



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2020 9:00 AM

CONTACT: Brittany Mews, Clark County Health Department Director/Health Officer

(715) 743-5106

Free COVID-19 Testing in Clark County with National Guard Assistance

Local public health departments in the Western WI region have requested assistance from the WI National Guard to scale up COVID-19 testing. The National Guard will be providing drive through style COVID-19 nasal swab testing.

In our area, Clark, Chippewa, and Taylor Counties are partnering to host a community COVID-19 specimen collection event in Thorp on **Wednesday, May 13th**. This event will run from 11am-7pm. **Anyone 5 years and older with at least one of the following symptoms:** fever, cough, loss of taste/smell, shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue, body aches, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, chills, or muscle aches can get tested. **This event is only available to WI residents.**

The event will be located at the Thorp High School parking lot located at 605 South Clark Street, Thorp, WI 54771. Please provide a current address, county of residence, and phone number when you arrive for testing. Testing at this event will be free. Please be aware that if testing kits run out before the end of the event, those not tested may be turned away.

Due to the unknown amount of interest, prepare for potential wait time. It is requested that modes of transportation (cars, horse drawn buggies, etc.) form a line while waiting for testing, and that those who want to be tested, **stay in or on their mode of transportation at all times.**

The National Guard will be doing the testing. They will be in uniform and in full PPE (personal protective equipment including gowns, mask, gloves, etc.) during this event.

We have two goals with this event. 1) Provide our communities with mass testing, and allow local healthcare providers more time to increase their testing capacity. 2) Give Public Health better insight into how widespread COVID-19 is in our communities. Following this event, we will continue to work closely with our local healthcare providers to continue building their capacity to meet patient demand.

There are alternative testing sites in the Western Region throughout the beginning of May. Additional testing sites are posted on the Western WI Public Health Readiness Consortium website at: <http://wwphrc.org/covid-19-community-testing/>. Any WI resident is welcome to attend any one of these testing events.

“If we receive positive cases through this event, we will isolate those individuals and trace their contacts to further stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. If there are few positive cases, we can use this data to explore reopening activities. However, a lack of positive cases as a result of this event doesn’t mean we’re in the clear. It means we are doing a great job of limiting contacts and need to keep social distancing,” said Brittany Mews, Clark County Health Officer/Director.

Following testing, people should return straight home. Please follow the full instructions that will be given to you after testing. Test results will be provided via phone by the National Guard or the Public Health Department in a timely manner.

If there are questions about the event, please call the Clark County Health Department at 715-743-5105 and select option 9 for the COVID-19 line, 2-1-1, or 877-947-2211 for non-WI area codes.

END