



DARYL L. FOWLER
County Judge

307 N. Gonzales Street
Cuero, Texas 77954
Ph.: 361-275-0916
Fax: 361-275-0919
daryl.fowler@co.DeWitt.tx.us
blair.duran@co.DeWitt.tx.us

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DeWitt County reports additional COVID-19 infections and recoveries; retracts erroneous statements from September 28 and October 19

County officials are reporting changes since the October 21 update. There are **six (6)** new cases and **six (6)** recoveries. **Three (3)** of the new cases are in the Cuero zip code. **Two (2)** are in the Yoakum zip code and **one (1)** is in the Yorktown zip code. As of today, there are **thirty (30)** active cases. **Two (2)** of these patients are hospitalized. **Twenty-eight (28)** are recovering at home.

A total of **1013 cases** have been diagnosed in DeWitt County since Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020. Of this total, twenty-nine (29) are known to be duplicated entries. Ten (10) are known to be reported in the wrong county. This error typically occurs when test results are received from the Yoakum area and the patient's residence in is Lavaca County. Taking into account the above-referenced errors, the county believes the correct number of recoveries stands at **nine hundred twenty-nine (935)**. The deaths reported to the state stand at **fifty-four (54)**.

County officials made statements about the categorizing of two unrelated deaths into COVID-19 deaths on September 28 and October 19 and subsequently found the information to be false. Officials apologize for the confusion this inadvertent error caused in the community and will strive to make sure all information communicated to the public in the future is factual and proven.

Approximately **64 percent** of the **83,242** confirmed cases and approximately **62 percent** of the **2,003** deaths attributable to COVID-19 in DSHS Region 8 have occurred in Bexar County where the county judge has issued an executive order requiring retail business employees and customers to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible. There are approximately 3.1 million people in the 28 counties that make up Region 8. DSHS data is current through **October 22, 2020**.

In an effort to slow the spread of this infectious disease, Texas Governor Greg Abbott has issued Executive Orders during this period of emergency. His latest executive order continues to expand occupancy limits in certain businesses in Texas, as well as, open medical facilities for elective surgery and allow visitation at nursing homes in regions where hospitalization of COVID-19 patients is below a recommended ceiling. Trauma Service Area S (TSA-S) which includes Victoria and DeWitt Counties is currently below the ceiling which, in turn, allows for the continued expansion of business services and restaurant activity. Judge Fowler signed documents allowing bars and related establishments to open

October 14, 2020. If hospitalizations begin to rise in the future, bars can be closed to foot traffic under the governor's executive order. The list of trauma service areas can be obtained at www.dshs.texas.gov/ga3031.

DeWitt County does not meet the governor's criteria allowing for a waiver of the requirement to wear a face mask because the 14-day history of new COVID-19 cases is above the ceiling imposed by the governor.

Judge Fowler and emergency management personnel are communicating daily with state officials and regional leaders about the spread of the COVID-19 virus and referring callers to the official websites of the Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of State Health Services. These websites are great resources for the general public according to Judge Fowler.

The public can find up-to-date coronavirus information at the Texas Department for State Health Services dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus and the Centers for Disease Control at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus> and DeWitt County at www.co.dewitt.tx.us and on the Facebook Page of DeWitt County Office of Emergency Management.

The governor's office is also providing information and links to the Executive Orders through the website www.governor.texas.gov

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News Media Contact:

Cyndi Smith, Emergency Management Coordinator, 361-275-0878
Daryl Fowler, DeWitt County Judge, 361-275-0916