



Media Information:

For immediate release:

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Yellowstone County records 3 more COVID-19 deaths

Billings, MT – Three Yellowstone County residents died Monday in Billings hospitals from COVID-19 related illness. Thirty-four county residents have died from the pandemic virus in the first 18 days of October, raising the COVID-19 toll to 390 lives lost since April 2020.

The latest victims are:

- A woman in her 50s who was unvaccinated and had underlying health conditions.
- A man in his 80s, who was vaccinated and had underlying health conditions.
- A man in his 50s, who was unvaccinated and had underlying health conditions.

On Tuesday, Billings Clinic and St. Vincent Healthcare were caring for 138 hospitalized COVID-19 patients, including 113 who weren't vaccinated.

“Vaccination is the most effective defense against this pandemic, but the majority of people in Yellowstone County remain unvaccinated,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County health officer and RiverStone Health president and CEO. “First, second and third doses and booster shots of safe, effective vaccines are available locally right now at no cost to individuals. Vaccination is the best weapon we have against the pandemic. For those of us who are unvaccinated, it is not too late or wrong to change our minds to save ourselves and others.”

Between Friday and Tuesday, the number of fully vaccinated Yellowstone County people (who have received two doses of Pfizer or Moderna or one dose of Johnson & Johnson) increased from 72,815 to 73,477, according to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. That increase brings our county to 54% of residents 12 and older vaccinated – the same rate as for the state of Montana, DPHHS reports.

Most of the vaccine doses administered in recent weeks were for booster shots or third doses. There are still many Yellowstone County residents age 12 or older who haven't received their first dose of protection against COVID-19.

At this time, there is no vaccine available for children under age 12. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is expected to consider approving Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 in the near future.

RiverStone Health will hold these free, walk-in COVID-19 vaccine clinics:

- Wednesday, noon to 2 p.m. Billings Public Library Community Room.
- Thursday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., North Park.
- Friday, 11 am. to 1 p.m., Terry Park, 511 Custer Ave.
- Oct. 27, noon to 2 p.m., Billings Public Library Community Room.

Clinics listed above will offer first and second doses and booster shots of Pfizer vaccine, along with first and second doses of Moderna and the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine to people 18 and older. Third doses of Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are available to immune-compromised people.

A limited number of vaccination appointments are available from the RiverStone Health Immunization Clinic, phone **406.247.3382**. More vaccination information is posted at covid.riverstonehealth.org.

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