



4/24/20-- Uinta County COVID-19 Update

UINTA COUNTY PLANS FOR RE-OPENING AND RE-DEVELOPMENT—SEEKING TO BALANCE HEALTH, SAFETY & ECONOMIC NEEDS

Within the next weeks, local leaders will be working to interpret guidance from state leaders, as well as national guidance documents, and analyze local health data to prepare and plan for the anticipated lifting of the closure orders.

Information and plans from these meetings will be shared with local agencies and businesses to help prepare.

The current state closure orders will expire on April 30th, and will be replaced by updated guidance, which, per Governor Gordon's press conference, will include an exemption application for counties, so that each county can make decisions based on consideration of their risks and other important factors.

We're getting antsy. Experiencing an historic pandemic has not been easy. Really, this is one of the biggest challenges the world, and all of us in it right now, have seen in a long time.

We want to be careful--We need to be careful. Because of low numbers in our corner of Wyoming and other rural places, it is easy to feel like it's not quite real, or that we're somehow exempt, at the least we might think that it is an urban problem.

While urban centers are definitely at higher risk for spreading, and have been hit harder, one of the big challenges in rural settings is the lower healthcare capacity. Before we open the door to having a lot of people sick at once, we need to make sure that we are prepared on that front, and that is one of the factors that we need to assess.

A broad, whole-population level intervention was deployed (what we now know as social distancing, stay-at-home policies and orders, including prohibitions on groups, and closing businesses) because of alarming rates and numbers of sick and dying people across the world.

These interventions were meant to slow down the rate, to get control of situation and provide for the ability to respond and care for the sick people.

It worked. Across the country, numbers have been declining, and in some places, like Uinta County, we were able to keep it from even getting a foothold.

And thankfully, the health data is beginning to indicate that we can prepare to make a shift from the population-based intervention to more specific public health interventions.

Those more specific interventions include: increasing testing to locate the positive pockets and individuals in the community, and a lot of contact tracing and focused quarantining. These require supplies: supplies for testing, personal protective equipment supplies for our healthcare providers, and personnel and training to be able to step up the contract tracing. Social distancing will continue to be important, as well personal use of masks and face coverings when

out in public. These capabilities are other factors that play into our preparation for moving out of the current phase

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