

MAYOR'S UPDATE – FACEBOOK LIVE

April 7, 2020

OPENING

Good evening everyone.

Let's get the bad news out of the way. LNP is reporting that 22 people in Lancaster County have died. Nationally, there have been 12,064 deaths, that is 4x the number of people that died in the 9/11 attacks.

I hear some people qualifying these deaths – people that are dying are old. One person was 90 years old. And it grates on me – because here's the deal, these folks are dying by themselves in a hospital. Their loved ones are not there with them when they pass. To add insult to injury, end of life celebrations are being postponed. So as we begin to come out of this, some of us will be going to A LOT of funerals. COVID-19 is no way to die. And that's why it is IMPERATIVE that you stay home.

So many people are staying home and making daily sacrifices big and small to keep our community safe. THANK YOU. KEEP DOING IT

Many of you are also so willing to help support our first responders, local businesses, and those in our community that are the most vulnerable.

I want to offer a few thanks:

1. Teachers and staff who are continuing to volunteer to distribute food to School District of Lancaster students and their families. This week food distribution will take place on Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon at JP McCaskey, Hamilton, Hand, Reynolds and Carter & MacRae. Power Packs will also be available for pickup at this time. You must register for Power Packs:
 - a. [English]
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ZMhNMXkFN3x4LWOzLX46wNr3HE3D5CQLB3zyvG96sj0/viewform?ts=5e84ebf0&edit_requested=true
 - [Spanish]
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1HW185RISxC_balqCjzlo6_sz2K9KKWuaDD61Wu00hc/viewform?ts=5e84ecbf&edit_requested=true
2. Everyone who has donated supplies or made masks for our first responders and health care community. At LGH/Penn Medicine, about 115 vehicles have dropped off donations. Mask-making fabric was handed out to 180 cars on Friday and 550 masks were returned to the donation center at Clipper, made from surgical cloth provided by LGH. Lancaster Health Centers has received approximately 1,000 masks. City of Lancaster Police and Fire also continue to receive donations. All of these contributions are appreciated and if you'd like to donate supplies or masks, you can donate to healthcare workers and first responders at the following locations:
 - a. Lancaster Health Center - Bright Side Baptist Church, 515 Hershey Ave.
 - b. LGH/Penn Medicine - Clipper Stadium, N. Prince St.
 - c. Police Bureau - 39 W. Chestnut Street
 - d. Fire Bureau - 333 E. King Street

3. And lastly, The City's water plant operators, maintenance crew, and lab techs! We have two water treatment plants – Conestoga and Susquehanna, aptly named because these rivers are the source of water for the 130,000 residents in our water distribution area which includes the City and surrounding municipalities. Every day, a team of 64 people are responsible for treating and maintaining water distribution system that provides 20 MILLION gallons of clean water EVERY DAY. Every day, it is because of this dedicated crew that we have clean water.

I'll continue to highlight City of Lancaster departments and teams who are continuing to work through this crisis. I'll also be highlighting some of the other providers in the community who are caring for us at this time.

UPDATES

1. Let's talk about unemployment benefits. Given the staggering call volume it has been very, very frustrating to get through. The average wait time 2 hours and 20 minutes, and is now down to an average of 49 minutes. The Commonwealth has posted job openings for additional UC staff (www.employment.pa.gov).
 - a. In addition to calls, 9,000-10,000 emails per day are being processed and they have about 69,000 emails pending.
 - b. We heard two notable updates from the UC system yesterday:
 - i. The \$600 weekly additional pay requires changes to their system that will mean it will be retroactive pay. We have NOT heard yet when that will be complete but we will keep you posted when we hear.
 - ii. If a head of household/breadwinner passes away due to COVID-19, their surviving spouse will be eligible for UC benefits.
 - c. The website, www.uc.pa.gov is being updated daily with questions and answers as well as other guidance. Please keep checking back.
2. Scammers are looking for opportunities just as the federal government readies to send out checks to every American who has filed their taxes. The FTC has great resources about the kind of scams they're seeing and how to avoid them. www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/coronavirus-scams-what-ftc-doing
3. Penn State Extension is offering online courses for free for the next 60 days if you register by April 30th. Check out the online catalog — lots of good topics for science, cooking, gardens, farms, business, environmental stewardship, healthy living and more. This could be a great opportunity to try out a new topic or learn more on a topic you already enjoy. There is no limit to the number of courses you can register for – please share with your friends, family and colleagues so they can learn too! <https://extension.psu.edu/shopby/online-courses>

CALL TO ACTION

As for what you can do to help: Let's keep it simple today – take a minute to share the information you've heard today with your neighbors who don't use social media and help spread access and information.

CLOSING

Take heart Lancaster. Stay well. Stay safe. Stay home. You are saving lives.

See you again tomorrow at 5 p.m.