

ITASCA COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ITASCA RESOURCE CENTER
1209 SE 2nd Ave, Grand Rapids MN 55744
Hearing impaired number TDD: 218-327-5549
(218) 327-2941
www.co.itasca.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INDEPENDENCE DAY TAKES ON EXTRA MEANING FOR THOSE VACCINATED

(Grand Rapids, Minn. – July 1, 2021) – Itasca County residents, visitors and front-line workers have beaten back COVID-19 infections in the county to a rate not seen since the early days of the pandemic. During the two weeks of June 2021, only 14 new cases of the disease were diagnosed among Itasca County residents. The most recent 14-day rate per 10,000 Itasca residents is 3.3.

For those still suffering from lingering effects of COVID infection and those not yet vaccinated, the disease remains very serious. The county has seen two additional COVID-related deaths of two males, one in his 60s and one in his 90s. Sixty-five total Itasca County residents have died due to COVID.

“As we move into another holiday weekend in Northern Minnesota, we would like to take a moment and reflect on how far we have come as a community in our adaptations to COVID-19,” said Kelly Chandler, Itasca County Public Health division manager. “We celebrate our neighbors, visitors, and local businesses who have supported the efforts to prevent the spread, especially amongst our most vulnerable. We celebrate our front-line workers including healthcare, EMS, law enforcement, fire, restaurant, grocery and retail workers who have worked tirelessly to keep services and resources available to our community. And we celebrate those who have been vaccinated to reduce the likelihood of severe illness or death from COVID, and reduce the burden on our healthcare workers. We appreciate you.

“Please stay safe this holiday weekend and remember to not drink and boat or drink and drive, wear sunscreen, and enjoy the outdoors as much as possible. Happy Independence Day from your Itasca County Public Health team!”

Slightly more than half of eligible Itasca County residents have received at least a first dose of COVID vaccine: 52 percent of those ages 12 and over, 56 percent of those ages 16 and over and 84 percent of those 65 and over.

In addition to COVID vaccines widely available through local clinics and pharmacies, special vaccine events are ongoing throughout the county. Current opportunities are featured at the county’s website, www.co.itasca.mn.us.

Deer River students ages 12 and older are invited to a July 22 vaccination event at the Deer River High School gymnasium from 9:00 a.m. to noon, with the second dose of Pfizer scheduled for Aug. 12. This will allow participating students to be fully vaccinated by the start of school. Assistance with consent forms will be available at the event.

Itasca residents with questions or concerns may leave them at the Itasca County COVID message line, with calls returned 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Itasca COVID line number is 218-327-6784.

--END--

Itasca County Public Health media contact: Kelly Chandler, 218-327-6144 and
Kelly.Chandler@co.itasca.mn.us.