



## **A Message from Mayor Rios**

March 14, 2020

Currently our community, like other parts of the world, is facing threats from the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. It's not just the coronavirus, but the misinformation, fear, and hoarding that have overshadowed the reality of the situation.

At the City of Rockport, our primary mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents and visitors. This is something we don't take lightly.

Long before the travel bans, cancelled sporting and cultural events, and spring break extensions throughout the country, the City was posting educational items and important links about the coronavirus in the News Flash section on its web site – and sharing its availability through the local social media pages. This is something we'll continue to do as more information becomes available.

Many of the precautions now being urged have been standard practice at the City for years – having employees stay home when ill, availability of hand sanitizer in our facilities, and thorough cleaning of public areas. We have stepped up efforts with social spacing at meetings, and aggressive disinfecting of touch points. It's important to note that there is NO threat to our water system.

The Director General of the World Health Organization has stated that “all countries can still change the course of this pandemic.” That's exactly what we're doing through action and education.

It all begins with STOPPING the spread of germs. There is no need for those who are not ill to start wearing a mask, which is ineffective anyway. Simply avoid people who are sick and stay home if you're not feeling well. Follow the advice you were taught as a child – wash your hands thoroughly, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Know the SYMPTOMS. Many of the symptoms mirror those of allergies and colds, i.e. fever and coughing, but shortness of breath may also be a signal.

If you FEEL SICK, stay at home and limit your exposure to family members, especially those who have compromised immune or respiratory systems, young children and the elderly. Keep yourself hydrated and fed and try using over-the-counter medication to alleviate the discomfort. There are currently no tests available for the coronavirus in our immediate areal however they're expected to arrive in Corpus Christi by late March. Even so, these tests have a 2-3 day turn-around for results.

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If at any time you experience SHORTNESS OF BREATH, without having exerted one's self, or are experiencing severe problems, present yourself at an emergency facility, NOT a doctor's office. If possible, call ahead or have the person taking you enter before you to alert the front desk. The facility may have a special entrance to bypass the waiting room.

On Friday, March 13, President Trump and Governor Abbot both declared states of disaster, opening up emergency funding. I continue to monitor the situation and will issue a disaster declaration when, and if, that becomes necessary. At this time, we do not feel circumstances require the City to cancel any events or close down public areas. As of Saturday, March 14, there have only been 50 confirmed cases in Texas and none in our area. We are in daily contact with the Governor's Office, as well as state and federal health services, emergency management, and homeland security entities.

As with Hurricane Harvey, the Mayor's Message and the City's web site will be the focal point of communication for the area. We encourage you to visit it regularly or sign up for alerts. We will include updated information and links to state and federal agencies.

Most of us have never lived through a major, national health scare like the 1918 influenza pandemic and polio in the late 1940s. But, through facts, not fear we'll come through it.

**Federal and State weblinks can be located on the City's web site or by clicking [here](#).**