Pierce County Public Health Urges Caution After Cases and Exposures Increase in River Falls

Over the past week, a number of bars and restaurants in the City of River Falls have experienced cases of COVID-19 among staff or customers. Pierce County, in collaboration with these establishments, has provided dates of potential exposures on the Pierce County Public Health Facebook page, when we were able to obtain specific information: https://www.facebook.com/piercecountypublichealth/. Pierce County has identified at least 10 cases are associated with these exposures.

Pierce County wishes to emphasize that these establishments are working closely with public health officials to stop further spread. Each establishment has voluntarily done their part in referring staff for testing, cleaning the establishment, excluding staff who were identified as close contacts of cases, and notifying the public of potential exposures. Some establishments are requiring staff to wear masks.

"In many parts of the country and state, we are seeing surges of cases associated with crowds of young people at beaches, bars and restaurants. We do not want this to go any further in Pierce County. We are at a tipping point for public health capacity, and if this spike continues, we will not be able to keep up with timely, quality disease investigations and contact notifications. We have an opportunity as a community right now to control further spread and protect our businesses from disruptive outbreaks," said AZ Snyder, Pierce County Health Officer.

Pierce County Public Health urges people to avoid crowds and reminds establishments to enforce physical distancing for staff and patrons. If you must go out, please keep the following in mind:

- Protect servers and bartenders by allowing them physical space.
- Insist that your group or table be 6 feet away from others.
- Spend time outside rather than indoors.
- When possible, wear a mask.

If you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing any symptoms, even if they are very mild, please call your healthcare provider to arrange testing and do not go out.

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