



Media Information:

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Yellowstone County records 242nd COVID-19 death

Billings, MT – Another Yellowstone County resident has died from COVID-19 related illness, according to RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County’s public health agency.

On March 17, a man in his 50s died at a Billings hospital.

At least 242 Yellowstone County residents have lost their lives to the pandemic so far, including four who passed away in March.

“Each COVID-19 death brings heartbreak to loved ones and grief to our community,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County health officer and RiverStone Health president. “I send my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the latest pandemic victim.”

As safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines become more widely available in Yellowstone County, a few thousand county residents are being vaccinated each week. About 23,500 county residents have been fully vaccinated and about 16,500 have tested positive for the virus over the last year. While there is some overlap in the vaccinated and COVID-19 infected populations, RiverStone Health estimates that approximately 25% of county residents have immunity through vaccination or by infection. For residents to be protected from COVID-19, at least 75% of the population will need to be immune through vaccination or through natural infection.

The Unified Health Command (RiverStone Health, Billings Clinic, St. Vincent Healthcare and Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services) is holding first-dose COVID-19 vaccination clinics at Cedar Hall at MetraPark. Appointments for the week of March 22 will be posted at mtreadyclinic.org when available.

These clinics are open to Yellowstone County residents in the 1A, 1B and 1B+ priority groups. All Montanans age 16 and over will be eligible for vaccination starting on April 1, but not before.

In addition to the free UHC clinics, many local pharmacies are offering COVID-19 vaccinations and may charge administration fees. Find information on pharmacy vaccine availability at vaccinefinder.org.

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