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March 25, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northeast Colorado Investigating Additional Positive COVID-19 Test Results and First Case in Washington County

Sterling, Colo. – March 25, 2020: Northeast Colorado Health Department (NCHD) has been notified of the first positive COVID-19 test result in one Washington County resident as well as a second Yuma County resident.

The Yuma County resident was tested at Melissa Memorial Hospital in Phillips County and the Washington County resident was tested at East Morgan County Hospital in Brush. This now brings the total to 8 positive COVID-19 test results for Northeast Colorado (Washington County (1), Yuma County (2), Morgan County (3), and Logan County (2)) and we know that there are several test results pending.   These numbers will likely continue to increase.

These people are in appropriate isolation. Case investigations are in process and we will be contacting anyone who has had direct contact with the individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. In order to protect the privacy of the individuals, identifying information and medical records will not be released to the public.

"Now is the time to say calm, practice social distancing and take measures to avoid getting sick., said Trish McClain, Director of NCHD. "We understand that people may be anxious and frustrated by the limits on gatherings, but we are encouraging people to

continue practicing social distancing —it is up to each of us to protect our most vulnerable populations by not giving this virus a chance to spread,".

If you believe you have been exposed, self-quarantine for 14 days. If you develop any of the cold or flu-like symptoms, self-isolate and contact your primary care provider. Call ahead so they can make appropriate accommodations. We also understand that there may be some fear and confusion around COVID-19 because it is a new virus. However, we want to remind our communities that NCHD and partnering agencies have been preparing for such an incident as this.

You can help slow the spread of COVID-19, influenza and other viruses by:

● Staying home if you're sick; keeping your children home if they are sick.

● Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

● Avoiding close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms.

● Practicing good hygiene.   Thoroughly and frequently wash your hands with soap and water; in the absence of soap and water, use hand-sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

● Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

● Increasing distance between people to six feet.

● Avoiding unnecessary travel.

● Observing the state public health order to limit gatherings to no more than 10 people.

Information about COVID-19 is constantly changing, and the public health response adjusts as we learn more about this virus. Reliable, up-to-date information is available at https://covid19.colorado.gov/ or by calling CO HELP at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911 or email them at COHELP@RMPDC.org, for answers in English, Spanish (Español), Mandarin (普通话), and more.

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