

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 Testing Increasing in Western Wisconsin with National Guard Assistance

Local public health departments in Western Wisconsin will receive assistance from the WI National Guard to scale up COVID-19 testing. A number of sites throughout Western WI are being announced. Testing through the collection site will be free of charge. **These events are only available to WI residents or people who work in WI.**

In our area, Pierce and St. Croix Counties are partnering to host community COVID-19 specimen collection sites; Baldwin on Friday May 8th and River Falls on Saturday, May 9th. Appointments will be required to ensure long lines aren't formed.

Please call 715-928-3969 to make an appointment.

Baldwin-Friday May 8th

Western Wisconsin Health, 1100 Bergslien St, Baldwin, WI 54002 from 11AM-7PM (take I94, US-63 exit).

River Falls-Saturday May 9th

St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center, 1091 Sutherland Ave, River Falls, WI 54022, from 9AM-4PM (take WI-35, Radio Rd Exit)

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR TESTING: Anyone 5 years and older, with any current symptoms of fever, cough, loss of taste/smell, shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue, body aches, diarrhea, vomiting or nausea, chills, shaking with chills, and/or muscle aches, are eligible for nasal swab testing.

We have two goals with this event. First, to provide our communities with mass testing. Second, to give Public Health better insight into how much COVID-19 is in our communities. Both Public Health departments will continue to work closely with our local healthcare providers to continue building their capacity to meet patient demand.

"This event is not meant to replace the great work our local healthcare providers are doing to provide testing. It is meant to be a blast of mass testing to get better data on what's going on in our community, and it will allow additional time for all of us to continue scaling up our local capacity for testing," said AZ Snyder, Health Officer for Pierce County.

There are plans for additional testing sites throughout the Western Region of Wisconsin in early May. Additional testing sites will be added to the Western WI Public Health Readiness Consortium. Learn more here: <http://wwphrc.org/covid-19-community-testing/>

"If we get positive cases through this event, we will be able to isolate those people and trace their contacts to stop further spread in our communities. If there aren't many positive cases as a result of this

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event, we can use that data to explore reopening activities. A lack of positive cases as a result of this event doesn't mean we're in the clear; it means we are doing a great job of limiting contacts and need to keep social distancing," said Kelli Engen, St. Croix County Health Officer.

Following testing, people should return straight home and isolate themselves until their symptoms end, regardless of the test result.

If there are questions about the event, please call 715-928-3969.

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