



Project News

Messages from Local Agencies on COVID-19/Coronavirus

This message sent on behalf of Project Director Valerie McCain

Given the level of employee interest in the topic of COVID-19/coronavirus, I want to share messages with you from the Benton-Franklin Health District and the Office of River Protection.

The Benton-Franklin Health District posted the below message on March 2:

BFHD is aware of concerns for people who recently visited Wildhorse Casino in Pendleton after one of their employees tested presumptively positive for novel coronavirus or COVID-19.

Based on the information we have received from our colleagues in Umatilla and Walla Walla Counties, the risk to the public is minimal and we do not suggest any additional actions at this time.

Remember that the best way to prevent COVID-19 and all respiratory illnesses is frequent handwashing with soap and warm water and covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve. (Watch a video on proper hand-washing technique [here](#))

Additional resources, including information on a Washington State public call center, are at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>. The BFHD website is bfhd.wa.gov.

The Office of River Protection distributed the below message on March 3:

As you are each aware, circumstances surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) are evolving by the day around the globe. This Saturday, the Governor of the State of Washington declared a State of Emergency, directing state agencies to use "all resources necessary" to prepare for and respond to COVID-19. Department of Energy (DOE) leadership, Hanford leadership and HPMC Occupational Medical Services (OMS) are closely monitoring the situation. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low and the CDC is recommending the standard preventative precautions for flu season to effectively manage the risk. However, as in all aspects of our work, preparation is key to success, and there are routine precautions we can each take to mitigate against the spread for both seasonal flu and COVID-19.

- Stay informed by continuing to review the CDC webpage, located at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.
- As is always the case, should you become ill with flu-like symptoms, please stay home to help speed your own recovery and to protect your colleagues from illness as well.
- Be mindful that according to the CDC, individuals could be at risk if they have been within six feet of others with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infection.

These measures represent common sense, tangible steps that we can all take to uphold the safety of our community and neighbors.