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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DeWitt County reports new cases of COVID-19, additional recoveries and four deaths

County health officials are reporting **25** additional (confirmed) cases of the novel coronavirus and **27** additional recoveries since Wednesday. The high numbers are attributable to testing performed at three locations in Lavaca County earlier in July, and outbreaks in the workplace and nursing homes. All other new infections are attributable to community spread or household contagion.

Since Wednesday, four recently hospitalized residents of local nursing homes have died from complications brought on by COVID-19. Altogether, seven county residents have passed away after contracting the novel coronavirus. "It grieves me to think the elderly and their family members were unable to unite at the bedside of their loved ones prior to passing away because of the quarantine protocols in place at hospitals and nursing homes," says County Judge Daryl Fowler. "We should remember these families in our prayers."

Fifteen (15) of the new cases reported today live in the Cuero zip code. **Nine (9)** live in the Yoakum zip code. **One** lives in the Yorktown zip code. Due to privacy concerns the county will no longer release demographic information that might lead to the identification of a person infected with COVID-19.

A total of **306 cases** have been diagnosed in DeWitt County since Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020. **One hundred fifty-eight (158)** individuals, including the 25 newly confirmed cases, are isolating at home. **Eleven (11)** are considered inpatients of medical facilities. **One hundred thirty (130)** have recovered.

Although the active case count in DeWitt County has escalated recently, the statistical proportion of total active cases is less than one percent (**.0082**) of the total county population. Expressed another way, there is one active case per **123** county residents. County officials expect another significant increase in confirmed cases when results from testing in Cuero and Yorktown are known late next week. More than 800 people took advantage of the opportunity for the free tests this week.

Throughout DSHS Region 8 which covers 28 counties east and west of San Antonio and includes an estimated population of 3.1 million people, a total of **29,725** cases have been confirmed since tracking began. More than **12,400** of the individuals diagnosed with the novel coronavirus have recovered. The

agency reports **309** deaths of COVID-19 infected patients in the region, but does not distinguish whether the individuals had comorbidities. The Region 8 information is current as of July 16, 2020.

More than 70 percent of the confirmed cases and approximately 65 percent of the deaths attributable to COVID-19 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.

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 is a mandate to wear facial coverings in public places where social distancing cannot be accomplished. The Executive Order imposes a monetary fine on violators. The Cuero city council rescinded its mandatory face mask order during its meeting on July 13, 2020.

The county judge 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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