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COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY



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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
10 COMMERCE COURT
VERONA, NEW JERSEY 07044

March 31, 2020

Dear Verona Residents:

The Office of the Township Manager, the Verona Police Department, and the Verona Rescue Squad would like to thank you for your support during the past three weeks in what has been a challenging time for our emergency services. We wish to especially recognize those who have been practicing with fidelity the social distancing recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We realize that this is extremely difficult, but necessary for the health of our community.

The events of the past three days have validated our collective concern that COVID-19 is a significant threat for Verona. Each update from the Township includes the number of individuals in Verona who have tested positive for COVID-19. The nearly 100% increase over the weekend is a significant concern. Please consider that due to testing delays, the provided data is reporting cases from four (4) to eight (8) days prior. The actual numbers in town, including those tested and awaiting results as well as individuals recovering at home, are much higher.

In the past 24 hours, the Verona Rescue Squad has transported four (4) patients who exhibited COVID-19 symptoms to local hospital emergency departments. This has included individuals who are awaiting the return of test results, but whose symptoms worsened.

Our observations of local emergency departments and intelligence from emergency management demonstrate that these facilities for both emergency and inpatient critical care are either at, near, or over capacity. It is clear that we are entering the predicted surge of the virus.

The Verona Police Department and Verona Rescue Squad have handled every call for service since the beginning of the pandemic without the need for assistance from other towns. Our volunteer emergency medical service continues to provide 24-hour coverage, and when needed, has assembled crews to handle up to three simultaneous emergencies.

In order to ensure that police and EMS in Verona can continue to provide this stellar response as the virus spreads, please avoid requesting an ambulance in non-emergent situations. Please call primary care physicians and utilize online and in-person urgent care. Self or ambulance transportation to the hospital does not guarantee or expedite testing for COVID-19.

In an effort to limit exposure to emergency services personnel, whenever possible, family members should transport those seeking medical care to an appropriate facility. An ambulance ride does not

guarantee quicker service at the hospital. Our EMS crews have been directed by hospitals to drop off non-emergent patients in waiting rooms.

Our township and emergency services are always here to provide for our community. In order to do so, we must not only provide you the most accurate information, but continue to request your assistance. This is a unique and evolving situation. Please make sure to follow our communications for future guidance.

We wish you and those you love the best of health. Please remember that the decisions you make have significant effects on you, your families, and our emergency services providers.

Sincerely,

Matthew Cavallo
Township Manager

Christopher Kiernan
Chief of Police

Frederick Tempesta, BSN, RN, CTRN, MICN
Chief of Verona Rescue Squad