Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Driver and Vehicle Services

Emergency Communication Networks

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Minnesota State Patrol

Office of Communications

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Pipeline Safety

Office of Traffic Safety

State Fire Marshal

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SEOC Update #19: Peacetime State of Emergency Extended Until May 13

ST. PAUL — Gov. Tim Walz signed an executive order today extending Minnesota's peacetime state of emergency another 30 days until May 13.

"Our actions have saved lives, but the threat of COVID-19 remains," Gov. Walz said.

Gov. Walz first declared a peacetime emergency on March 13 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) remains fully activated and staffed either physically or virtually by all state agencies and several volunteer organizations.

SEOC continues FEMA-approved non-congregate care planning

- FEMA gave initial approval of Minnesota's non-congregate care plan. SEOC officials are reviewing the plan for any gaps that need further consideration. Non-congregate care includes those experiencing homelessness and who live in close quarters, such as a small apartment, and how those residents can self-isolate if they test positive for COVID-19.
- The SEOC continues to concentrate on personal protective equipment (PPE). The state warehouse moved to a new location today, and the Minnesota National Guard is providing around-the-clock staffing to ensure PPE needs are met in a timely fashion.
- The SEOC is supporting the state hotline. The hotline received 151 calls April 10-12. Call volume was down over the past two weekends. SEOC officials expect the call volume to pick up during the work week. State employees are staffing the hotline and are answering calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily at either 651-297-1304 or 800-657-3504.

Here are today's updates and actions from state agencies and volunteer organizations:

COVID-19 now in 80 percent of Minnesota counties

- 1,650 lab-confirmed cases in Minnesota; cases reported in 70 out of 87 counties.
- 70 reported deaths.
- 157 patients are currently hospitalized with 74 in the ICU; 842 patients out of isolation.
- Learn more about the latest lab-diagnosed cases on the COVID-19 public dashboard.

Counties encouraged to sound outdoor warning sirens during Severe Weather Awareness Week

Even with our recent snowfall in Minnesota, severe weather can strike at any time. Tornado outbreaks in our southern states remind us that we are not immune to natural disasters during the COVID-19 pandemic. That's why you, your family, and coworkers should be prepared now. Each day of Minnesota's Severe Weather Awareness Week focuses on a different theme:

- Monday: Alerts and Warnings
- Tuesday: Severe Weather, Lightning and Hail
- Wednesday: Floods
- Thursday: Tornadoes (with statewide tornado drills)
- Friday: Extreme Heat

Minnesota will move forward with Tornado Drill Day on Thursday. What you won't see or hear this year: alerts on your NOAA Weather Radio or an Emergency Alert System (EAS) message scrolling on your television screen. The National Weather Service has canceled those alerts due to COVID-19. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety division of Homeland

Security and Emergency Management (DPS-HSEM) has encouraged counties to sound their outdoor warning sirens twice on Thursday so Minnesotans can practice their tornado sheltering plans. However, it is up to each county to decide if they will sound their sirens or not on Thursday. Read the latest DPS blog for tips on how to shelter for a tornado in our social distancing world.

Minnesota DNR imposes burning restrictions

Consistent with Gov. Tim Walz's executive orders to help ensure the health and safety of all Minnesotans during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proactively imposing burning restrictions immediately after snowmelt to reduce the potential for wildfire and emergency response.

- Burning restrictions apply to the counties where DNR administers open burning. DNR's burning restrictions map indicates restrictions by county and is updated daily.
- These burning restrictions will reduce demands on our limited wildfire response resources at this critical time, helping to ensure our wildland firefighters can respond effectively to those wildfires that do occur and are available to support other critical emergency response needs.
- This is not a burning ban. During these burning restrictions, DNR will consider requests for variance permits, when the risk of fire spread is low, for agricultural field and construction site preparation and for limited prescribed burning.
- People seeking a variance permit should call their local DNR Forestry Office.
- Open burning without a permit is allowed when there is 3 inches of continuous, unbroken snow on the ground, even when burning restrictions are in place. Small recreational fires or campfires are still allowed during the burning restrictions.

Metropolitan Council to offer door-to-door transport for essential health workers across the region

The Metropolitan Council is marshaling its resources for the region's frontline health care workers to provide a safe and stress-free trip to and from work.

- Metro Mobility is now providing free door-to-door service from home to work and work to home for any person who works at a health care facility, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- To participate, essential health care workers need to provide their employee identification badge that shows they are employed in a healthcare facility. These trips will all be following state guidelines for physical distancing and will only transport as many customers as is safe for the vehicle.
- The Metro Mobility's Service Zones can help you find your trip provider.

Making cloth facemasks? Donate them within your community

- If you have, or can make, homemade cloth facemasks please consider donating them to a local childcare facility, nursing home, or other community organization.
- Masks may be helpful but are not PPE. They are not a replacement for other medical-grade masks and equipment needed for direct patient care.
- For more information on how to sew cloth face masks, pattern ideas, and materials to use, please go to the Minnesota Department of Health's website and click on the "Facemasks" icon on the right-hand side of the page, or go to the Centers for Disease Control website.

State Fire Marshal tracking COVID-19 responses, working with fire departments on fire code violations

The State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) is working with Minnesota fire departments to track COVID-19-related fire and emergency medical services responses. SFMD staff are also continuing to work with local fire officials to ensure fire code issues are being addressed and corrected in a timely fashion. The SFMD reminds Minnesotans that emergency and other exits at businesses, apartment buildings and nursing homes cannot be blocked and must be easily accessible.

Workers among first to receive additional assistance thanks to DEED implementation of

CARES Act provisions

- Minnesotans receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits are among the first in the country — if not the very first — to receive the temporary additional $600 a week in federal assistance under the CARES Act. The Minnesota Unemployment Insurance office distributed additional benefits to over 192,135 applicants ($115,281,000) in the first 12 hours alone last week.
- Unemployment Insurance staff are working seven days a week to prepare to offer assistance to some independent contractors and other self-employed people under Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Program (PUA). We expect we will be one of the first states in the nation to provide PUA benefits, although we are not able to provide an exact timeline on implementation. We will provide regular progress updates on www.uimn.org.
- We ask that affected workers with questions about Unemployment Insurance please look for the answers you are seeking on our updated questions/answers page before calling the Unemployment Insurance office. We have answers to all the most common questions posted online.

Red Cross in Minnesota: Pandemic environment brings disaster relief changes

- Everyone at Red Cross facilities will be required starting April 15 to wear a face mask or covering in alignment with new CDC guidance. This includes employees, volunteers and blood donors as well as people staying in congregate shelters following a large disaster.
- Through remote outreach, volunteers continue to help people affected by home fires across our state. This includes two recent multi-unit apartment fires displacing approximately 80 people in Dakota and Hennepin counties.
- In our pandemic environment, Red Cross disaster relief continues to include assistance for shelter, food and clothing, as well as health and mental health support. Hotel, rather than congregate sheltering, is our preferred option when people need housing following disasters big or small.

Weather most likely a factor in traffic volume change during April 11-12 weekend

The Minnesota Department of Transportation continues to monitor traffic volumes statewide. Traffic volumes took a big drop between Saturday (April 11) and Sunday (April 12), likely attributable to mild weather on Saturday and a winter storm that dumped several inches of heavy, wet snow over much of the state on Sunday.

Metro area

- Traffic volumes on Saturday, April 11, were down 36 percent compared to Saturday averages for April 2019.
- Traffic volumes on Sunday, April 12, were down 70 percent compared to Sunday averages for April 2019.

Statewide

- Traffic volumes on Saturday, April 11, were down 40 percent compared to Saturday averages for April 2019.
- Traffic volumes on Sunday, April 12, were down 68 percent compared to Sunday averages for April 2019.