

3/15/2020

Dear Neighbors,

The Borough has news on more closings and restrictions, including recommendations on avoiding the use of playground equipment and recreational facilities. We also include information on services that remain operating as normal. Finally, this update includes basic tips for precautions that you can take and information on what to do if you feel ill.

On Friday, the Borough passed a declaration of disaster emergency related to the Novel Coronavirus and the disease Covid-19. That will remain in effect for the foreseeable future. Your administration, police, public works, elected officials, and fire fighters have been working diligently to prepare for the challenges of serving the public during a pandemic and planning to minimize the disruption of our work for you. More importantly, we've been consulting with experts and officials at all levels of government on what measures we should take and recommendations we can give you to avoid or slow the spread of the virus. We list those updated measures and recommendations below.

Please note that scientists and healthcare providers still are learning about this new virus. And as we learn more, we may ease some of the restrictions below or recommend even more stringent precautions. One example of the fluidity of information, on Wednesday, federal government scientists working with researchers at Princeton and UCLA found that the novel coronavirus can live in the air for up to three hours, and on steel and plastic surfaces for up to three days. That research hasn't been peer reviewed and there is no confirmation that anyone has contracted the virus from touching a surface long after mucus droplets were left on it. Still, the smart thing to do today is to be overly cautious.

The adage "hope for the best but prepare for the worst" fits this situation perfectly. The Borough has an obligation to its residents to do just that. We believe these steps necessary to guard the public health. We ask that you respect these restrictions and appreciate that small, individual sacrifices are for the benefit of your neighbors and people who you don't know but could be in a potential chain of infection that you and your kids have the opportunity to break. This virus is serious. Our actions in response should reflect that seriousness. We should be good and charitable, not irresponsible and selfish.

The PA Department of Health has strongly recommended that all non-essential businesses cease operations and a number of stores and businesses are now closed. Essential stores including grocery stores, pharmacies and gas stations will remain open.

We are greatly appreciative of everyone's joint efforts to fight the spread of COVID-19. We need to work together to make the health and safety of our families, friends, and neighbors our highest priority.

#### **WHAT BOROUGH SERVICES ARE FUNCTIONING?**

- All Borough services are operating, with modifications to protect the health and safety of our employees and residents.
- We expect trash and recycling to continue as normal. However, the Borough contracts with an outside vendor, so this may change. We will post information about any disruptions or schedule changes if those occur.
- Borough Hall - Closed to the public. Please call the Borough (610-544-1028) with any questions or for information on permits or other services that traditionally were done in person. Please understand that

the building will be operating with reduced staffing, so you may need to leave a message and wait for a return call. Correspondence may be left in the mail slot in the door to the office.

- Parks will remain open with the following restrictions
  - The use of Playgrounds and equipment should be avoided.
  - Basketball, baseball and other multi-player games should be avoided. More specifically, ball games

involving physical contact or where a single ball is handled by different participants should be avoided. Soccer may be an exception to this recommendation if the participants avoid touching the ball with their hands or each other.

- Borough Council Meetings will be available on facebook live, although not closed to the public, we strongly encourage that residents email or call with questions ahead of time. Residents will be allowed in one at a time if they wish to speak at the meeting.

## CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) WHEN TO SEEK CARE

Please follow the guidelines below when considering whether or not to seek medical care if you're experiencing symptoms similar to symptoms associated with COVID-19.



### STAY HOME

If you are worried, but well, **please stay home.**

Going to a hospital or doctor's office when well adds a higher number of people and can overwhelm medical staff.



### CALL FOR ADVICE

If you are **sick** and think you have been **exposed** to COVID-19 **call** your health care provider or 1-877-PA-HEALTH to discuss your exposure.



### SEEK CARE

If you are **sick** and feel you have an **emergency**, **call** your health care provider or seek medical care.

Please **call** your provider's office or hospital **before you go**, especially if you're symptomatic.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES, VISIT:  
**HEALTH.PA.GOV**



### TIPS TO KEEP YOURSELF HEALTHY AND FIGHT THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE

- DO NOT GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM if you do not have an actual emergency or life-threatening symptoms. If you go to the ER without Coronavirus, you may leave with it. Also, going to the ER could cause a pile up at our hospitals that will harm the hospitals' ability to treat patients with true emergencies. Heart attacks and car accidents haven't stopped occurring. Please reserve emergency department visits related to suspected COVID-19 for more severe illnesses such as difficulty breathing, inability to eat or drink normally, or if you think you are unable to care for yourself in some other manner. Crozer has dedicated a special line for COVID-19 concerns 610-447-6730
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze with your elbow to avoid touching your face
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm/hot water for at least 20 seconds
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available

- Clean surfaces frequently, including countertops, light switches, cell phones, remotes, and other frequently touched items
- If you are feeling sick, stay home. Get rest, take care of yourself, and limit interaction with other people to the greatest extent possible.
- Religious services – we encourage churches, synagogues, mosques and temples to consider cancelling indoor, in-person services for the duration of this pandemic.
- Do not spread or listen to rumors, pseudo-science, or hysteria. Disinformation is not our friend.

### **ARE TESTS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE CONCERNED THAT THEY MAY HAVE COVID-19?**

We have heard that Crozer-Keystone has tests available. Please contact their hotline: 610-447-6730.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK I HAVE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS?**

If you think you may be ill with Coronavirus, call the Pennsylvania Department of Health hotline at 1-877-PAHEALTH (1- 877-724-3258) and your primary care provider for further advice.

If you are unsure if you should go to the hospital, call 911 or call the ER. Again, unless in immediate distress, do not go to the ER without calling in advance.

- Crozer has dedicated a special line for COVID19 concerns 610-447-6730, and its Emergency Department can be contacted at (610) 447-218.

For more information on the novel coronavirus and how to protect your family and the community, visit the CDC's website

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fpreparing-individuals-communities.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fpreparing-individuals-communities.html)

We will work to keep you posted on local efforts.

Look after your neighbors and stay safe.

-Rutledge Borough Council and Mayor Kevin