

# NEWS RELEASE



**Chief Administrative Office  
El Dorado County**

## **PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER ISSUES STATEMENT ABOUT JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> HOLIDAY GATHERINGS, VISITING EL DORADO COUNTY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Contact:** Carla B. Hass  
530-621-4609  
916-293-2046

**(PLACERVILLE, CA)** – *The following statement can be attributed to El Dorado County Public Health Officer, Dr. Nancy Williams:*

“Independence Day has a long tradition of bringing family and friends together from near and far to enjoy many of the things that make us uniquely American. Along with all of the freedoms we enjoy we share a strong national conscience. Part of that conscience is accepting responsibility for fulfilling, as individuals, our civic duties. In these times of pandemic, perhaps our most important civic duty is to ensure the health and safety and wellbeing of ourselves, our families and our community.

“COVID-19 rates are climbing again in California with hospitalization rates rising and death rates undoubtedly about to follow. It scares me to see those statistics because it means we have become lax on personal responsibility. Each of us must take seriously the need to try to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We know how to do that and it is not difficult. We move about less. We stay farther away from one another. We wear face coverings. We can flatten the curve again. If we don’t take those precautions, the virus will continue to jump from person to person (through coughs, sneezes, talking, singing, etc.), resulting in illness, lost work time and income, closures of businesses, prohibition of activities, and deaths. While many people experience only mild illness, this is a very serious disease for others. Restrictions cause serious economic hardship for many.

“I would hope that people are willing to reduce their movement and risk-taking voluntarily. However, the State still limits nonessential travel and the Governor’s prohibition of a gathering of any size (unless it includes only members of a single household) is still in force. The increase in COVID-19 cases across the state seems to be a result of people having become lax about following these simple guidelines, starting around Memorial Day. We must turn this trend back around.

“The recent increase in rates across California has already prompted the State to reinstate some of the restrictions on businesses that had previously been allowed to reopen in 19 counties. While El Dorado County rates are not high enough to be included in those roll-backs yet, the threat is there as our rates are rising, too. We need everyone to be more careful to help prevent illness and to keep our businesses open.

“The State’s guidelines were issued with the understanding that Californians could resume activities safely if we take appropriate precautions. However, not everyone has taken the time to read the guidelines thoroughly and implement all the aspects required of them to operate safely and legally. That puts people at risk – business employees and customers, residents of and visitors to El Dorado County, people young and old, but especially the oldest or people who have underlying health issues. Please do things safely and according to guidelines.

“Here are some things to keep in mind about COVID-19.

- Just because an activity is allowed or a business is open doesn’t make it inherently safe.
- Just because someone offers an activity or invites you to an event doesn’t mean it is allowed under the guidelines.
- An individual’s behaviors and actions are what determine how safe something is.
- You will have a hard time knowing if someone else has COVID-19.
- Spending time close to people outside your household members increases your risk (or maybe theirs).
- Some people have COVID-19 infections but no symptoms. They can still make others sick.
- Some people travel while not knowing that they are infected and carrying COVID-19 with them.
- If you treat everyone as if they might have COVID-19, you can stay safe.
- If you take precautions you can keep yourself and other people safe.

“I am hoping the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend is not the start of an even greater increase in COVID-19 case rates. July 4<sup>th</sup> is a great holiday to enjoy with one’s own family – a back yard barbecue, badminton or ping pong, grilling corn. Save the gathering for a future time when it is safe to gather again. For now, please savor some quieter time with those closest to you.

“Keep your distance, stay close to home, wear your face covering proudly and wash your hands.”

For more tips, see CDC’s “How to Protect Yourself & Others”: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

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