

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Myra Stoney, Health Director, director@swhealth.ne.gov, 308-345-4223

COVID Vaccination Effort Continues in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) received 900 doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine last week, which brings the total Moderna distribution to 6,400 doses for southwest Nebraska. The number of names on the vaccine waiting list has gone from nearly 6,000 in early January down to a couple hundred as of the beginning of March.

SWNPHD and the six local hospitals in the health district have been joined by seven area pharmacies that are now able to give COVID vaccines. The focus of vaccination has progressed to Phase 1B Tiers 2 and 3, which includes: funeral homes, grocery workers, food processing, transportation, US Postal Service and public transit workers. Additionally, healthcare workers, anyone 65 years and older, first responders, utility workers, corrections staff, and educators will continue to be vaccinated.

Anyone in these categories is encouraged to sign up for the COVID Vaccine waiting list and they will be contacted for an appointment. The waiting list for Phase 1A and 1B in southwest Nebraska is located at swhealth.ne.gov/featured/1 or via the state's online registration system for the general public at vaccinate.ne.gov. Those without a computer or internet access are encouraged to reach out to a friend or family member for assistance. The health department has been contacted by many persons who were called to be scheduled for vaccination but did not answer their phone. Messages for appointments are not being left at this time, due to time constraints.

The statewide COVID-19 Risk Dial, based on the amount of hospital capacity used for COVID patients, is currently in the green level. SWNPHD continues to recommend wearing a mask in public, washing hands and surfaces often, and avoiding the 3 C's: crowded spaces, close contact, and confined spaces.

SWNPHD had 62 new cases of COVID-19 reported February 17th to March 1st bringing the total number of cases to 3720. Testing for COVID-19 has decreased across the area, with medical providers reporting that individuals are being treated for COVID-19 symptoms without being tested. SWNPHD will be moving to reporting COVID data bi-monthly instead of weekly, with updated information always available on the website.

COVID-19 information can be found at dhhs.ne.gov and at swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook.

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