

Killingworth Copes 29: Coronavirus update

Hello, Killingworth-

Over the last two weeks, the number of deaths from COVID-19 in Connecticut was still averaging over 70 per day, and the number of confirmed cases in Middlesex County grew by 36 percent. Better news: the number of hospitalizations has been falling for over a week, and the state is beginning to look beyond the epidemic to how we might begin to reopen businesses, public services, and other sectors of our society.

Killingworth needs to start thinking about what we should do to support our residents and our economic base as this phase of the pandemic wanes in Connecticut. We will be setting up a Long-Term Recovery Committee, to coordinate information and plans for "re-opening" our town. If you are interested in serving on that committee, please contact me by email (ciino@townofkillingworth.com) or phone.

Update on unemployment assistance for self-employed workers. In my last message, I included instructions from the Connecticut Department of Labor on how self-employed residents could apply for federal unemployment benefits (PUA). I mistakenly said that a button for the PUA application could be found on the DOL website. The CT DOL has not yet put up the button; they say it will be available by the end of this week. I apologize for the misinformation.

Working with contractors. Killingworth Building Official Richard Pleines offers the following advice on construction in the time of coronavirus:

Stick to outdoor work. Having a contractor spend hours in your kitchen or living room isn't the best idea right now, but if you have exterior work, you can hire someone without exposing yourself. For example, reseeding your lawn, fixing loose shingles on your roof, or clean out your gutters are all projects that don't require someone to set foot inside your home.

A contractor could drive up to your property, talk to you outdoors from a distance, do the work at hand, and leave a bill in your mailbox. You can pay that bill by check or electronically, without contact. Be sure to inspect the work before you pay.

Urgent indoor repairs. What if you need a job tackled inside your home that you can't put off? Say, a pipe breaks and you need to shut your water off until it's repaired. Please take precautions: When you call your contractor to check on availability, ask what his or her plan is for maintaining distancing and hygiene. Ask that only essential workers be in the house at any

time, and make sure that anyone who might come to your home is not experiencing symptoms of coronavirus. Err on the side of caution. If the contractor can't stop coughing or reports recently having had a fever, politely move on to someone else.

Next, ask your contractor to wear shoe covers, mask, and gloves when entering your home. This will help prevent the spread of germs (and dirt).

Inside your home, maintain a six-foot distance from the contractor when discussing the work to be done and while your contractor is working, maintain social distancing at all times.

Don't forget to avoid contact when paying the bill. Exchange the bill and the check placing them in an agreed-upon spot that you and your contractor visit separately. Pay electronically if you can. If you must hand over a credit card, avoid direct contact, wipe down the card with disinfectant immediately before and after, and wash your hands thoroughly before you do anything else.

Once your contractor leaves, disinfect every surface he or she may have touched, and wash your hands with soap for a minimum of twenty (20) seconds.

Killingworth, we're doing a good job of keeping apart together. Thank you, and keep it up!

Stay home, stay safe.

Cathy