Media Information:

Yellowstone County records 239th COVID-19 death

Billings, MT – The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed the life of another Yellowstone County man, RiverStone Health, the county public health department, reported Monday.

On March 5, a man in his 80s died at a Billings hospital.

At least 239 Yellowstone County residents have lost their lives to the pandemic so far. The man who died Friday is the second Yellowstone County person to die of COVID-19 related illness in March. There were 10 local COVID-19 deaths in February and 21 deaths in January. Yellowstone County has had 16,412 residents test positive for the virus and 1,074 hospitalized.

John Felton, Yellowstone County health officer and RiverStone Health president and CEO, offers his deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the most recent pandemic victim.

"Until everyone in our county who wants a vaccine can be vaccinated against COVID-19, I strongly encourage everyone to continue wearing masks, avoiding large gatherings, keeping six feet away from people outside your household, frequently washing hands and staying home if you are sick," Felton continued. "Please do what you can to protect yourself and your loved ones by slowing the virus spread."

The Unified Health Command (RiverStone Health, Billings Clinic, St. Vincent Healthcare and Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services) is holding first-dose vaccine clinics at Cedar Hall at MetraPark. Appointments for this week have been filled. Appointments for the week of March 15 will be posted at mtreadyclinic.org when they are available. Some appointments will be saved for those unable to use the internet and will be available starting at 9 a.m. on March 15 by calling 406.651.6596. The vaccine supply allocated by the federal and state governments limits our appointment numbers.

Clinics are open to Yellowstone County residents in the 1A, 1B and 1B+ priority groups. For complete information on Montana vaccination priority groups, go to covid.riverstonehealth.org.

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