

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Big Jump in COVID-19 Cases

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) reported nearly twice the number of COVID-19 cases last week than the week before. More than 250 people tested positive last week, with many more having symptoms but not getting tested. There were 72 cases reported in one day, which is just under the record from November 2020 of 77 cases reported in one day.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or are a close contact with someone who tested positive, you may not receive a live phone call from a contact tracer. Instead, you may receive a text message from an automated text messaging service asking you to take a survey to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This will help SWNPHD contact tracers who are working hard to complete the high numbers of case investigations.

- If you receive a text from 844-774-7604, or NE DHHS, please respond.
- The text will lead you to a digital survey that will help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- The survey is safe and secure. It is not spam.
- Complete the survey as soon as possible, within 24 hours.

SWNPHD had 257 new cases of COVID-19 reported from January 11 to January 17, 2022. A breakdown by age includes: 0 to 19 – 33; 20 to 29 – 39; 30 to 39 – 45; 40 to 49 – 41; 50 to 59 – 34; 60 to 69 – 35; 70 to 79 – 16; 80 and over – 13. The average number of cases per week in the last 30 days was 143.5, with weekly totals of 74, 92, 151, and 257. The total number of COVID-19 cases is 6,736. Four additional deaths from COVID-19 were also reported, including one probable and 3 confirmed, bringing the total deaths to 91.

Hospitalizations for COVID-19 and other illnesses continue to rise across the health district and Nebraska. SWNPHD strongly recommends residents take precautions against the spread of viruses by avoiding crowds, wearing a mask indoors when in public, frequent handwashing, disinfecting surfaces often, staying home when sick, and vaccination for eligible ages.

SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223. The website www.swhealth.ne.gov contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties.

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