



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Health Director recommends summer event cancellations; Aligns with Whatcom Unified Command to prevent spread of COVID-19

BELLINGHAM, WA – [Whatcom Unified Command](#) (WUC), which includes the [Whatcom County Health Department](#) as a lead partner, is working to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 locally. Consistent with that key objective, and in line with [recent simulation models](#), the Health Department recommends cancellation of summer events throughout Whatcom County.

In a letter to community leaders today, April 14, Erika Lautenbach, Whatcom County Health Department director, noted that work already underway to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 has been showing results.

“We see positive effects of the efforts to contain the virus, in large part due to the social distancing measures put into place in March,” said Lautenbach. Governor Jay Inslee initially announced his [Stay Home, Stay Healthy order](#) on March 23; on April 2, he [extended the order through May 4](#).

Modeling presented by the Health Department on April 13 indicate Whatcom County is "on the downside of the first wave of COVID-19 spread locally. Scenarios suggest that with continued social distancing, the next wave could be mitigated as well. However, if group gatherings resume too soon, the virus' spread could be deadlier.

Lautenbach said that's why she recommends that all summer events – including parades, community festivals and fireworks displays – should be cancelled.

(More...)

“I recognize that this recommendation creates considerable disappointment,” said Lautenbach. “However, the long-term health of our community and our economy could be further damaged if we move too quickly to resume the activities that we know will put us at risk.”

For more information on COVID-related recommendations, visit the [Whatcom County Health Department COVID-19 webpage](#). For updates on WUC work to prevent the spread of the novel virus, visit [WhatcomCOVID.com](#) or the Whatcom Unified Command: [COVID-19 Facebook](#) page.

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