MADISON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

Eric Faisst, Director of Public Health   *Dr. John B. Endres, President of Board of Health*

FOR IMMEDIATE Release:
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Samantha Field, Public Information Officer
Samantha.field@madisoncounty.ny.gov
315-366-2822

Positive Cases in Madison County on the Rise

Wampsville, NY – Madison County Health Department (MCDOH) would like to reassure the community after an uptick of positive COVID-19 cases. Please note that many of these cases are from isolated incidents. Currently, as of 8:30 AM on May 4, 2020, the number of active positive cases in Madison County is now 121, up from 51 active cases on Friday, May 1, 2020. As we mentioned last week, there have been several positive cases confirmed at The Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing in Chittenango, NY and among workers of the Green Empire Farms in Oneida, NY.

Madison County recognizes that residents and people with family members in the Nursing Facility may be concerned when they see the growing numbers over the past few days. Please know that the Madison County Health Department is working closely with the New York State Health Department, who regulates nursing homes, regarding the positive cases within the facility. We are working hard to make sure measures are in place to limit exposure for the staff and residents of the facility. There is limited risk to the surrounding community.

Unfortunately, Madison County announces that we now have our 6th death from this virus. A resident at The Grand who was elderly and had underlying health conditions died as a result of COVID-19. Nursing home residents have at a greater risk of getting more serious symptoms from COVID-19. We all need to do our part to help protect these individuals.

Another reason for the uptick in positive cases is that Madison County began to see some positive test results from workers at Green Empire Farms. As a result, MCDOH worked closely with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to set up a testing site to test all of the workers at the greenhouse and those in close contact with them. On the first day of testing, we were able to test 186 people. The majority of the new positive cases are a direct result of conducing this targeted testing. Now that we know who is positive, we can isolate and quarantine individuals sooner, which helps prevent further spread of the virus.

"We have always known that if we test more people that there is the possibility of more positive test results," said Public Health Director Eric Faisst. "We decided to conduct a joint test site with these workers because we knew that a large number of people were possibly exposed. We now understand how much this virus has spread within this community so that we can better contain it."

The Madison County Health Department and Office of Emergency Management are working with Green Empire Farms, MAC Contracting who employ some of the employees there, and other local businesses to make sure that all of those impacted by this virus are provided for and receive appropriate education and care.

"We understand that this drastic uptick in numbers can be concerning for our residents. Please know we are doing everything we can to protect our residents, but we need your help and cooperation," continued Faisst. "I would like to remind the public that people should wear a face covering when you are out in public, especially when they are unable to maintain social distancing, such as when in a store. Also, members of the public should be staying home. Do not go out unless you have to, and if you do go out, wear a face covering. We all have to be smart. If anything can be learned from these numbers, it is that this virus spreads quickly and easily. These guidelines are for all of our protection to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community."

Again, if you must go out, be sure to stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times and wear a cloth face mask. Please remember to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer before you touch your face.

For planning purposes only, Madison County will be holding a press conference at 10:00 AM on May 5, 2020 to give more information regarding the rise in test results.

For more information please visit https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2479/Coronavirus-COVID-19 or call the Madison County non-medical COVID-19 Hotline at 315-366-2770.

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