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Hurley, WI- Iron County Public Health is reporting a total of **72** positive COVID Iron County residents, **7** positive COVID non-residents, 49 recovered residents, 3 ever hospitalized, 945 negative test results and 1 death.

Not all test results from last week's testing in Hurley and Mercer sites are reported yet. Please be patient and follow the guidelines below to protect yourself and others. If your test result was negative, you will receive a call from the National Guard. It may be a 608 area code number so please answer your phone. They will attempt to call you 2 or 3 times but will not leave a message. If your test is positive, then you will receive a call from the Iron County Health Department staff if you are a resident of Iron County. If you live in another county or state your results will be sent to your county of residence and you will be notified by your local health department. If you still have not received a phone call then call the health department at 715-561-2191.

Q&A: Cloth face coverings

Why has the advice changed?

- Scientists are learning more about the virus that causes COVID-19 at a very rapid pace. As we learn more through research on the virus, some initial advice may change because we better understand how this virus works.
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/19/health/face-masks-us-guidance/index.html>
- Early in this pandemic, scientists didn't know whether this virus could spread between people without symptoms or how long [infectious particles could linger in the air](#).
- Early in the pandemic, there were [shortages of masks](#) used by [health care professionals](#) and first responders, who were quickly overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients.
- There is [emerging evidence](#) from clinical and laboratory studies that shows cloth face coverings reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth.
 - The Journal of Medical Virology published a study of N95 masks, medical masks, and homemade masks made of four-layer kitchen paper and one-layer cloth showed they could block 99.98%, 97.14%, and 95.15% of the virus in aerosols.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7228401/pdf/JMV-9999-na.pdf>
- We've learned more about how effective cloth face coverings can be. The efficacy of cloth masks depends on the material(s) and the number of layers.

- A study published in the journal ACS Nano, found that combinations of various commonly available fabrics used in cloth masks can potentially provide significant protection against the transmission of aerosol particles.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7185834/pdf/nn0c03252.pdf>
- On April 3, 2020, the CDC recommended the voluntary use of cloth face coverings when in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

Why do cloth face coverings matter?

- Cloth face coverings help keep our economy open. They are one tool, along with social distancing, hand washing, coughing and sneezing etiquette, cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, and increased ventilation, which helps to reduce the spread of the virus. When we reduce the widespread transmission of the virus, more of the things we enjoy can stay open and reopen.
- It's not just people who are sneezing and coughing who can spread coronavirus. It's also people who don't appear to be sick. CDC's recommendation to use cloth face coverings is based on evidence suggesting that persons with COVID-19 can transmit the SARS-Cov-2 virus to others before they develop symptoms or have an asymptomatic infection ([1,2](#)).
 - This coronavirus is highly contagious. [COVID-19 is more contagious](#) among certain populations and age groups than flu.
 - It's easy to spread the coronavirus without any symptoms -- either from [asymptomatic carriers or pre-symptomatic carriers](#).
 - This virus has a long incubation period -- up to 14 days -- giving a wide window of opportunity for people to infect others before they even know they're infected.
 - People may be most contagious in the [48 hours before they get symptoms](#), making unknown transmission possible.
- It is a simple, cheap, and effective intervention.
 - Wearing masks can reduce transmission of the virus by as much as 50%. - [Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation](#).
 - Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings.
 - A pre-print study showed that cloth face coverings, especially with multiple layers, may help reduce droplet transmission of respiratory infections. Study measurements indicate that 2 or 3 layers of highly permeable fabric, such as T-shirt cloth, may block droplets with an efficacy similar to that of medical masks, while still maintaining comparable breathability.
<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.04.19.20071779v2.full.pdf>

What does the science say?

- The cloth face covering helps prevent a person who is sick [from spreading the virus to others](#). It helps keep respiratory droplets contained and from reaching other people.

- [Universal Masking to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Transmission—The Time Is Now.](#)
 - Review article describing studies that have shown a significant protective effect of masks in health-care and non-health care settings.
- [Absence of Apparent Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from Two Stylists After Exposure at a Hair Salon with a Universal Face Covering Policy — Springfield, Missouri, May 2020.](#)
 - Two symptomatic hair stylists. Both wore face coverings. 139 total clients and all wore face coverings.
 - No symptomatic secondary cases reported. 67 clients tested and all were negative.

Can cloth face coverings cause health problems?

- "There has not been any indication that putting a mask on and wearing a mask for a considerable period of time has any deleterious effects on oxygen exchange or anything like that," Fauci said. "Not at all."
 - Several studies and a number of statements by health officials show that people who wear cloth or surgical masks are in no danger of hypercapnia (i.e., excessive levels of carbon dioxide in the blood stream) or hypoxemia (i.e., low blood oxygen). For many years, health care providers have worn masks for extended periods of time with no adverse health reactions. The CDC recommends wearing cloth masks while in public and this option is very breathable. There is no risk of hypoxia, which is lower oxygen levels, in healthy adults. Carbon dioxide will freely diffuse through your mask as you breathe. [Debunked myths about face masks from Mayo Clinic](#)
- This is a good opportunity to talk to children about trauma, racism and discrimination, as well as the need for acceptance, understanding, and empathy regarding the reasons it may not be safe for everyone to wear a cloth face covering. Another opportunity for discussion is the topic of protecting the health of friends, stressing that it is important for people who are able to wear a cloth face covering to do whatever they can to protect people who are less able to do so. Make sure kids understand that it isn't their job to enforce wearing or not wearing face coverings.

For more information, check out this plan language resource: [Cloth Face Coverings in Schools What Families Need to Know](#). This resource is also available in [Hindi](#), [Hmong](#), [Somali](#), and [Spanish](#), and is listed under "Tips for Staying Safe" on the [DHS COVID-19 Resources page](#).

If I wear a cloth face covering do I have to follow any other public health recommendations?

- It's still important to stay home when sick or exposed to someone who tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19, keep social distancing whenever possible and wash your hands frequently -- especially because you could [touch a contaminated surface](#) (like the front of your mask) and then touch your face when your mask is off.

- While cloth face coverings can reduce transmission of the virus by a lot, they do not reduce transmission of the virus by 100% so it's important to put all actions together for the most effective prevention.
- [Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#)

Meta-analysis showing that use of face masks in health care and non-health care is associated with significant reduction in risk of infection, but that it does not completely eliminated the risk (17% without mask, and 3% with mask, for certain encounters).

**Check the Iron County web page and Facebook for updates and alerts.
www.ironcountypublichealth.org**