



# MADISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE Release:**

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## **Madison County Tracking COVID-19 through Wastewater Surveillance**

**Wampsville, NY** – Madison County Health Department (MCDOH) has teamed up with the SARS-CoV-2 Early Warning Surveillance Platform (SARS2-EWSP), in an a collaborative effort between Syracuse University, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and SUNY Upstate Medical University; Quadrant Biosciences; and local wastewater treatment operators to study wastewater in Madison County for early warning signs of COVID-19. Wastewater influent samples are collected from Cazenovia's, SUNY Morrisville's and Colgate University's wastewater treatment plants. By testing the wastewater, we can track the COVID-19 virus in the community before we see any positive cases in our residents.

"Surveillance of the wastewater in our community will serve as an early warning detection system, which will help us better identify hotspots earlier in our community," said Madison County Health Director Eric Faisst. "Wastewater surveillance is a common surveillance tool for identifying the presence of various viruses in a population. The idea that we can use it to detect and identify COVID-19 is an asset to our community, especially in our college communities."

In the coming weeks, Madison County will be welcoming back over 4,600 college-age students, many of whom are from any from states and countries that are currently on New York State's travel advisory listing. COVID-19 can spread quickly in higher populated areas and in close living quarters, such as college campuses. By monitoring the wastewater in our college communities, MCDOH hopes to be able to identify, and possibly prevent or minimize, any potential community spread within our community.

Wastewater samples are collected from the wastewater treatment plants twice a week. Those samples are sent to Quadrant Biosciences for testing and analysis to see if there is any detection of COVID-19. Sample collection started in Madison County on July 15, 2020.

For more information please contact Eric Faisst at 315.366.2361.

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