



NEWS



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All San Bernardino County fire stations are closed to the public but remain operational

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: March 17, 2020



All San Bernardino County fire stations are now closed to the public. However, the stations are fully staffed and remain operational.

Most **San Bernardino County Fire** facilities are now closed to the public until further notice.

The closure is out of an abundance of caution to keep community residents and employees healthy, the Fire Department said in a news release.

All fire stations, administrative offices, and County Fire Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facilities will be closed to the public. Several fire stations are located in Fontana.

The fire stations are all fully staffed and will remain operational. HHW will continue to pick-up bulk hazardous waste from its remote facilities.

"Customer service remains a priority," said Tracey Martinez, the public information officer for San Bernardino County Fire. "As such, services at the Office of the Fire Marshal will continue with minimal person to person contact. We encourage you to utilize our online services. Plan reviews can be submitted electronically with the EZ online permit process at <http://wp.sbcounty.gov/ezop/> or by mail. Site inspections will continue except for medical facilities, residential care facilities and schools. Normal inspections will resume once the County Health Officer lifts the emergency proclamation."

The Office of the Fire Marshal may be reached at (909) 386-8400.

Most services and questions can be accessed through the Fire Department's website at www.sbcfire.org.

"We encourage you to utilize our online services whenever possible," Martinez said.

For additional assistance, contact the Fire Department Headquarters at (909) 387-5974 or email info@sbcfire.org.

For a list of phone numbers to reach the fire stations and other facilities, see <https://sbcfire.org/about/Contact.aspx>. For Household Hazardous Waste facilities, visit <https://sbcfire.org/ofm/hhw/CollectionFacilities.aspx> or call (909) 382-5401.

For information and updates regarding the coronavirus, visit <http://wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/coronavirus/>.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/inland_empire_news/all-san-bernardino-county-fire-stations-are-closed-to-the/article_abab9bca-687a-11ea-8950-83d75942c51b.html

San Bernardino County Fire closes most facilities to public

Matthew Cabe, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: March 17, 2020, 3:28 pm



On Monday, March 16, 2020, most San Bernardino County Fire facilities closed to the public until further notice out of an abundance of caution amid the coronavirus pandemic. [DAILY PRESS FILE PHOTO]

Most **San Bernardino County Fire** facilities are closed to the public until further notice out of an abundance of caution amid the coronavirus pandemic.

All County Fire stations, administrative offices and Household Hazardous Waste facilities were closed to the public starting Monday, according to a statement released Tuesday.

The fire stations are all fully staffed and will remain operational, and Household Hazardous Waste continues to pick up bulk hazardous waste from its remote facilities, the statement said.

Services at the Office of the Fire Marshal will continue, with minimal person-to-person contact. As such, County Fire encouraged citizens to utilize its online services. Plan reviews can be submitted electronically with the EZ online permit process at wp.SBCounty.gov/ezop/ or by mail, according to the statement.

Site inspections will continue with the exception of medical facilities, residential care facilities and schools. Normal inspections will resume once the acting County Health Officer, Dr. Erin Gustafson, lifts the emergency proclamation. The Office of the Fire Marshal may be reached at 909-386-8400.

Also on Tuesday, County Fire announced that dispatchers who field 911 calls have started asking additional questions during medical emergencies as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Dispatchers, when 911 is called, may ask additional questions under their Emerging Infectious Disease protocol to gather additional information, according to a separate statement. The protocol is asked to callers when patients are showing flu-like systems or shortness of breath.

The callers are asked these questions while crews are already dispatched, not to delay response times or care, the statement said. Symptoms dispatchers are looking for are difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, nasal congestion, persistent cough, sore throat or a runny nose.

Other questions include recent travel history, confirmed travel to highly infected areas, or contact with someone who has suspected flu-like symptoms. In addition to the questioning, when possible, patients may be asked to go outside for assessment and care.

“Our dispatchers are the first line of defense for responding crews and gather vital information on the patient’s condition, history and possibility of having COVID-19,” the statement said. “This information is relayed to responding units.”

These questions, and first-responding units wearing personal protective equipment, are important to reduce the probability of an exposure, according to the statement.

Most County Fire services and questions can be accessed and answered at www.SBCFire.org. The statement encouraged citizens to utilize online services whenever possible. For additional assistance, contact County Fire Headquarters at 909-387-5974 or email info@sbcfire.org.

For a list of phone numbers to reach our fire stations and other facilities, see <https://SBCFire.org/about/Contact.aspx>. For Household Hazardous Waste facilities, visit <https://SBCFire.org/ofm/hhw/CollectionFacilities.aspx> or call 909-382-5401.

For information and updates regarding COVID-19, please visit wp.SBCCounty.gov/dph/coronavirus/

<https://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20200317/san-bernardino-county-fire-closes-most-facilities-to-public>

Fire crews in Southern California begin taking extra steps in the field to limit coronavirus spread

Nathaniel Percy, Daily Breeze

Posted: March 17, 2020, 3:07 pm



OCFA Capt. Ben Gonzales plays the patient at Station 64 in Westminster, CA on Tuesday, March 17, 2020. The department demonstrates safety precautions taken as they answer calls in light of the coronavirus. They wear a mask, goggles and a gown that is deposited at a hazmat sight. They also ask patients to come outside if they are able and put a mask on them as well.(Photo by Mindy Schauer, Orange County Register/SCNG)

Fire crews across Southern California have begun taking special safety precautions in the field during the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, meaning some could arrive to emergency calls dressed in masks, gowns, gloves and goggles.

Some officials, like those with the Redlands Fire Department, asked residents not to be alarmed if they see firefighters arriving in gear that makes them appear to be working a hazmat situation.

“Please know we are doing everything we can to protect you and your loved ones as well as our own,” the department told residents and social media followers..

Departments around the Southland have implemented steps to ensure both patients and firefighters limit the spread of coronavirus during medical calls, officials said.

Some firefighters have been wearing the extra protective gear in the event a patient may have been exposed to the respiratory virus, officials said. Many calls lead to contact with a single firefighter, who assesses the patient and signals to the rest of the crew whether extra protective gear is needed, officials said.

However, the additional gear will be worn on a case-by-case basis, authorities said.

In Orange County, the first firefighter making contact with a patient at a scene will work to place masks on everyone as an added precaution, Orange County Fire Authority Capt. Jason Fairchild said. OCFA will provide the masks.

“With permission, we’re asking if we can place a mask on them,” Fairchild said. “It helps our firefighters limit their exposure because we don’t know exactly how this thing is spreading.”

OCFA developed additional guidelines for safety following previous disease outbreaks, like the H1N1 virus outbreak more than a decade ago, Fairchild said.

Departments have also been asking patients to meet firefighters outside the home, as long as it’s safe, in order to keep fire personnel out of confined spaces, said Henry Narvaez, a spokesman for the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

“The issue for us is we could very well be in 20 to 30 homes a day,” he said. “We could have been exposed on the first call of the day and then 24 homes later, didn’t know we were exposed and now we’re bringing it to other houses. We’re really trying to eliminate that exposure.”

But the precautions start with dispatchers, who have been asking 9-1-1 callers additional questions in hopes of determining whether a risk may be present.

“Our dispatchers are the first line of defense for responding crews and gather vital information on the patient’s condition, history and possibility of having COVID-19,” said Battalion Chief Mike McClintock of the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

Additional questions include recent travel outside of the country and whether they are presenting symptoms including fever, cough or shortness of breath, Narvaez said.

The dispatcher questions will occur while firefighters are en route to the location, said Capt. Fernando Herrera of CalFire, adding that call times have not been affected by the additional inquiries.

“We’re all pretty much following the same standard,” Herrera said. “We’re just taking it to the next level in being precautions.”

<https://www.dailybreeze.com/2020/03/17/fire-crews-in-southern-california-begin-taking-extra-steps-in-the-field-to-limit-coronavirus-spread/>

Fire crews in Southern California begin taking extra steps in the field to limit coronavirus spread

Nathaniel Percy, Daily Breeze

Posted: March 17, 2020, 3:07 pm

San Bernardino County reports third confirmed case on March 17

As the Grizzly was going to press March 17, San Bernardino County officials released a new COVID-19 alert.

A third confirmed case has been reported involving a woman in her 50s. No further information was available on the patient and where she lives.

Because of that, the county's acting health officer, Erin Gustafson, has ordered the cancellation of gatherings of any number of people within the county through at least April 6.

The order also requires, starting Wednesday, March 18, the closing of all movie theaters, gyms, health clubs, bars, adult entertainment establishments and other businesses that serve alcohol but do not serve food. Food and beverage establishments must follow guidance issued by the California Department of Health on March 16.

The order does not apply to activities essential to the functioning of the state, including work, public transportation, airport travel, grocery stores, charitable food distribution, certified farmers markets and shopping at stores or mall. The order also does not apply to congregate living situations including dormitories and homeless encampments.

The order is county wide and also pertains to incorporated towns and cities including Big Bear Lake.

All San Bernardino County public schools have voluntarily closed as part of the effort.

"I understand this creates hardships for many families and businesses, but at the end of the day I believe we all understand that we are in this together, and that together, we will get through this," said Curt Hagman, county Board of Supervisors chairman. "The county is taking every step we can to stay in front of this threat."

Some county and local agencies have closed their doors to public access. Others are keeping their doors open for now. All have staff on hand to assist customers and residents with questions, concerns and payments.

The city of Big Bear Lake's doors remain open at City Hall for now. Frank Rush, city manager, said customers are encouraged to make an appointment for any city business that cannot be handled via phone or online.

At this time, no city staff is working remotely, but the city's IT department is working on creating remote connections if it becomes necessary, Rush said. Essential public service personnel such as those in the public works department can't work from home, Extra measures to keep equipment sanitized are in place, Rush said.

Additionally, all city meetings have been canceled. This includes City Council and Planning Commission meetings.

San Bernardino County officials continued their effort to slow the spread of novel coronavirus March 16, announcing the temporary closure of several county-operated attractions. These county departments will offer services online and over the phone, closing public offices until at least April 3.

County officials moved quickly to respond to public health concerns even before the first COVID-19 case was reported in the county on March 15. The county has continued to update its response via the Office of Emergency Services. According to Dawn Rowe, 3rd District Supervisor, the OES is coordinating the county-wide response to the outbreak.

“As it relates to county operations, essential services like law enforcement, fire and public works will continue,” Rowe said.

The county’s second confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported March 16. The patient is a 54-year-old male with underlying health conditions who had come into contact with people who had recently traveled from Washington state. The first case was involved a 53-year-old female Kaiser Fontana patient who returned from London sometime in the past week.

“The health risk from COVID-19 to the general public in San Bernardino County remains low at this time, but everyone is strongly urged to engage in practices that reduce the risk of spread,” Gustafson said. “We are prepared, from a public health standpoint, and our residents, cities, businesses and other key communities have been informed about safe practices.”

San Bernardino County Fire Department closed its stations to the public effective March 17. All stations remain staffed and personnel are responding to all calls for service.

Rowe said the county’s Department of Public Health added a page on its website with updated information on the county’s response to COVID-19. Residents can access the website at <http://wp.sbcounty.gov/dph/coronavirus/>.

The county has established a hotline to answer questions and provide information about resources. The number is 909-387-3911, and is available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The hotline is not for medical calls. If you are feeling sick, contact your health care provider or 911. Call 211 with questions about social services.

“We continue to commend the community for its strength and resilience in the face of this challenge,” Hagman said. “Avoiding panic and heeding the advice of public health professionals is the path that will lead us through this crisis. As more testing is conducted and more results come in, we thoroughly expect to see an increase in the number of reported cases.”

In Big Bear City, the Community Services District plans to keep its doors open to the public for now, but encourages people to use the drop box to make payments.

According to CSD General Manager Mary Reeves, the CSD will accept cash payments, but will not make change to avoid potential spread.

Each department has pandemic preparation procedures to follow, Reeves said.

“After every interaction, we wash our hands and clean the area,” Reeves said. “We clean and disinfect the work areas. We’ve canceled nonessential work related travel and classes. And we’ve relaxed the use of sick time for family leave.”

Reeves said the trigger for the CSD to close the office to the public is if and when a COVID-19 case is reported in Big Bear Valley.

“We are also looking into holding our April meetings via teleconference,” Reeves said.

Mountain Transit’s meeting scheduled for March 23 has been canceled and will be rescheduled for a later date. The public hearing was to discuss service changes.

At this time there are no major route or service changes for Mountain Transit. Social distancing on buses is in place. There may be changes in the future to accommodate passenger needs.

The Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power is limiting lobby access and suspending indoor water audits. The lobby will be closed for payment, but open for urgent questions until further notice.

Customers are encouraged to submit questions by phone at 909-866-5050 or email at

DWPCustomerService@BBLDWP.com. There is a drop box on the south side of the building for payments.

Rush said there have been no orders issued by the state to shelter in place as is happening in Northern California, but admits it could get to that point. He and other leaders are watching what’s taking place in other areas to learn and be ready.

Rush said he expects there will be a lot of great lessons learned from this when we come out on the other side.

http://www.bigbeargrizzly.net/news/government-agencies-respond-to-covid/article_b1ac2a2c-68b0-11ea-bc37-d31a6200320a.html

Coronavirus: Palm Springs issues shelter-in-place order; two cases reported in western Riverside County

Rebecca Plevin, Christopher Damien and Mark Olalde, Palm Springs Desert Sun

Posted: March 17, 2020, 7:18pm

As Palm Springs issued a shelter-in-place order for city residents and called for all non-essential businesses to close, Riverside County's top public health officer on Tuesday announced the first two cases of coronavirus on the west side of the county. Both are expected to recover, Dr. Cameron Kaiser said in a news release.

Riverside County now has a total of 16 cases. Before Tuesday, nearly of all the reported cases were in the Coachella Valley.

“We knew getting west county cases was an inevitability,” Kaiser said in a statement. “The disease curve must be flattened, and that’s why we’re already intervening as early as possible so that our vulnerable residents are protected.”

County officials also confirmed a third death related to COVID-19. All three people — two men and one woman — were Coachella Valley residents in their 70s and two had underlying health conditions, according to county spokesperson Brooke Federico. One of the three had recently resided at a skilled nursing facility in Rancho Mirage, she said.

At least one other confirmed county case is from a gated community in Palm Desert for people over age 55, according to a news release issued by the Sun City Palm Desert Community Association.

The community association announced it is closing its dance pavilion, all fitness centers, and closing its clubhouses to all indoor social and recreational activities to protect residents from the virus. All outdoor pools and pro shops will remain open and outdoor sports will be allowed.

Palm Springs issues shelter-in-place order

The Palm Springs City Council in a special meeting on Tuesday directed City Manager David Ready to issue a new emergency order advising all residents to shelter in place and limit activities to only those essential to their daily lives. The order also requires the closure of all nonessential businesses.

The emergency order will be effective Wednesday at 7 a.m. and remain in effect until April 2. The council will review the situation at an April 2 meeting and extend the order as necessary. The order excludes a list of 21 essential businesses, which was to be outlined in the emergency order and posted on the city’s website later Tuesday, the city said in a news release.

The order is modeled after the actions taken by the City of San Francisco. On Monday, six Bay Area counties issued a similar lock-down, requiring roughly 6.7 million people to stay in their homes through April 7.

According to the order issued Monday by the city and county of San Francisco, "essential businesses" include health care operations; grocery stores, certified farmers' markets and food banks; businesses that provide food, shelter and social services for lower-income people; newspapers, television, radio and other media services; gas stations and auto supply and repair shops; banks; hardware stores, among other services.

Restaurants will no longer be able to serve dine-in customers, although takeout and delivery can continue.

"Given the rapid spread of COVID-19, and the long incubation period, the action of the City Council closing all non-essential businesses and having people stay in place will help prevent more infections, illnesses and deaths," Palm Springs Mayor Geoff Kors said in a statement. "The faster we all take proactive measures, the faster we will get through this, saving lives and helping residents, workers and businesses get through this with the least amount of harm."

The police department will not be arresting business owners for staying open at this time, Kors said during the meeting, instead allowing several days for the police to educate the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Christy Holstege also asked staff to look into what funds and other economic decisions such as tax relief the city can open up to offer relief to local businesses and residents. The council will ask the Coachella Valley Association of Governments if it would organize nearby cities to take similar measures.

Shortly after the city's emergency declaration was released Tuesday afternoon, downtown was quiet with a few people still wander about. Public radio news about the coronavirus blared from elderly man's SUV.

Outside Sammy G's Tuscan Grill, a deflated leprechaun figure was laying on the ground, emblematic of the day's subdued St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Agua Caliente tribe declares state of emergency; other casinos close

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians has declared a reservation-wide state of emergency in response to the coronavirus pandemic sweeping the state and globe, consistent with similar declarations by the state and the federal government.

All tribal enterprises including its casino resorts, golf courses and hiking areas are closing through March 31, the tribe said in a press release issued Tuesday. The Agua Caliente Casinos in Rancho Mirage and Palm Springs were expected to close at 6 p.m. Tuesday, while the Indian Canyons Gold Resort in Palm Springs, Tahquitz Canyon and the Indian Canyons will close effective Wednesday.

The tribe made the decision during the regularly scheduled tribal council meeting on Tuesday.

"Pursuant to Tribal law, we declared a State of Emergency today for the Reservation to protect the health and welfare of Tribal Members, Tribal employees and the broader non-tribal Reservation community," Tribal Chairman Jeff Grubbe said in a statement. "We stand ready to assist federal, tribal, local and state agencies with emergency preparedness and disaster response related to the COVID 19 global pandemic."

Fantasy Springs Resort Casino, operated by the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, announced it would close through March 31 to prevent the spread of the virus.

The Morongo Band of Mission Indians also is closing its Morongo Casino Resort & Spa from Tuesday at noon through the end of the month.

School closures extended

Kaiser also announced on Tuesday that school closures in Riverside County would be extended through April 30.

Hours after Kaiser's announcement, Newsom said it was unlikely most schools statewide would reopen before summer break. California, he said at a press conference, will request a formal waiver from the federal government to exempt students from nationwide testing — for advanced placement courses and other standardized tests.

"Planning with kids is some of the most challenging planning," he said, directing his comments toward the families of the 6.1 million California students out of school. "It's unlikely that many of these schools — few, if any — will open before summer break."

On Monday he had announced a prohibition on all gatherings of more than 10 people through April 30. He provided more details to the supervisors on Tuesday morning, explaining that under the order, houses of worship should move online, and adding that it has become a "virtual necessity" for restaurants to operate as take-out only operations.

Kaiser said he is working with county counsel to determine how to enforce the order.

While Bay Area counties have issued a shelter-in-place requirement to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, county officials consider Kaiser's 10-person regulation to be "more enforceable than a shelter in place order," county spokesperson Brooke Federico said in an email to The Desert Sun on Monday night.

"Restricting places where people gather and potentially spread the virus is the best way to stay ahead of this curve," she said. With Kaiser's order, "there is now a wide control of occupancy among different businesses and public places. It makes minimizing travel and reducing unnecessary trips and outings mandatory."

Diocese of San Bernardino suspends mass

To prevent the further spread of the coronavirus, Bishop Gerald Barnes of the Diocese of San Bernardino has suspended all public masses until further notice, according to diocese spokesman John Andrews. The diocese will be live-streaming mass weekly, including one service in English and another in Spanish, he said.

Priests also may choose to live-stream privately celebrated masses, he said.

"This is an extraordinary situation," Andrews said Tuesday.

Barnes wrestled with the decision to suspend masses because, "the last thing he wants to do is not make available the sacrament of the Eucharist," Andrews said. "There's a lot of pain in that, but we understand that we are in a public health crisis."

Andrews said the Diocese is taking additional steps to limit gatherings of people, including:

- All Catholic funerals will be suspended. Graveside burial services are allowed, as long as there are less than 10 people present.
- All Catholic weddings should be postponed if at all possible. Weddings that can't be postponed must be attended by no more than 10 people.
- Baptisms and confession will only be allowed if a person is near death.

More closures, cancellations

With life in the Southern California desert gridding to a halt, the 530-room Hyatt Indian Wells Resort & Spa announced Tuesday it is temporarily suspending operations until May 17. Any reservations made through April 30 can be changed or canceled at no charge up to 24 hours before scheduled arrival, according to the hotel's website.

The Parker Palm Springs hotel said Monday it would close for at least two weeks as of noon Wednesday, becoming the first local hotel to announce such a suspension in operations.

Officials with The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens on Tuesday announced the Palm Desert attraction would shut down through April 1 after trying to remain open for as long as possible.

“However, in the interest of public health, the health of our team and the new guidelines from multiple levels of government, we have made the difficult decision to temporarily close our public operations,” zoo management said in a statement.

A team of experts will remain onsite to take care of all animals, which are all “healthy and doing well,” officials said.

Behind-the-scenes footage, conservation stories and animal profiles will continue to be available via social media during the closure.

Sunday polo events at El Dorado Polo Club and Empire Polo Club, both in Indio, have been suspended for the rest of the 2020 season. The Friday night polo events at Empire also are canceled. Both clubs say the events will resume for the 2021 season in January.

Joshua Tree National Park remains open, but the park has temporarily closed all of its visitor centers, superintendent David Smith said in an email to The Desert Sun. Park rangers are available outside of visitor centers to answer questions, but they will maintain a six-foot distance to prevent virus transmission, he said.

The park has also cancelled interpretive programs that bring together groups of people, including Climbers’ Coffee, Artists’ Tea and evening campfire programs.

County offices will be closed to the public beginning Wednesday. Some facilities will remain open, including the Riverside University Health System-Medical Center, clinics, district attorney locations, probation offices, animal shelters and parks.

Palm Desert declares emergency

Palm Desert has declared a local emergency, closing City Hall and other municipal facilities through at least April 3, when a public health risk reevaluation will be conducted.

Police and fire protection, as well as other public safety related municipal services, including building inspections will continue without interruption, the city announced in a press release.

Responses to other city services could be delayed while City Hall is closed. Those who need to conduct business with the city are encouraged to use the online resources including Palm Desert's e-gov website www.cityofpalmdesert.org.

The declaration was made by City Manager Lauri Aylaian and went into effect at noon Tuesday.

"Palm Desert cares deeply about the health and well-being of its residents, business community, visitors and staff," the press release said. The city has been working closely with Riverside County, the agency responsible for providing public health services in Palm Desert, on how to respond to the pandemic and the challenges it poses.

"We will continue to quickly implement all directives from Riverside County Public Health, which has the expertise and authority to order closures that impact private businesses within the county," officials said.

Desert Hot Springs could potentially follow suit. The council will hold an emergency meeting at 11 a.m. Wednesday to discuss in closed session the threat to public services and facilities.

Cathedral City suspends special events

Following the county's Monday order prohibiting gatherings of more than 10 people, Cathedral City is suspending all special events through the end of April, or until approved by the county health officer, the city said in a news release.

The city is suspending Movies in the Park and Easter Kidapalooza, the city said. It already cancelled this year's Cathedral City LGBT Days and postponed the State of the City to May 28.

Most **San Bernardino County Fire** facilities, including fire stations, administrative offices and County Fire Household Hazardous Waste facilities, have closed to the public "out of an abundance of caution" until further notice, the agency said in a press release Tuesday.

Fire stations remain fully staffed and operational, the agency said, and Household Hazardous Waste will continue to pick up bulk hazardous waste from its remote facilities. The agency encourages people to use its online services.

San Bernardino County orders cancellations of all gatherings

In neighboring San Bernardino County, the acting health officer on Tuesday ordered the cancellation of all gatherings from Wednesday through at least April 6.

The county also said a woman in her 50s tested positive for the virus. It is the county's third case.

Beginning Wednesday, all movie theaters, gyms, health clubs, bars, adult entertainment establishments and other business that serve alcohol but not food will be closed. Food establishments must follow guidelines from the California Department of Public Health.

The state has recommended restaurants focus on delivery and takeout while maximizing social distancing for those inside.

<https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/health/2020/03/17/coronavirus-update-sun-city-palm-desert-resident-has-virus-palm-springs-emergency-meeting/5066806002/>

City, county coordinating response

Saul A. Flores, Needles Desert Star

Posted: March 17, 2020

NEEDLES — A meeting was held between the representatives of the city of Needles (Mayor Jeff Williams, Councilor Tona Belt, Vice Mayor Ed Paged, MD.), **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Fire Station 32, SBC Sheriff's Colorado River Station, Tri-State Community Healthcare Center, SBC Public Health Department, Colorado Medical River Center and Baker Emergency Medical Services.

“All those first responders reviewed the situation (coronavirus pandemic) and what their plans are by their agencies,” said Rick Daniels, city manager. “They shared a strategy on how to deal with the first patient when and if that occurs here in the city. The immediate steps would be testing, isolation and quarantine.”

Key points that Daniels reported from the meeting were:

Tri-State Community Healthcare Center is trying to get designated as a COVID-19 testing site.

The top priority for the fire and police is to make sure that first responders are safe and that they have the equipment to do their job.

Schools closed one week before their regular scheduled spring break.

The hospital is ready to go.

The recreation center opened for kids but since it wasn't being used, the city decided to shut it down.

The senior center continues to be open for groups of less than 10. The city will continue to provide noon meals but they will adhere to the social distancing recommendation.

“It was a good meeting and it was good to know what others were doing,” said Daniels.

http://www.mohavedailynews.com/needles_desert_star/city-county-coordinating-response/article_f1ef1d70-68dc-11ea-9b72-ab78676e7c89.html

City of Fontana and local partners provide updates regarding coronavirus

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: March 17, 2020

The City of Fontana and local partners came together for a recorded meeting on March 17 to provide updates regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The "Fontana Together" meeting can be viewed through a link on the city's website, www.fontana.org.

The updates are as follows:

----- CITY OF FONTANA:

"First and foremost, our city is not shutting down. We are open for business and ready to serve everyone," said Mayor Acquanetta Warren.

Updates include:

- Cancellation of all City events through May 1
- Temporary closures of neighborhood and community centers through May 1
- Heightened use of personnel protective equipment for first responders
- Suspending passport handling services at City Hall
- Conducting city meetings virtually or by phone

----- FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

Congresswoman Norma Torres spoke regarding an emergency supplemental spending bill that passed, a financial assistance bill that has moved to the Senate, and a third bill in progress.

Two weeks ago, the federal government passed a supplemental spending bill of \$8.3 billion to aid the U.S. response to the coronavirus. This includes ensuring that when testing kits become readily available, everyone has access to them.

Congress has also passed a financial assistance bill last Friday to ensure people who are exposed to the virus, or those who have to take care of others, are able to do so without fearing that they do not have money or a paycheck coming in to pay their bills.

Lastly, Congress is working on a third bill focusing on supporting temporary employees.

----- SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Board of Supervisors Chair Curt Hagman and Vice Chair Josie Gonzales discussed the importance of the response to the virus.

"There's no need to hoard. We are the warehouse capital of the western United States. We have contacted our major chains of grocery stores. They are supplying faster than they normally do, but we have been on a buying spree, that's why you see the shelves empty," said Hagman.

Gonzales emphasized coming together to assist one another during this time.

"Write a note to your neighbors, leave it on their door. Say if you need anything, call me...Let's help each other," she said.

----- FONTANA POLICE DEPARTMENT:

The City of Fontana public safety first responders are ready, trained, and equipped to respond to emergencies regardless if the call is coronavirus-related or not, said Police Chief Billy Green.

"We're coming. Whether you're sick or whether you're well. If there is an emergency, and you need us, we will be there," Green emphasized.

Green also advised that residents make dispatch aware if they are experiencing any flu-like symptoms when calling 911.

----- FONTANA FIRE DISTRICT:

Fire Chief Jeff Birchfield announced that residents will see some changes in the fire department's response if they have ever previously called 911 for a medical emergency.

"You will see one firefighter paramedic will be approaching your home, or the location where you may be, in full protective equipment. That may include a gown or a Tyvek-type suit, with a face mask, goggles and gloves," said Birchfield.

Every call will receive this precaution as a way to limit exposure of the virus to first responders and reduce their need to quarantine.

----- FONTANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

"We are open for business and we will be working throughout this time to make sure that we are bringing resources to our members and to the business community," said Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gloria Martinez.

She encouraged the business community to visit the chamber website for information specific to businesses and their employees. This includes updates from the Employment Development Department (EDD), Workforce Development Department, and financial assistance information from SBA.

"We all have a role to play in this effort to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Fontana Together is not just a hashtag, but a motto reminding residents that we are all in this situation together. We must not panic and continue to be respectful of others," the city said in a statement.

For more information on the coronavirus, visit readyfontana.org.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/city-of-fontana-and-local-partners-provide-updates-regarding-coronavirus/article_9eefc188-68cd-11ea-afd9-1b6d7b4e314d.html

Dispatchers ask additional questions during 911 calls due to Covid-19 pandemic

Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

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SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, dispatchers have started asking additional questions when 911 callers call in for medical emergencies.

When 911 is called, trained dispatchers may ask additional questions under their Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) protocol to gather additional information, officials said.

“The protocol is asked to callers when patients are showing flu-like systems or shortness of breath,” stated **SBCFire** spokeswoman Tracey Martinez. “The callers are asked these questions while crews are already dispatched, not to delay response times or care. Our dispatchers are the first line of defense for responding crews and gather vital information on the patient’s condition, history and the possibility of having COVID-19.”

The information is then relayed to responding units.

“Symptoms dispatchers are looking for are difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, nasal congestion, persistent cough, sore throat or a runny nose.

Other questions include recent travel history, confirmed travel to highly infected areas, or contact with someone who has suspected flu-like symptoms.

In addition to the questioning, when possible patients may be asked to go outside for assessment and care.

These questions and our first responding units wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) is important to reduce the probability of an exposure.

<https://www.vvng.com/dispatchers-ask-additional-questions-during-911-calls-due-to-covid-19-pandemic/>