



Media Information:

For immediate release:

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Yellowstone County COVID-19 Related Deaths

Billings, MT – RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County’s public health department, reports 15 more Yellowstone County residents have died from COVID-19 related illness over the past three months.

These deaths occurred between September 22 and December 3, but were not reported to RiverStone Health until last week. After reviewing more than 300 case reports the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services sent last week, RiverStone Health has determined that 15 of those cases involved deaths that had not been previously reported to the public.

These Yellowstone County residents all died in hospitals. Some had been living in local nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Others had been living in private homes. The victims include:

- A woman in her 80s who died on September 22.
- A woman in her 80s who died on September 23.
- A man in his 50s who died on October 8.
- A woman in her 70s who died on October 13.
- A man in his 60s who died on October 24.
- A woman in her 70s who died on October 29.
- A woman in her 80s who died on October 30.
- A man in his 90s who died on November 5.
- A man in his 60s who died on November 8.
- A woman in her 90s who died on November 17.
- A woman in her 80s who died on November 28.
- A woman in her 70s who died on November 28.
- A man in his 80s who died on December 1.
- A man in his 80s who died on December 2.
- A woman in her 80s who died on December 3.

Including these 15 deaths, 144 Yellowstone County people have died of COVID-19 illness, according to RiverStone Health records. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services online map indicates 145 deaths have occurred in our county as of December 15. We are working with DPHHS to reconcile that discrepancy.

“The loss of life in this pandemic is terrible and shocking,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County public health officer and RiverStone Health CEO. “Our hearts go out to all the families, friends and coworkers of our Yellowstone County neighbors who have died.”

A vaccine is gradually becoming available in limited quantities in Montana and throughout the nation. It will be months before there is enough vaccine produced and distributed to protect everyone from this disease.

To reduce sickness, hospitalizations and loss of life in the months till vaccination is widely available, the best protection is prevention: Wear a mask in public and whenever you are near a person who doesn't live with you. Keep your distance from others who don't live with you. Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently. Stay home if you are ill.

To date, 12,813 Yellowstone County residents have been infected with COVID-19.

More information on COVID-19 in Yellowstone County is online at covid.riverstonehealth.org.

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