



PACIFIC COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Robin K. Souvenir

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2020

Contact: Benjamin Haslam, Public Information Officer

Pacific County Emergency Operations Center

COVID-19 Response

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HEALTH OFFICER ORDERS CANCELLATION OF CLAM DIGGING IN PACIFIC COUNTY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

{South Bend, WA March 19, 2020} On Thursday, March 19, 2020, the Pacific County Deputy Health Officer (“Deputy Health Officer”), Dr. Steven Krager, ordered that all clam digs in Pacific County, Washington be cancelled until further notice in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The prohibition on clam digging in Pacific County is in effect as of 12:01 AM on March 20, 2020 per the Health Officer’s Order, and remains in effect until further notice.

The Deputy Health Officer has determined that this step is now necessary in Pacific County in light of the increasing scope and severity of the threat that COVID-19 poses. Although no cases are confirmed in Pacific County at this time, the increasing instances of community spread in Washington State have influenced the decision.

1. Summary of the Deputy Health Officer’s Order

The Deputy Health Officer issued an Order prohibiting clam digging in Pacific County to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 due to: (a) the increased likelihood that gatherings will attract people from a broad geographic area; (b) the prolonged time period in which large numbers of people are in close proximity; (c) the difficulty in tracing exposure when large numbers of people attend a single event; (d) the inability to ensure that attendees follow adequate hygienic and social distancing practices; and (e) the potential impact on community resources including food, pharmaceutical supplies, and healthcare resources.

For the purposes of the Order, “COVID-19 risk mitigation measures” include all of the following: (a) The space in which a permissible gathering is held must accommodate social distancing by allowing all attendees to stand or sit at least six feet from any other attendee; and (b) Proper hand hygiene and sanitation material must be readily available to all persons at all times, including soap and water, tissues, and waste receptacles (if soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used).

2. Pacific County Recommendations

This Order does not ban access to public beaches. However, as a reminder, Pacific County recommends that people at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 stay home as much as possible. This includes individuals over age 60, and/or those with serious, chronic medical conditions (diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or those who have weakened immune systems, etc.).

Anyone who has questions about whether their condition puts them at risk for COVID-19 should contact their primary healthcare provider or an appropriate medical practitioner.

Pacific County also recommends everyone take steps to keep themselves and others healthy, including:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Use a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Stay home and away from others when sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched.

Pacific County will continue to update the public with information pertinent to COVID-19 as soon as it is available.

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For more information, or to schedule an interview with Benjamin Haslam, please contact the Direct Response line at (360) 875-9407 / (360) 642-9407 or pceocOps@co.pacific.wa.us