

CITY OF SISTERS

COVID-19 Situation Report

By Mayor Chuck Ryan and City Manager Cory Misley

The May 13 City Council meeting discussion ranged from the County reopening plan and State framework to all City operations and facilities that have been impacted by COVID-19. An overview of those discussions and decisions can be found in another section of this edition of *The Nugget*, as well as the packet materials and audio of the meeting on the City's website.

The Council made two key decisions: First, a resolution was adopted to extend the City's Emergency Declaration through May 31; second, the Council decided to let the Administrative Order discouraging tourism travel and visitor overnight stays expire May 13. These decisions were made after consistent monitoring and careful consideration of the County and State actions leading towards reopening of the economy. The County submitted a plan to the State earlier this month to move into Phase I reopening and was approved by the State on May 13.

Earlier in May, the State extended their emergency declaration to July 6. There was some confusion as to whether this meant the "stay home, save lives" directive was also extended until then — the answer is no. The emergency declaration gives the Governor the ability to adopt administrative orders implementing temporary policies that supersede existing policies adopted by the State legislature. Think of the emergency declaration as a tool box and the "stay home, save lives" order was a tool used from that tool box. Furthermore, the emergency declaration allows access to Federal relief funds.

The City extended its

Emergency Declaration for those same reasons.

We are still in a wait-and-see approach regarding the progression of COVID-19 as the economy opens up. For the previous month the City had discouraged tourism travel and visitor overnight stays in lock step with the County. Now that we are in Phase I, we are no longer discouraging that activity but at the same time are not encouraging that activity in line with the County and State. The City, through a contract with the Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce, contributes hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to support marketing and promotion of Sisters as a destination. Right now, none of those funds are being spent to attract visitors from afar, for safety sake.

The City understands that we receive many visitors throughout the summer tourism season. As we all know, almost every public event has been canceled for the foreseeable future. Even though we won't have a traditional event season we still will have a tourism season. No one knows how many people will come and exactly from where. At this point and likely for all three phases of re-opening (each phase requires minimum 21-days before moving to the next assuming there isn't a spike in cases), the City and Chamber will not be advertising for those outside of Central Oregon to come to Sisters. This is a shared approach by the counties, cities, and chambers/visitor centers across Central Oregon.

The enforcement of activity and precautionary measures (such as social distancing and gatherings) will be a team approach. Many public entities, in particular County Environmental Health, OSHA, and the City, will

be triaging on a situation by situation basis. Most importantly, the emphasis from all public partners is voluntary compliance through information and education. If that doesn't work in a specific case, a warning and referral to an enforcement authority will be made — ultimately a citation may be issued in severe cases and/or refusal to cooperate.

Within the City of Sisters, you can call the City if you have questions or concerns. We are all truly in this together. What we don't want to have happen is we take one step forward and then have to take two steps back. These first few weeks in Phase I, including Memorial Day weekend and better weather, are critical in setting the right example for the coming months.

The City is focused on supporting our community economically while at the same time maximizing safety during these challenging times. The recipe for keeping COVID-19 at bay is relatively simple — yet easier said than done. Social distancing, regular sanitation of surfaces and hands, avoiding touching your face, and wearing of face coverings, if all done consistently, will make a tremendous difference in keeping infections down. If not, we could revert to seeing cases rise and the potential for the reopening halted or reversed.

We need to continue to focus on supporting local businesses. Every dollar spent locally will have a compounding effect on the recovery and resilience of our businesses and fellow community members. We are still living in uncertain times and will continue to monitor the situation as we move through Phase I. We encourage you to do your part in keeping Sisters safe and prosperous.

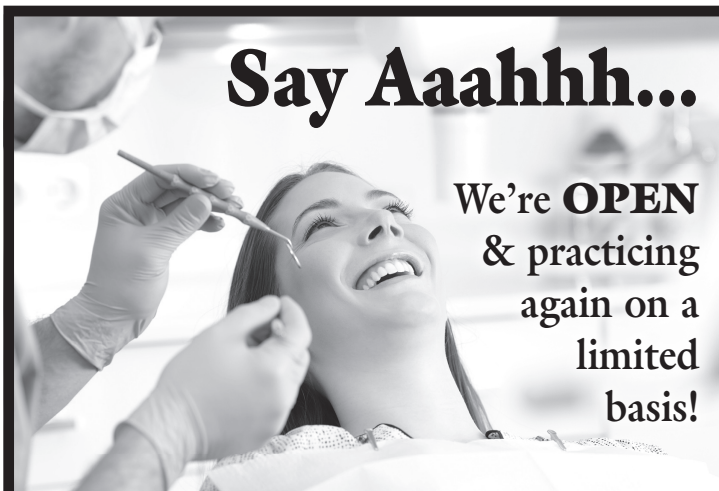
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Sisters recycling center reopens

The Sisters Recycle Center reopened on Monday, May 18 with new restrictions.

The City closed the center on March 26, out of an abundance of caution surrounding the transmission of the coronavirus.

The following restrictions will go into effect with the opening of the center:

- Social distancing of six feet between people should be maintained while dropping off your recyclables.
- Every other parking space will be closed, which will allow a maximum of four cars at a time within the facility.

City staff will monitor operations to determine if designated operating hours need to be put in place for user and staff safety. If the City staff cannot safely clean the center while it is open, they will reduce hours

of operations to allow staff to clean when the center is closed. Republic Services, formally High Country Disposal, has rescheduled the City of Sisters free residential cleanup event to the week of June 1. Residents are asked to put their yard debris, miscellaneous household waste, and appliances out on their regular collection day either Tuesday, June 2 or Wednesday, June 3.

Collection is only for residents within the City of Sisters. More details at may be found at ww.highcountrydisposal.com. Deschutes County Spring FireFree days are happening until May 24. Details can be found at <https://www.firefree.org/firefreeevents/>.

For updates and changes to City operations, visit www.ci.sisters.or.us/coronavirus.

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