



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

July 26, 2021

Dear Community Partner,

You've likely been hearing reports of the recent surge in new COVID cases at the state and national level. Unfortunately, we are seeing a concerning increase here in St. Louis County, as well. In the last two weeks, we've added 105 new cases (total 18,282). We saw an 88% increase in cases last week compared to the week before.

One new death was reported (total 319), but it was actually a late reported case that occurred in February, which means we've now gone a full month without a new death.

Other updates/resources you may find helpful:

- There's been a lot of talk about variants and questions about need for boosters. Here are answers to the questions we hear most:
 - All of the vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson&Johnson)) provide protection against currently identified variants, including the Delta variant.
 - MDH reports that more than 99.9% of new cases, hospitalizations, and deaths, regardless of strain, are in unvaccinated Minnesotans.
 - There currently are NO recommendations for people to get a booster. Though if you're overdue for a second dose of Pfizer or Moderna, don't wait any longer. It's not too late to get it, and the second dose will give you added protection.
- MDH has developed a COVID-19 Vaccine speakers program to educate community members about COVID-19 vaccines, raise awareness about the benefits of vaccinations, and address common questions and concerns. To request a speaker for a group that you're part of or for an event you'd like to organize, visit here: [COVID-19 Vaccine Speakers Request Survey \(state.mn.us\)](https://state.mn.us/covid-19-vaccine-speakers-request-survey)
- Not just for COVID, but for a variety of disasters you should prepare for - St. Louis County Public Health has a Master's student working with us through mid-September. This individual has considerable experience with the Red Cross and is available to provide training in disaster mitigation. This training can be customized depending on the nature of your organization and the services you provide. Let me know if you'd be interested in learning more.
- Water fountain safety: The all clear has been given to use water fountains again. (The risk of getting COVID-19 from touching a solid surface like a water fountain button is low.) However, if a water fountain hasn't been used in a while – whether because it was turned off or is in a location that had been unoccupied – there could be risk for other water quality issues, including bacteria growth. If this potentially describes a water fountain in your location, [please read these safety tips.](#)

Thanks, as always, for the continued partnership. Never hesitate to reach out if I can help with any questions you may have.

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