



Kane County Health Department Urges Residents to Change Behavior to Stop the Surge of COVID-19 Cases

October 16, 2020 - The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) added Kane County to its COVID-19 county watch list today. Two of metrics which triggered the warning level for Kane County include increases in the new case rate and number of deaths.

Kane County Health Department (KCHD) Director Barbara Jeffers requests that residents limit activities that could spread COVID-19.

“Yesterday, the State of Illinois announced the highest number of new cases identified on a single day in the entire pandemic,” said Jeffers. “In Kane County, our cases and hospitalizations have continued to climb. In the past several days, our case positivity rate has risen above 8%. Unless we change our behavior as a community, we can expect to see more illness, death and economic hardship. This is avoidable and by taking precautions, together we can improve the situation for our residents and our businesses.”

The new case rate in Kane County reported by IDPH for the week ending October 10 is 114 cases per 100,000 population, and goal is to be below 50 per 100,000. There were seven deaths reported by IDPH during that week, up from two the previous week and one the week before that. The warning level for this measure occurs when there are two consecutive weeks with more than a 20% increase. Kane County is meeting stated thresholds for other measures.

Director Jeffers announced several concerning trends. In September, residents in their 20’s represented the largest number of new cases, with 40% more cases than any other age group.

“Even though this group may frequently have less severe illness, we have seen around the country that increases in this group lead to increases among all age categories,” said Jeffers. “Younger people exposing their older, more vulnerable family members is a serious concern.”

“We are getting reports that many people are getting together in groups, both small and large, without taking appropriate precautions such as social distancing and wearing face coverings. We understand that people are comfortable getting together with friends and family, but unfortunately, that is leading to increased transmission and will continue to be a threat as we enter the holiday season. Kane County residents take care of each other and now is an important time for us to come together to protect ourselves and those around us.”

KCHD is reaching out to leaders in the public and private sector to urge a united front to reverse this surge before winter and colder weather drives people indoors. Early next week, the department will release an updated toolkit on its website, KaneHealth.com, to help businesses protect their employees and customers.

The department continues to encourage residents to contact them with concerns about businesses not following the guidelines by calling 630-208-3801 or CovidConcerns@co.kane.il.us. KCHD investigates all complaints and the county will pursue fines against non-compliant businesses if education to the owners is insufficient.

(more)

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All residents are encouraged to wear a face covering, maintain 6 feet of social distance, wash hands frequently, avoid gatherings with people not in your household, and stay home when ill.

For more information about COVID-19, visit the KCHD website at KaneHealth.com

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Contact:

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KaneHealth.com

Additional Information for the Media

IDPH uses numerous indicators when determining if a county is experiencing stable COVID-19 activity, or if there are warning signs of increased COVID-19 risk in the county.

New cases per 100,000 people: If there are more than 50 new cases per 100,000 people in the county, this triggers a warning.

Number of deaths: This metric indicates a warning when the weekly number of deaths increases more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.

Weekly test positivity: This metric indicates a warning when the 7-day test positivity rate rises above 8%.

ICU availability: If there are fewer than 20% of intensive care units available in the region, this triggers a warning.

Weekly emergency department visits: This metric indicates a warning when the weekly percent of COVID-19-like-illness emergency department visits increase by more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.

Weekly hospital admissions: A warning is triggered when the weekly number of hospital admissions for COVID-19-like-illness increases by more than 20% for two consecutive weeks.

Tests performed: This metric is used to provide context and indicate if more testing is needed in the county.

Clusters: This metric looks at the percent of COVID-19 cases associated with clusters or outbreaks and is used to understand large increase in cases.

A map and information of each county's status is on the IDPH website at

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics>.