

COVID-19 Update from Mayor Paul Sarlo

March 16, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is real and it must be taken seriously. Borough officials and I have been in regular contact with State and County Health Officials throughout this period. We will update the Borough Webpage with information that is confirmed and verified when it becomes available.

Wood-Ridge, like many other small towns in Bergen County, contracts for Public Health Services with the Bergen County Health Department. The Wood-Ridge Health Officer is the Bergen County Health Officer. Therefore, all public health information for our community is provided to us by the Bergen County Health Department. The Bergen County Health Department is coordinating its operations with the New Jersey State Health Department and is following the directives of the United States Centers for Disease Control.

All information on COVID-19 infections is being sent from hospitals and county health officials to the state health department. Governor Murphy will be providing public updates daily at 2pm to provide local officials and the public with the most up to date information as well as to issue any new guidance or directives as necessary.

Information on COVID-19, including its symptoms, risk factors, exposure methods and preventions, treatment, etc. has been widely disseminated through the media this past week by health officials and medical experts. I'm going to leave it to these professionals to provide all medical information and advice because they have the training and experience that enables them to speak to this issue with authority. Therefore, I encourage anyone who wants more information on COVID-19 to consult the websites of the Bergen County Health Department, the New Jersey Health Department and the United States Centers for Disease Control.

With respect to the one COVID-19 case from Wood-Ridge, this is what the County Officials have told us:

She is a 72 year-old woman who was visiting and staying with relatives in Wood-Ridge. She has an underlying chronic health condition, unrelated to COVID-19, that required her to go to the hospital on March 8th. She showed COVID-19 symptoms days later in the hospital, which caused a test to be administered on March 13th, and received a positive test result on March 14th. She is still in the hospital. Her relatives are at home under quarantine, pending the results of their COVID-19 tests, under the supervision of the Bergen County Health Department.

We will provide updated information on this woman and her family as we receive it from the county health officials. I ask all Wood-Ridge residents to keep this woman and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

In response to COVID-19 the Borough of Wood-Ridge has implemented the following:

- All areas, surfaces and fixtures at Borough Hall and the Senior/Civic Center were thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant on Monday, March 9th. This is being done on a daily basis, Monday to Friday.
- All counters and other surfaces in customer service areas (i.e. Tax Office counter and window) are cleaned with disinfectant several times per day.
- All park benches and tables are cleaned with disinfectant every day, except Sunday, as part of our standard operating procedures. It will now be done 7 days per week.
- All playground equipment is thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant on a weekly basis as part of our standard operating procedures. It will now be done 7 days per week.
- All scheduled senior citizen activities were suspended on Wednesday, March 11th. All activity participants and senior club members were notified of this.
- The Senior Citizen Bus is continuing to operate for grocery store trips only because it is vital to senior citizens who do not drive. The bus is thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant after every use.
- All organized youth recreation activities were suspended on Friday, March 13th to coincide with the Bergen County School Superintendent's decision to close all schools. All recreation group officers were notified of this and instructed to inform their coaches and parents.
- The Senior/Civic Center is closed as of March 16th to coincide with the Bergen County School Superintendent's decision to close all schools.
- The Library is closed as of March 16th to coincide with the Bergen County School Superintendent's decision to close all schools. Library staff will continue to report to work and will perform a thorough cleaning with disinfectant of the entire Library and its contents during the closure.
- Police, Fire and EMS have been following the COVID-19 precautionary protocol promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control and New Jersey State Health Department when interacting with the public.
- The Bergen County Health Department serves as the Health Officer for Wood-Ridge as well for many other towns in Bergen County. County health officials have been in regular contact with Borough officials.

- All Borough employees have been instructed to stay home from work if they are sick with any illness regardless of its symptoms.
- All local government services (DPW, Police, Fire, EMS, Administration) will continue to operate as normal in order to provide residents with needed services. However, we ask all residents to use common sense and consider the following:
 - Do not visit Borough Hall if you have any COVID-19 symptoms including fever and cough and/or runny nose not caused by seasonal allergies
 - Do not visit Borough Hall if your need can be addressed via telephone, email or postal mail
 - If your need can only be addressed by visiting Borough Hall in person, but it is not of an urgent nature and is not time sensitive, please delay your visit to a later date

We will keep you informed via this webpage of any changes as they develop. We will also utilize the Nixle alert system if it is warranted. I ask all residents to remain vigilant and calm and follow the advice of public health and medical professionals.

I thank you all for your cooperation and your patience during this trying time.

Sincerely,

Mayor Paul Sarlo