



Weekly COVID-19 Update from the CEO

September 17, 2020

The combination of wildfires, smoke and the pandemic can feel overwhelming, but please stay calm and collected as we weather these storms. It has been a strange week of wanting to stay inside to breath smoke-free air yet wanting to be outside in order to enjoy the last weeks of summer (at a safe distance from others). Masks are helpful for both situations. The WA Department of Health recommends that we all stay inside as long as the wildfire smoke is making the air unhealthy to breath. If you must work outside in the smoke, an N-95 mask is much more protective than a cloth one for filtering out particulates.

It is hard to fathom that my first update came out in March! Our lives have changed many ways in these past six months, and small things – like a visit with a friend - can seem so much more precious. Now that we've seen the devastating impact of the pandemic, we recognize that without a vaccine, this virus will not go away. Although they are working as fast as they can, it is clear that the scientists need as much time as it takes to develop a vaccine that is both effective and safe. We are all hoping for that to happen by next Spring.

All of our staff should have received an email from Human Resources announcing flu shots will be available September 28th from 10AM-2PM at the 7 Cedars and September 29th from 12-4PM at Red Cedar Hall in Blyn. Please make a point of getting one this year! It is highly effective in preventing you from getting the flu, which will free up our medical staff to treat patients with other illnesses, including COVID.

We pray that the downward trend of COVID cases continues. Remember, if you or a loved one experience symptoms, please contact your primary care provider to get tested right away. If you test positive, please cooperate with public health workers who are doing “case investigation and contact tracing.” Case investigation is the process through which public health officials get the names of those who came into close contact with a COVID-positive person. Then, calls are made to those contacts, asking them to get tested and isolate themselves. This process is a key part of the strategy to stop the spread. The faster people are notified that they have been exposed to a COVID-positive person, the faster they can stay home and prevent spreading the virus even further.

Stay safe,

W. Ron Allen, Council Chair/CEO