

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Big Horn County
Confirms Three (3) Additional Cases of COVID-19
Asymptomatic cases found through mass testing events

HARDIN, MONTANA (May 27, 2020) – Big Horn County added three (3) confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 today. These patients were asymptomatic and were found by consenting to be tested at sentinel surveillance testing events.

“Until recently, our public health officials have been in a reactive testing mode by necessity,” said George Real Bird III, Chairman of the Big Horn County Board of Commissioners and Public Health Board. “With the ability to test everyone in our County at a mass screening, public health can be much more proactive, particularly when it comes to finding asymptomatic cases of COVID-19.”

The three (3) newly-confirmed cases are:

- One (1) female in her 20’s
- One (1) male under age 10
- One (1) male in his 20’s

The nine (9) previous cases were:

- Two (2) females in their teens
- Two (2) females in their 20’s
- One (1) female in her 50’s
- Two (2) males in their teens
- One (1) male in his 30’s
- One (1) male in his 40’s

Eight (8) of the earlier confirmed-positive patients have recovered. The remaining four (4) patients, including these newly-confirmed patients, are quarantining and recovering at home.

As with previous confirmed-positive cases, the Indian Health Service (IHS) Public Health Nursing, with assistance from the Big Horn County Public Health Department, are tracing the contacts of these new cases. All close contacts will be notified, interviewed, and given instructions for further action if required.

Big Horn County encourages everyone to attend the next drive-through/walk-through COVID-19 sentinel surveillance testing event, tomorrow, Thursday, May 28, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Hardin High School on Terry Avenue in Hardin. Those wishing to be tested are required to bring valid I.D. and provide a working telephone number and physical address (not P.O. Box) for follow-up with testing results.

Sentinel surveillance testing is random testing of members of a community to determine spread of a particular disease and is particularly useful in finding asymptomatic cases of COVID-19. A patient is asymptomatic when they show no outward signs of the disease.

As always, IHS Public Health Nursing and Big Horn County Public Health wish to remind all residents of Big Horn County of the best ways to prevent the transmission of this illness: stay home; wash your hands thoroughly and often; clean and sanitize frequently touched surfaces and items; wear a mask when in public; stay at least six (6) feet away from other people; and avoid travel out of the County if at all possible. And if you are feeling sick, do not go to work or leave your home; rather, contact your healthcare provider for guidance.

Tracking down contacts to a positive case is one of the best tools public health can use to slow the spread of the virus. If you believe you were in the presence of a recently confirmed COVID-19 case for more than five (5) minutes, please call public health so that a nurse may interview you and determine what level of exposure you have:

- IHS Public Health: (406) 638-3478
- Big Horn County Public Health: (406) 665-8720

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Big Horn County is the sixth largest county in Montana, at approximately 5,023 square miles, and with a population exceeding 13,000. The local government was established January 13, 1913. Hardin is the County Seat. <https://www.bighorncountymt.gov/>. For more information about the County's COVID-19 response, please visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BHCMTResponds>.