CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

MARCH 27, 2020 UPDATE

FROM GATESVILLE MAYOR, GARY M. CHUMLEY

I wanted to take this opportunity as Mayor to get factual information regarding Gatesville's response to COVID-19 to as many residents of Gatesville as possible – and I would ask you to pass this information along to your friends and neighbors.

At the current time, there is still just one confirmed case in Coryell County. McLennan County is now reporting 33 cases and Bell County 25 cases (+5 since yesterday, with the one death reported on the 26th). The Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center reports there are 97,028 confirmed cases in the United States (an increase of 15,000 from yesterday) and 1,475 deaths – an increase of 300 from yesterday. There are 1,751 confirmed cases in Texas with 24 deaths – virtually all of the confirmed cases are east of I-35.

As a nation, we are not "flattening the curve." While several counties and cities in Texas have issued "shelter in place" warnings, neither Coryell County nor the City of Gatesville have done so. While we must all remain vigilant, there is no need to panic. Our greatest defense is to follow the same simple steps that you have heard since COVID-19 community spread started to occur. If you feel ill, stay home. If you are experiencing high fever, coughing, difficulty breathing, etc. call the Coryell Health Respiratory Hotline at (254)248-6263, or your primary care provider – and follow their instructions. Wash your hands, use hand sanitizer, and keep a 6-foot social distance from others.

The County Judge issued a press release reminding everyone that if you are transiting a city/county with a "shelter in place" order, you are subject to being cited by law enforcement if you do not have an "essential reason" for being there. If you don't have to travel to adjoining counties with demonstrated community spread for an "essential" purpose – don't.

We continue to monitor advisories from Governor Abbott and County Judge Miller, but I have decided to not issue a "shelter in place" directive for the City of Gatesville at the current time. I would ask that you continue to do what you are currently doing in order to stay safe – and that largely means staying home unless you have an "essential" reason that you need to be out. Some may question my decision based upon what is occurring in the larger cities in Texas, but if we all do the right thing then placing severe restrictions on your rights as an American and resident of Gatesville will not be necessary.

I would also encourage you to "fact check" everything you are seeing on social media. A great source of factual information and resources is posted on the CVB website https://www.visitgatesvilletx.com/covid-19. **Sign up to automatically receive "push" notifications about COVID-19, information for businesses, and general information.**

Many of you are aware that Congress has passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the President is expected to sign it later today. Help is on the way and we will post more information about the details of the bill on the City website in the coming days.

Again, thanks for what you are doing to ensure that COVID-19 doesn't create a "New Normal" that we don't want in Gatesville.