

Killingworth Copes 10: Coronavirus update

Hello, Killingworth--

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Connecticut took another big jump today, from 1524 to 1993. Middlesex County numbers rose from 28 to 38. Thanks to all who are staying home, maintaining social distance, washing their hands frequently, and avoiding touching their faces, we have not yet seen local transmission in Killingworth. Keep up the good work! Tell your neighbors!

New Health Director. I am happy to report that starting April 1, Killingworth will have a new health director. Sonia Marino comes to us with a master's degree in public health, four years' experience as health director and registered sanitarian in Westbrook and five more years as a registered sanitarian. She has been working with Paul Hutcheon, our current health director, since last week, and because we are in the midst of a health emergency, Paul will continue to serve as assistant director of health as needed after April 1.

Stimulus checks. The federal stimulus bill enacted on Friday includes one-time payments to individuals and families. Individuals making up to \$75,000 are to receive \$1,200; joint filers making up to \$150,000 will receive \$2,400. The size of the payments decreases above those income levels, phasing out completely at \$99,000 for individuals and \$198,000 for couples. There is also a \$500 payment per dependent child.

IRS will base the income determinations on the 2018 or 2019 tax return filed, and those who qualify will automatically receive the payments. If you did not file a tax return in 2018 and 2019 because your income was below the filing threshold but you receive Social Security or Railroad Retirement benefits, you will still automatically get a stimulus check for \$1,200 without having to file a tax return. If you didn't file a return in either of those years and are not on Social Security, and you would like assistance with filing, leave a message at Town Hall (860-663-1765, ext. 201) and we will have someone from the AARP TaxAide program contact you to help.

Health care workers--face masks available. We are getting a stream of hand-sewn face masks donated at Town Hall. If you would like masks, please leave a message at 860-663-1765, ext. 201.

As we have noted, the CDC has said that, in settings where N95 face masks are not available, health care professionals might use homemade masks for care of patients with COVID-19 as a last resort. Homemade masks are not considered PPE, since their ability to protect health care professionals is unknown. Caution should be exercised when considering this option. Homemade masks should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (extending to the chin or below) and sides of the face.

Stay home, stay safe--

Cathy