



DARYL L. FOWLER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DeWitt County reports new case of COVID-19

DeWitt County is reporting its fourteenth case of COVID-19. The new case is also categorized as the county's first fatality. Today's death is the first one attributable to a DeWitt County resident diagnosed with the disease.

In this instance, exposure is presumed to have occurred in Victoria, but the mode of transmission is still under investigation. The victim is part of a DeWitt County family. Other members of the family have tested positive for the disease and are accounted for in previously released state health statistics. Two family members live outside of Yorktown. One family member lives outside of Cuero.

A total of fourteen cases have been diagnosed in DeWitt County since Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020. State health officials report that six patients are self-quarantined and recovering at home. Seven patients have fully recovered from the disease. Currently, one patient is under investigation and self-quarantined at home in Cuero.

"My heart goes out to the family of the victim," says County Judge Daryl Fowler. "I understand the family has been under a tremendous burden caring for their loved one."

In an effort to slow the spread of this infectious disease, Texas Governor Greg Abbott has issued Executive Orders during this period of emergency. In EO GA-14 he directs citizens to "stay home" and "stay safe."

Individuals may be exposed to COVID-19 and be infectious even when no symptoms are present. If you believe you have been exposed, monitor yourself closely for symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath for 14 days after the exposure. If you experience any of these symptoms and do not need urgent medical attention, isolate at home and contact your healthcare provider.

If an individual knows they have been exposed, they should not go to work. If a fever and cough are present, they should isolate themselves from others at home and monitor symptoms.

Minimizing exposure is especially important for people who are 65 or older or who have an underlying health condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer. People in those groups have a higher risk of developing severe complications if they do get COVID-19, and the safest thing for them during an outbreak will be to stay home as much as possible and minimize close contact with other people. To get ready, they should talk to their doctor about getting additional prescription medications and have enough household items and groceries on hand to stay home as needed.

Governor Abbott's Executive Order No. 14 limits non-essential social gatherings, business operations, and other non-essential activities. Citizens are subject to a fine up to \$1000 and/or 180 days in jail for flagrant violations of the executive order.

The 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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