



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Rhea Borja
City of Healdsburg Communications
rborja@ci.healdsburg.ca.us
(707) 431-3320

City of Healdsburg Declares Local Emergency to Respond to Coronavirus

The St. Patrick's Day Parade will be canceled and other City-sponsored public events will be postponed for the next several weeks to help prevent the spread of the disease

Healdsburg, Calif. – Out of an abundance of caution, the City of Healdsburg has declared a Local Emergency to respond to the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This declaration empowers the City to access state and federal resources, mutual aid, and other tools to help protect the community and City facilities from this virus outbreak, which the World Health Organization has declared a pandemic.

Healdsburg City Manager David Mickaelian signed the declaration of Local Emergency today and the Healdsburg City Council will consider the declaration for ratification at its meeting on 6 p.m., Monday, March 16, at City Hall, 401 Grove Street.

“Declaring a local emergency means that we can more easily access state and federal funding and other resources to help fight this outbreak,” said Mr. Mickaelian. “It’s a prudent and pro-active action to keep all of our community members healthy.”

Healdsburg’s declaration of Local Emergency follows emergency declarations by the County of Sonoma, the cities of Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma. Sonoma County is regularly updating information about the novel coronavirus at www.socoemergency.org.

City-sponsored public events postponed

In addition to declaring a Local Emergency, the City of Healdsburg is postponing City-sponsored public events for the next few weeks.

This decision comes after guidance from Gov. Gavin Newsom to postpone all non-essential gatherings of 250 people or more through the end of March as well as recommendations from the Sonoma County Public Health Officer to cancel or postpone non-essential indoor events of 50 people or more for adults over age 60 and those with chronic medical conditions.

Specifically, the California Department of Public Health finds the following:

- Large gatherings that include 250 people or more should be postponed or canceled. This includes concerts, conferences, and professional, college, and school sporting events.

- Smaller gatherings held in venues that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person should be postponed or canceled. This includes gatherings in crowded auditoriums, rooms or other venues.
- Gatherings of people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should be limited to no more than 10 people. This includes gatherings at retirement facilities, assisted living facilities, developmental homes, and support groups for people with health conditions.
- A “gathering” is any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, cafeteria, or any other indoor or outdoor space.

In Healdsburg, the public events that will not be held include the March 17 St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Celtic Concert and the April 18 Senior Center bus trip to see the play, “Book of Mormon,” in San Francisco.

The City continues to work with the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management and Department of Health Services – which is working closely with the California Department of Public Health -- to monitor the coronavirus situation on an ongoing basis and may extend this event restriction as necessary.

“Our number-one goal is to keep the Healdsburg community safe and informed,” said Healdsburg City Manager David Mickaelian. “We are collaborating daily with the County’s health department to see what actions we and the community need to take going forward.”

Cleaning and disinfecting City facilities

The City is taking extra steps to clean and disinfect City facilities to help guard community members from contracting the virus.

Public bathrooms in City facilities now undergo a deeper cleaning and City staff are disinfecting frequently touched surfaces such as door handles and knobs, table tops and handrails with alcohol-based wipes more often. Hand-sanitizer stations have also been placed at all City facilities and signage in both English and Spanish on good hygiene practice has been posted as well.

Practice good hygiene

The novel coronavirus is impacting all facets of private and public life and it’s important that everyone does their part to keep healthy. The City encourages everyone to keep practicing good hygiene – that’s the most effective way to stay healthy. Hygiene practices include:

- Wash hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Avoid touching your face, especially our eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeved elbow.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you’re ill.

Stay up-to-date on how the coronavirus is impacting Healdsburg via these City channels:

City website: www.cityofhealdsburg.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CityofHealdsburg

Nextdoor: <https://nextdoor.com/agency-detail/ca/healdsburg/city-of-healdsburg/>