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Westport Board of Health COVID-19 Update
September 17, 2020

Case Update:

Total number of state confirmed COVID-19 positive cases of Westport residents as of Sept. 16th is **128**, which is the same as last week. **No new cases in a week is great news and brings Westport back down into the green or low risk category.** The rolling 14 day incidence rate is now 2.1/100,000. We have had 120 recoveries to date, and no new deaths or hospitalizations.

But as can be seen on [the statewide interactive map](#), the number of high risk towns has climbed due to a spike in cases – which are often associated with large gatherings. So if we want Westport to stay green we have to keep at it and maintain social distancing, wear face coverings, and wash or sanitize hands frequently. The state map is updated based on the [state's weekly community COVID report](#), which is published very Wednesday evening.

Statewide there have been **123,720 confirmed cases** and **9,036 confirmed deaths** as of September 16th. Massachusetts is still reporting about 2000 new COVID-19 cases statewide each week.

Testing Data:

4980 COVID tests have been performed on Westport residents up through September 16th. There were **7 positive tests** out of 690 done in the last 14 days for a rate of **1.01%, a significant decline.** The statewide 14-day average is down to 0.90% positive, which is encouraging news.

The state's **Stop the Spread** free testing initiative for certain higher risk communities has been extended through September 30th. The sites in these communities are open to all. Hours of operation, site details, and contact information can be found online. To find a site visit www.mass.gov/stopthespread.

Other COVID-related news:

Quick links to key COVID information can be found on the Town's main COVID-19 webpage at: <https://www.westport-ma.com/covid-19-corona-virus-information>

Travel Order: The list of higher and lower risk states changes often so make sure to check the status before any travel. New Mexico was added to Lower-Risk States & Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia were removed from Lower Risk-States, effective September 12, 2020. Rhode Island remains on the restricted list. Detailed travel order instructions and the travel risk map can be found [here](#). In summary, all visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, are required to:

1. Complete the online Massachusetts Travel Form prior to arrival, unless they are visiting from a lower-risk state.

2. Quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to arrival in Massachusetts.

Revised gatherings order applies to both public and private property:

- Outdoor gatherings limited to 50 people
- Indoor gatherings limit is 25 people
- Masks required for any group of 10 people from different households.

Restaurant rules have been updated:

- Alcoholic beverages may only be served for on-site consumption if accompanied by orders for food prepared on-site.

Town COVID Updates:

- **The temporary Food Pantry has moved to the Westport Grange, 931 Main Rd.** The next food pantry pick-up is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 21st from 9 am to noon at the Grange. Food donation days are Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- **Schools** - The Westport Community Schools [website](#) has the latest on what is happening locally. You can also find FAQs for families with information from the state at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/backtoschool/>
- **Town Hall and Annex** – Open to the public, however service by phone, mail, outdoor dropbox, or online is still highly recommended. Face masks are required for in person visits.

Other BOH announcements:

- **Septic system information session** – The Board of Health will host a webinar on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 5:30 pm with several speakers discussing the science and technology related to denitrifying septic systems. Details will be posted on the BOH website shortly.
- **Barn Book Inspections** – The Mass. Department of Agriculture just announced that it is postponing the routine annual barn inspections until fall of 2021. Local Animal Inspectors may still conduct as-needed inspections, but are required to follow COVID-19 safety protocols in addition to normal biosecurity.
- **Transfer Station** - Due to contamination issues we can no longer accept paint cans of any kind. Small pressurized cans, such as hairspray, are also no longer accepted. Large pressurized tanks (20 lbs. or more) must have the tops removed. All Household Hazardous Waste can be brought to New England Disposal Technologies (NEDT) in Sutton, MA.
- **Flu season coming** – Stay tuned for details about flu vaccine availability through the Town Nurse. With COVID around, it will be especially important to get your annual flu vaccine this year.
- **Mosquito and tick season** – I want to remind everyone to protect against mosquito and tick bites. Visit the [Massachusetts Aerial Mosquito Spray Map webpage](#) for the latest updates on spraying and the [EEE in Massachusetts web page](#) for tips on prevention.
- **Census reminder:** The deadline to [complete the U.S. Census](#) is now **Wednesday, September 30**

Stay safe everyone. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Matthew J. Armendo, Director