



**For immediate release
Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

Yuba-Sutter Health Officer issues directive to stay home except for essential activities

Bi-County Health Officer Dr. Phuong Luu today issued a directive to Yuba and Sutter county residents to remain at home except to engage in “essential activities,” effective 11:59 p.m. Thursday, March 19, in response to the regional spread of COVID-19.

“There remain NO confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Yuba-Sutter, but our area’s proximity to Sacramento—which experienced a near tripling of cases in days – leaves me extremely concerned,” Yuba-Sutter Health Officer Dr. Phuong Luu said. “In addition, guidance for limited gatherings across the country has rapidly changed in recent days, from less than 250 people over the weekend, to 50 people by Sunday, and to just 10 people or less by Monday.”

Luu said residents and businesses need to be aware that the situation continues to be extremely dynamic and fluid, changing not by the day, but by the hour. But the safety of the public is paramount.

“We are directing residents to stay home and avoid public places where possible to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the utmost extent possible,” Luu said.

Luu characterized the directive as a “first step, and it’s possible” a public health “order” may be considered by Yuba-Sutter officials at a later date. Enforcement of such an order could come down the road with scenarios the region can’t possibly contemplate at this moment (no, you will not get stopped for going to the grocery store), but officials hope that can be avoided with the cooperation and compliance from the community.

“I have been working in coordination with leaders in both Yuba and Sutter counties, and we all acknowledged that the directive is disruptive to everyday life, but we still maintain that public safety is of the utmost importance,” Luu said, “and with directives like this happening all over the state, country and world, we believe our communities understand the gravity of this public health situation.”

A bi-county Emergency Operations Center activated this week, and a bi-county Department Operations Center activated last week, with the goal of the two counties working together to prepare and respond to this public health emergency. Staff compiled a list of resources for those who may need assistance during this time, which can be found at BePreparedYuba.org or BePreparedSutter.org. A bi-county Call Center is also fielding general calls from the public and can be reached at 749-7700.

Residents are encouraged to take the time available to prepare: ensure that they—and especially the higher risk community members – have necessary items like groceries and medications. It is vital people not hoard items as grocery stores which are considered essential businesses, will remain open under this directive.

This directive outlines that residents leave their residence only to perform essential activities, which include:

- Activities/tasks essential to health and safety (like obtaining medical supplies, visiting with healthcare professional).

- To obtain necessary supplies for themselves, their family or others like groceries.

- To engage in socially-distanced outdoor activities like walking, hiking or running (keeping healthy is still important).

- To care for a family member or pet in another household.

- To perform work providing essential products and services at an Essential Business. For a list of what is considered “essential,” please see the accompanying directive.

Residents can find essential resources for food, housing and childcare, and other pertinent information, online at BePreparedYuba.org or BePreparedSutter.org.

As has been the case in recent weeks, if you are sick and believe you need screening and testing, call your primary care physician or Urgent Care (749-3420 or 749-3242).

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