Gov. Pritzker Launches Mask Awareness Campaign: ‘It Only Works If You Wear It'

Press Release - Monday, August 03, 2020

Springfield, Ill. — Governor JB Pritzker launched a new $5 million awareness campaign today to encourage Illinois residents to wear a face covering every time they're in public — because it only works if you wear it. Following the data-driven approach that has guided Illinois' coronavirus response, the campaign uses local information to advertise on broadcast and cable television, radio, billboards and social media to the communities with the greatest risk from COVID-19.

The Governor launched the campaign from the State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield with those who are helping to lead the state's response: Dr. Ngozi Ezike, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, and Alicia Tate-Nadeau, Director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. As of Friday, 11 counties have now reached IDPH's "warning level" for virus spread, including here in Sangamon County.

"I'm proud to launch a new public awareness campaign today that has a straightforward message for Illinoisans: A mask is like anything that keeps us safe. It only works if you wear it," **said Governor JB Pritzker.** "We've made so much progress since the beginning of this pandemic. Let's protect that progress. This is our moment to pull together as families, friends and neighbors. We're all safer and stronger when we go all in, Illinois."

"This campaign connects the dots between daily actions we take to keep ourselves safe and one the best things we can do to fight COVID-19: wearing a mask," **said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike.** When you get in a car, you buckle your seatbelt to protect yourself in case you get into an accident. When you play football or ride your bike, you put on a helmet to reduce your risk of seriously injuring your head or brain. When you're on the water, you put on a life jacket so you don't drown. And when you're in the bedroom, you use a condom to protect against STIs. A mask is no different. It only works when you wear it."

"Governor Pritzker, Dr. Ezike and I spend each and every day poring over the numbers, making decisions to keep people safe and planning for what's ahead," **said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau.** "If we continue on the track we're on, we'll need to look at bringing back some restrictions that we've seen over the last few months. Nobody wants that. We haven't seen enough people wearing face coverings and following the rule we put in place on May 1. If more people do their part by wearing a mask in public, we can move forward, not backward. Let's go all in, Illinois."

Governor Pritzker introduced Illinois' mask-wearing requirement on May 1, the same day Illinois moved into Phase 2, and called for a national mask mandate during testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives on July 8.

Building on decades of public health campaigns that have helped the public adopt safety precautions as daily practices, the campaign reminds Illinoisans that wearing a mask is just like wearing a seatbelt, a helmet or lifejacket, tools used every day to prevent serious injury or even death. Research has found that highlighting these commonsense comparisons is the most effective messaging to change behavior and increase mask usage. Research also demonstrates that wearing a face covering is one of the most effective ways of decreasing the spread of the virus, and new research indicates it could also provide important protection to the wearer.

The $5 million campaign will reach residents statewide in both English and Spanish through a variety of traditional and online media channels, including broadcast, cable and connected TV; streaming audio and radio; billboards; digital display and video; and social media. Like other coronavirus-related expenses, costs are reimbursable by the federal government.

To view or download the videos, audio and images, CLICK HERE.

Driven by real-time data, the awareness effort will respond to the latest trends in cases and mobility at the county level, following the evolving on-the-ground conditions in communities across the state. For example, if both cases and mobility are high in a county, platforms in that county would receive the maximum amount of funding, while counties with lower cases and mobility would receive baseline funding. The funding model was built to ensure all counties have ample coverage of this vital public health messaging.

'It only works if you wear it' was developed by Illinois-based ad agency OKRP, directed by world-renowned photographer Sandro and produced with SAG-AFTRA talent. The campaign is supported by TimeZoneOne and Spurrier Group and guided by data insights from the state's COVID-19 modeling team and Civis Analytics.

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