am
 - 821 Morehead Street (Old Hospital ER Entrance next to Wilson Park)
 - **Other testing opportunities for symptomatic patients may be available through the hospital as ordered by your Primary Care Practitioner, call the hospital at 747-2466 with questions.**
 - **Gordon** Memorial Hospital: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2-4pm
 - Regional West Health Services in **Scottsbluff**: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays: Noon-3pm; Call 308-630-2100 for other testing opportunities for symptomatic patients.
 - **Sidney** Regional Medical Center: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, 7-9:30am
- Community Action Health Center in **Gering**: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, 7-8am
 - Testing is free, sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/ydxdx5mc>
- Alliance Community Pharmacy in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 7:30am-6pm; Saturday-Sunday, 9am-5pm
 - For people experiencing symptoms, same day results. Call 308-629-1045 for appointment, fee is \$125.
- Morrill County Community Hospital in **Bridgeport**: Daily
 - Call 308-262-1616 for testing, same day results, insurance can be billed.
- Contact your local hospital or clinic for information on testing access.

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.