



State mandates face masks for most public settings

Effective Friday, June 26

By MIKE MALTAIS
STAFF WRITER

OLYMPIA – Effective Friday, June 26, Washington state residents and visitors are required to wear face coverings in most indoor and outdoor public settings to guard against the spread of the coronavirus per an order signed by state Secretary of Health John Wiseman.

The order applies to those:

- Inside of or in line to enter any indoor public space.
- Seeking health care services.
- Waiting for or riding public transportation.
- Outdoors and unable to remain six feet distant from others not in their household.

Exceptions to the above order include children under five years of age and

people with medical or mental health conditions or disabilities that prevent the wearing of a face covering.

Earlier in June state officials launched a program to make reusable cloth face coverings available for all low-income Washington residents. The state Emergency Management Division partnered with the Department of Enterprise Services to purchase 3.6 million cloth masks. The goal is to distribute two masks to every Washingtonian with an income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$52,400 for a family of four).
“In just two weeks, the state distributed nearly 2.8 million masks and is working on filling the remaining orders from local emergency management offices,” a state Department of Health media release said.

The state delivers the masks to local emergency management offices which

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Pateros receives DOE wastewater grant

By MIKE MALTAIS
STAFF WRITER

PATEROS – The state Department of Ecology announced the award of a wastewater grant to the City of Pateros as part of \$14.7 million dollars distributed among six Central Washington counties to fund clean water projects.

Pateros received \$192,810, the \$96,405 principal of which is a forgivable Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan. Per an explanation from DOE, the funds will be used to update the city's Wastewater Facility Plan

described as out of date and not reflective of the city's current Water Treatment Facility (WWTF).

“The city has experienced changes in influent flows at the WWTF, which has led to challenges to treatment processes, and has the reduced effluent quality which impacts the Columbia River,” said the DOE media advisory. “Also, the city's sanitary sewer collection system is old and leaking, which causes contamination to the groundwater and the city's sole source of

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Second Harvest food truck makes third visit on July 1

Walk-in cooler donated

By MIKE MALTAIS
STAFF WRITER

BREWSTER – For the third time since the coronavirus pandemic turned the damper down on profit and nonprofit business proceedings alike, the Second Harvest food truck is making a return visit, its third, to Brewster on Wednesday, July 1. As in the previous two visits on April 13, and again on May 22, the truck will park in the Brewster High School lot adjacent to the football field on Sunset Drive.

Brewster Food Bank manager Neal McKee said the hours for food distribution will run from 11 a.m. through 1 p.m. The food



Mike Maltais/QCH

The Second Harvest food truck made its last visit to Brewster on May 22.

truck is specially equipped with five compartments on each side of the van to allow food boxes to be accessed from both sides of the rig. Volunteers complying with COVID-19 social distancing requirements, place the food boxes in client vehicles.

The Brewster Food Bank at 301 S. Fourth Street is

open every Thursday from 9-11:30 a.m.

McKee said the food bank will soon have a walk-in cooler thanks to the generosity of the school district. The school had the spare cooler for sale when McKee approached Brewster School Superintendent Eric Driessen to learn more

about it. When Driessen learned that McKee was inquiring about the cooler in his capacity as food bank manager, he agreed to donate the unit to the bank.

The owner of the truck on which the cooler is currently staged also agreed to donate his time to deliver the unit to its new home.

Anglers land lunkers at Lure Safe Open Bass Tournament

By MIKE MALTAIS
STAFF WRITER

BREWSTER -- One of the first public events held in the Quad City area since the COVID-19 lockdown was the Lure Safe Open Bass Tournament hosted by the Okanogan Valley Bass Club (OVBC) and sponsored by Mauk Fishing Stuff on Saturday, June 20.

Nearly two dozen boats turned out for the event despite the difficulties navigating the coronavirus restrictions and in so doing demonstrated two facts:

- Bass fishermen are a resilient bunch.
- The Columbia-Okanogan river system is home to some large bass.

Long time OVBC members Rick Lind and Ken Chaplin cast their way to first place and the \$660 grand prize with a combined total weight of 17.38 pounds of largemouth bass. It was a back-to-back win for Chaplin who took top prize in the previous OVBC



Courtesy Mike Mauk

Ken Chaplin and teammate Rick Line, not pictured, were the tournament winners.



TJ & Taylor Merrell landed second place with 16.04 pounds of spiny rays.

event. Second place and \$230 went to TJ and Taylor Merrell with 16.04 pounds of largemouth.

Steve Brown and Lance Manning won third place and \$130 with 15.44 pounds of largemouth.

The team of Jason Ro-

beck and Brad Baranouskas finished fourth for \$90 with 15.24 pounds largemouth and 6.04 pounds of smallmouth bass. One of Baranouskas's largemouth proved the whopper of the day and earned the angler another \$330 for landing the biggest fish.

“It was an awesome sight to see competitive bass fishing being brought back to our great local waters,” said Mauk, who received a big shout out by the OVBC members. Special thanks are also extended to Amanda Kay for helping at the tournament.

OCTN, Senior Center provide take-out meals



Mike Maltais/QCH

Rose Guzman, left, Kim Smith, and Neal McKee were on the job last Thursday at the Brewster-Pateros-Bridgeport Senior Center at 109 S. Bridge St., preparing take-out lunches for their call-in customers. Senior citizens are asked to call ahead at 509-869-2815 to place orders. Meals are available for pick-up from 11 a.m. to 12 noon every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.



Jason Robeck, left, and Brad Baranouskas caught 15.24 pounds of largemouth and 6.02 pounds of smallmouth bass to win fourth place.



Brad Baranouskas hoists the biggest largemouth bass caught in the tournament.



Craig Randall, right, handled the weigh-in chores.

Pateros amends PMC, approves six-year TIP

Accepts RDA grant

By MIKE MALTAIS
STAFF WRITER

PATEROS – The city council met in a special

virtual session on Monday, June 22, to amend the city municipal code, approve the updated six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and a Rural Development Block Grant (RDBG). Votes on the PMC and TIP

followed public hearings on both issues.

The PMC provision, entitled Pateros Mall Use and Regulation, was amended to allow businesses abutting the mall area to obtain a license to conduct com-

mercial activities within a defined area of the mall. The amendment is needed so that businesses can use the mall area as space for additional outdoor customer

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During this difficult time support your neighbors

Most local businesses offer curbside service or delivery

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MASKS

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in turn allocates them to community and service organizations for distribution to individuals. As of June 22, Okanogan County has received or will receive 36,900 masks and Douglas County 28,150. To inquire locally about picking up a mask contact:

Okanogan County Emergency Management 123 5th Ave. N., Room 200 Okanogan, WA 98840 Phone: 509-422-7206 Fax: 509-422-7217 http://okanogandem.org/

Douglas County Emergency Management 110 N.E. 2nd Street Suite 200 East Wenatchee, WA 98802 Phone: 509-884-0941 Fax: 509-886-1045 http://www.douglascountywa.net/departments/emergency-management

Those interested in making face coverings can join

the Lt. Governor's Mask Challenge at It.gov.wa.gov/mask-challenge

More information about the face cover order is available online at coronavirus.wa.gov/masks.

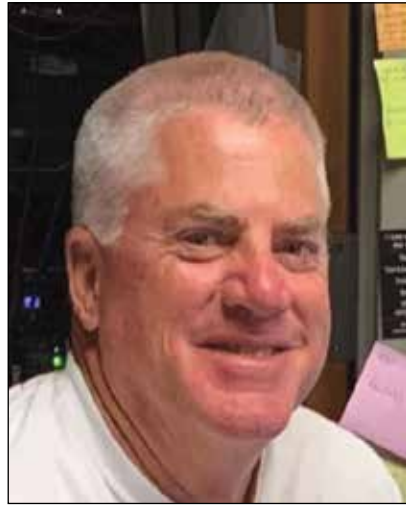
Okanogan County Sheriff Tony Hawley and Douglas County Sheriff Kevin Morris, both appointees to the North Central Washington Law Enforcement Leadership Group organized by Congressman Dan Newhouse, issued statements concerning the latest developments:

"In response to many inquiries on the Governor's recent proclamation regarding face coverings, we want to communicate we will continue to focus on crimes and criminals which impact public safety. The statewide face covering order is a public health and safety measure, it is not a mandate for local law enforcement response. We encourage our community to take the necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of all."

Austin named District 6 Athletic Director of Year

Honoring 32 years of service

BY MIKE MALTAIS STAFF WRITER



Courtesy WSSAAA

Greg Austin

BREWSTER - High School Athletic Director and Middle School Principal Greg Austin has been named the District 6 Athletic Director of the Year by the Washington State Secondary Athletic Administration Association.

Austin, a fixture at BHS and Bears' sports for more than three decades, is currently the head coach for varsity track and field, secondary athletic director, and secretary/treasurer of the North Central Washington 2B league.

"A big reason for Brewster's success is because of Greg's leadership, commitment and contributions. Greg's demeanor is exemplary" said District 6 Director Dave Cullen in a WSSAAA media release. "When he speaks, people pay attention. He has proven that he is a very organized, responsible, and thorough individual. He has been impressive in his abilities to create relationships with both staff and students."

Brewster School Superintendent Eric Driessen echoes Cullen's assess-

ment of this year's honoree.

"Greg has been dedicated to Brewster School District and WIAA District 6 for 32 years," said Driessen. "He has taken on numerous roles within the leagues and district, too."

Driessen goes on to describe Austin as "a man of his word. He is loyal, committed to supporting kids and you know the decisions he makes, whether it is for Brewster schools, the league, or the WIAAS district, are being made to benefit kids."

Austin's secretary, Jennifer Evans, described Austin's influence in the Brewster community this way:

"Greg is very organized and meticulous in making sure everything is completed in a timely manner," said Evans. "He expects the best out of his students, athletes, and staff. He always encourages them to never settle, to always go for that golden ring."

Austin was a biology and chemistry teacher for 25 years and has served as the Middle School Principal for the past seven.

Athletic directors around the state nominate their colleagues for A.D. of the Year. Those nominations are reviewed by WIAA district boards to determine who among the nominees will be honored at the district level and represent their district at the WSSAAA State Conference.

"I am humbled by the recognition that my peers around the CWB League and District 6 gave me," said Austin. "Being an athletic director is a time-consuming position and I know that each A.D. up and down the valley puts in just as much time as I do. I am blessed that I get to work for the Brewster school district not only for the athletic department but the district as a whole."

TIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

seating in compliance with social distancing provisions required by the coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier in June the city applied grant money from the state Department of Commerce Coronavirus Relief Fund to purchase tables and chairs to provide extra outdoor seating on the mall. The city purchased 120 metal chairs and 30 metal tables with the \$25,000 grant and needed

to amend the PMC so businesses could put them to use on the mall.

The city needed to approve the updated TIP for the years 2021-2026 to qualify for state and federal funding for projects listed in the six-year plan.

The city received a \$30,000 grant from USDA Rural Development to complete a feasibility study for a plastics recycling facility. Council members voted to approve the terms of the letter of intent to meet RDA conditions for the grant.

Feeling the pain at Bridge and Main



Mike Maltais/QCH

Two vehicles met in the middle of the intersection at the four-way stop at Bridge and Main street in downtown Brewster last Thursday morning, June 25. Brewster Police Chief Marcos Ruiz said the driver of one vehicle fled the scene of the non-injury accident but was later located and cited.

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NCRL grant will expand Wi-Fi range

Part of Strategic Plan

BY MIKE MALTAIS STAFF WRITER

WENATCHEE - A grant from the Pacific Library Association and Microsoft will allow the North Central Regional Library to extend its wireless broadband internet ranges around all 30 of its branches, including those in Pateros, Brewster, Bridgeport, and Waterville.

"The \$20,000 grant will pay for equipment to expand the Wi-Fi signal approximately 400 to 600 feet outside all 30 of the public libraries in Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Okanogan and Ferry counties," said NCRL Communications Manager Michelle McNeil. "All of the district's libraries already offer free Wi-Fi outside. Equipment to expand the range of the service will be installed over the next several weeks."

No library card is needed



(Courtesy bing.com) Lisa Karstetter

to access NCRL's Wi-Fi network. Any user can walk or drive within range of an NCRL branch and use the service while complying with existing COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

"High speed internet plays a prominent role in our daily lives," said Lisa Karstetter, Microsoft TechSpark Manager in Quincy. "Connecting rural communities so they may have access to remote



(Courtesy ncrl.org) Barbara Walters

learning, telehealth, remote work, etc., is more important than ever before as we navigate this pandemic."

Expanding Wi-Fi access is a key objective in the library district's 2019-2021 Strategic Plan. Broadband use was at 47.7 percent in NCRL's five-county service area when the plan was adopted, compared to 65.2 percent statewide. Wireless internet at NCRL's branches was used almost

half a million times in 2019. "The stay home order has highlighted the crucial role that internet connectivity plays in all of our daily lives," said NCRL Executive Director Barbara Walters. "Just as the pandemic closed library buildings that were the source of internet service for many people in our communities, the need for internet service grew exponentially."

People experiencing homelessness and poverty, older citizens and students relied on libraries for digital access to complete schoolwork, apply for jobs, connect with health care providers, communicate via email, conduct business, and find information.

"While recognizing that libraries can't be the only answer to this problem, we are a key part of the solution," said Walters. "The lack of broadband access in rural communities is a long-term problem that affects everyone."

Washington Apples Specialty License Plates Available Next Week

SUBMITTED BY WASHINGTON APPLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

WENATCHEE - With much anticipation, the Washington apples specialty license plates will make their debut this week. Start-



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WASHINGTON APPLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION. WASHINGTON APPLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION. WA AC SMPLE World's Finest Apples. ing July 1, Washington drivers may order the plates for their licensed vehicles from the Department of Licensing website at https://www.dol.wa.gov/vehicleregistration/specialdesign.html. Proceeds from the sales and renewals of the plates benefit the Washington Apple Education Foundation (WAEF). Late last year the Washington Apple Commission expressed their interest in a plate paying tribute to Washington apple growers to Wenatchee-area state Senator Brad Hawkins. Senator Hawkins took the lead sponsoring SB6032. The bill had broad support from senators and representatives from fruit growing

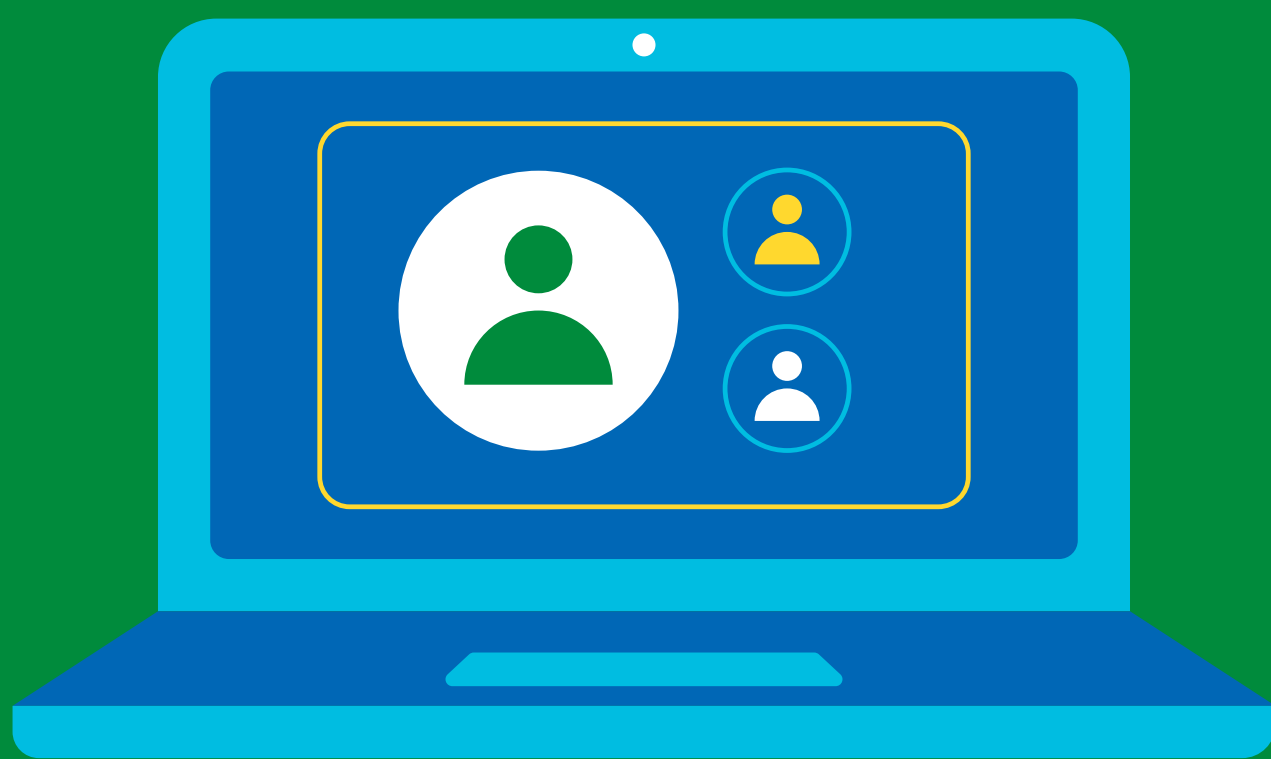
regions. With a good deal of effort, the bill passed the legislature in early March. It was signed into law by Governor Insee on March 19th.

Specialty license plate pricing is established by the state Department of Licensing through the legislative process. The purchase price of the Washington apples specialty plate is \$77.25. Annual renewal will be \$30. For each sale and renewal, WAEF receives \$28. The foundation will utilize the funds in support of its scholarship and student outreach activities.

"We anticipate seeing thousands of Washington

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Hispanic coalition pens open ‘Letter to the Chelan-Douglas Health District Board’

We are experiencing very difficult times right now. It is understandable that we want to have a sense of normalcy especially as we see other counties in our state enter Phase 2. But, as we seek solutions to address economic shortcomings in our region, we should recognize it will take a collective effort for our community to stand strong in the face of this pandemic.

As the Chelan-Douglas Health District clearly recognized in the 1.5 Phase proposal, the Latinx community, “which makes up at least a third of our population, suffers a much higher rate of known COVID-19 infection than the general population.” We could look at economic disparities and cultural customs to explain these numbers, however, we cannot ignore the systemic factors that leave our poor, Latinx – and Native American – communities behind. The pandemic has clearly magnified unjust practices and policies currently in place.

The current transmission rate in Chelan and Douglas counties is the second highest in Washington State and continues to show an upward trend. These numbers are driven by the cases reported from the agricultural industry. The public only knows about COVID-19 cases reported when outbreaks spiked, but there are many more cases in this industry. According

to the Washington Department of Health, “outbreaks in agricultural settings can threaten the health of workers, their families, and their communities, as well as the food supply and economic recovery for Washington State and beyond.”

Agricultural businesses have been responsible for following state law and federal guidelines to help prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. However, we continue to see disproportionately high numbers of COVID-19 cases in agricultural workers.

Currently, the Chelan-Douglas Health District is preparing a proposal to move beyond phase 1. The proposal would include language that separates the numbers of COVID-19 positive cases reported in group housing from the general community when reporting and evaluating cases. Although the local health care system regularly tests residents in group living spaces, reporting the number of positive cases in the community that has been hit the hardest, separately from the rest of us is harmful to our neighbors working in agriculture and is harmful to the entire community.

Each harvest season, our state grows by 20,000 seasonal workers, many coming to our region and increasing the number of people shopping at stores and eating at restaurants. If agricul-

tural businesses do not revise and implement meaningful changes to COVID-19 plans and policies, how will employers ensure that our community will be kept safe?

We pride ourselves in being an agricultural community, it is time we care about every member of this community.

It takes leadership that is held accountable to comply with necessary health regulations that are in place for the safety of the community.

The responsibility must start with the Health District Board. Employers should coordinate efforts with the Health District to regularly provide and revise culturally-sensitive education about safety practices as recommended by the CDC and required by the State. The number of cases in agricultural workers demonstrates that current COVID-19 plans or policies require third-party oversight and need to be modified to ensure agricultural businesses are protecting workers. The Health District also needs to monitor compliance frequently and enforce the consequences for noncompliance. As it currently stands, workers are responsible for reporting health and safety concerns to the Department of Labor & Industries through a hotline. Many workers fear repercussions and prefer not to file reports. We can stop the transmission

of COVID-19 through contact tracing, which identifies people who have been in contact with COVID-19 positive patients. It appears the Health District has not deployed enough bilingual, bicultural contact tracers to implement regular check-ins with COVID-19 positive cases and their contacts. If these preventive measures are not in place, we can expect COVID-19 cases to skyrocket.

We cannot ignore the clear conflict of interest in the board that governs the Chelan-Douglas Health District. Three of the eight board members are elected officials who appeared as plaintiffs in the lawsuit against Governor Inslee. We need transparency from our elected officials and voices that speak up for the safety of our community.

If we move too quickly back to “business as usual”, we will knowingly widen the gap that already exists in health outcomes for the marginalized in our communities. If we continue to suppress the voices of the ones most affected by inequalities in our systems, we will continue to create responses that do not address the actual needs of our communities. To assume that lack of access into spaces where decisions are made is equivalent to a lack of brilliance ignores systemic inequalities in place. The time is now to offer a seat at the table to other voices

and ways of knowing.

Let’s not rush back to a “normal” where some thrive while many barely survive. Let’s create a new community, together.

Karina Vega-Villa, Teresa Bendito, Immigrant & Latinx Solidarity Group; Irene Morrow, Beth Sattler, Jamie Krish, Wenatchee for Immigrant Justice; Tonantzintla Chacón, Alma, Jorge Chacón, The Community for the Advancement of Family Education; Community members: Cecilia Anguiano, Norma Gallegos, Xacira Velasco Ponce de León, Krista Herling, Brian Herling.

Wenatchee for Immigrant Justice is a group of local residents whose mission is to promote a community of neighbors that supports immigrant rights in the Wenatchee area. Since July of 2019, it has been working through the state-wide WA Immigrant Solidarity Network to accompany immigrants to local courthouses. It advocates for just immigration policies, and it networks with established immigrant organizations to facilitate bridge-building between culturally diverse communities.

Immigrant & Latinx Solidarity Group formed to coordinate different groups including non-profit, community, and grassroots groups to respond to the needs of the immigrant and Latinx communities in our region.

It’s the air you share

SUBMITTED BY MALCOLM BUTLER MD CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, CVCH HEALTH OFFICER, CHELAN DOUGLAS HEALTH DISTRICT



Malcom Butler

I was speaking with my neighbor the other day, whose age makes him both wise and at high risk should he contract COVID-19. I was wearing a mask – he was not. “Yeah, I don’t do that,” he said. I thought, “He must not understand how the COVID-19 virus is transmitted, because if he did, I think he would wear a mask.”

He went on to say, “The science around this changes all of the time, so who are you supposed to trust?” As a scientist, I am ok with some uncertainty as we learn more about diseases. For instance, it was believed that ulcers were caused by stress – now we know that they are largely an infectious disease. It’s the nature of scientific discovery that our “mental model” of how the world works evolves over time. The nature of how we understand COVID-19 is continuously evolving, which is normal and correct - and clearly frustrating.

When the pandemic began, scientists believed it was similar to influenza. We know a great deal about influenza. The last great pandemic involved influenza. It was a natural place to start. Influenza is spread by droplets, and COVID-19 is spread by droplets, so we deployed influenza-type strategies of hand washing and hygiene, wiping down surfaces, social distancing, etc. When that wasn’t enough, we used more draconian measures that included stay home orders and closing all but essential businesses.

Now we understand how COVID-19 is NOT like influenza; let me explain.

COVID-19 seems to fit the “eighty-twenty rule” of biology. 80% of the disease is caused by 20% of the transmission. Here’s how that 20% works with this virus.

Imagine a keyhole, and only a specific shape can fit through that hole. The COVID-19 virus has a specific shape and must land on a specific keyhole to pass through the lining of your nose, mouth, or lungs and into your bloodstream. These keyholes are spread out randomly. So, it takes multiple hits for a virus to infect you. If you are peppered with enough virus, eventually one will land on the keyhole, pass through and cause an infection. The total volume of virus that peppers your system is the key. How much time you are

in contact with an infected person and the time sharing their air determines if you will contract COVID-19.

Both COVID-19 and influenza are transmitted via droplets. But unlike influenza, the droplets that remain suspended in the air are what matter most. Influenza is all about big droplets that land on surfaces, which we touch, and then carry up to our mouths, or eyes. COVID-19 is about small droplets that remain floating in the air that we share.

Imagine your tonsils as the breeding ground of the COVID-19 virus. Anything that pushes air past the tonsils will collect and expel virus. Singing, yelling, breathing hard, coughing, all will generate large droplets filled with virus. Talking or just breathing release small virus-containing droplets. The big droplets contain lots of virus but fall to surfaces within 6 feet – and yes, you could contract the virus from those surfaces, but it is difficult. Very small droplets float around for a long time, but don’t contain many viruses, and aren’t that infectious.

So, what about medium

sized droplets? Medium sized droplets carry medium volumes of virus. And here is the key: medium sized droplets float around long enough to start to evaporate off their water. As the water evaporates, they turn into small droplets that can float around all day. But instead of carrying just a small volume of virus, these dried-out medium-sized droplets contain a medium volume of virus. They become concentrated “super-infectors.”

Outside, humans don’t share much air. Floating droplets dissipate, and we are all pretty safe. Inside, with minimal air movement, we share a lot of air, and receive multiple hits from virus-laden droplets. Thus, carpooling with extended family for celebrations like birthday parties, or even gathering in someone’s living room for a memorial service, with singing and sobbing, are more dangerous.

This is why wearing a mask is so important. I must confess that at first the whole universal masking thing made no sense to me. As a physician I have been trained to use a mask in a very specific way to avoid transmitting something like Tuberculosis from one patient room to another when working in a hospital. Universal masking violates my medical training. So how could it work?

In China and Italy and New York City - all of the hotspots - the curves finally started to bend only after universal masking was imposed. Why?

Masks, even cloth masks, retain the biggest droplets and those nasty medium

sized droplets. Only the small droplets that aren’t very infectious can get through. When an infected person wears a mask, and remember that you are most infectious before you even start to feel sick, the total volume of virus floating around in the air that we share is dramatically reduced. Because 80% of infections come from droplets floating around in the air, the simple act of wearing a mask is enough to stop the pandemic spread. How I wish we had known that

in March.

It turns out that in COVID-19, masking is the next best thing to a vaccine. And probably nobody reading this will receive a vaccine before June of 2021.

Many say, “You cannot make me wear a mask.” That is true, but why wouldn’t you want to? You wear a mask to protect those around you, to beat the pandemic, to keep the economy open. Just like not smoking in restaurants or speed limits – they exist as public health interventions

that make sense. I hope with a better understanding of how COVID-19 is transmitted, wearing a mask will make sense too.

Reminders:

- Don’t stop washing your hands and don’t start touching your face. You can still contract COVID-19 from droplets on surfaces.
- 80% of COVID-19 appears to be transmitted through the air - the air you share.
- Masking during COVID-19 is the next best thing to a vaccine.

BE A PROTECTOR NOT AN INFECTOR WEAR A MASK USE SOCIAL DISTANCING

For more information, visit www.cdhd.wa.gov-covid-19

