FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Shelley Hersil, Lincoln County Health Officer
Phone: 715-536-0307

Law Enforcement & Public Health Officials Emphasize Public to Stay Home

Although there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County, cases continue to rise throughout Wisconsin and some of our surrounding counties. It can be assumed that COVID-19 is in Lincoln County. Currently, there are not enough resources to do widespread testing; so there are likely unidentified positive cases in our communities.

Many of our surrounding counties are starting to report community spread of COVID-19. This means a person’s illness cannot be traced to a specific individual or source. When you go out in public, assume you will come in contact with someone that has COVID-19. Many people that have COVID-19 don’t have any symptoms; this means that they can spread the virus to others and not even know it. “Staying home is our best defense at slowing the spread of COVID-19,” said Shelley Hersil, Lincoln County Health Department Director and Health Officer. “We know this has not been easy and has required a lot of sacrifice, but we need the whole county on board at this time. Everyone needs to do their part and stay at home.”

Governor Evers’ Safer at Home order is in place to protect the public. Only essential businesses may remain open. Travel must be restricted to travel to the essential business where you work or for an essential reason. Essential reasons include shopping for food (including pet food), medical supplies, prescriptions and other necessities. Getting essentials should be happening once per week, by one person in your household. If you are a single-parent household, do your best to plan ahead to limit the trips you must take with your children.

“Social distancing is a critical part to the Safer at Home order,” said Tomahawk Police Chief Al Elvins, “This means separating yourself 6 feet from others regardless of if you are indoors or outdoors. This is in place for your safety and the safety of others.” Lincoln County Sheriff Ken Schneider said, “The Safer at Home order is there for all of our safety. Our first duty is to protect the people. Please stay at home to help prevent the spread to our Officer’s that need to be here to protect you.”

Local law enforcement will continue to take calls and emails about non-essential activities happening in Lincoln County and plan to place more emphasis on enforcement in order to protect people during this serious health crisis. Failure to abide by the Governor’s Safer at Home order is a criminal offense under §252.25 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This Order is enforceable by any local law enforcement official, including county sheriffs. Violation or obstruction of this Order is punishable by up to 30 days imprisonment, or up to $250 fine, or both.

“According to projections, Wisconsin will reach its peak death rate at the end of April with an estimated 25 deaths per day,” said Hersil. “Cases and deaths will continue to rise and orders are meant to be followed. We are working closely with local law enforcement to determine a plan for enforcement. We need the public to take this seriously and stay at home.” Remember to continue to check-in with those most vulnerable in our communities, especially anyone who may be isolated during this time. Call, email, video chat, or send a letter.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. If you have questions or immediate needs related to COVID-19, call 2-1-1. For the latest information, visit Lincoln County Health Department’s website at https://co.lincoln.wi.us/covid19 or follow us on Facebook.

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