A Quick Update on Coronavirus Preparedness

The Village of Rhinebeck is receiving constant updates from the New York State Department of Health, and the Dutchess County Department of Behavior and Community Health on the status of the Coronavirus (Covid19) in New York State. On Tuesday March 3, Dutchess County officials and local municipalities will be holding a joint meeting to examine not only the local status of the virus, but our emergency preparedness.

In the Village of Rhinebeck, our emergency systems are in place should the virus impact us locally. So far, we have no confirmed cases in New York State, and health officials say the risk to most people is very low. But of course, it is very possible that the outbreak might become more severe. Our goal is to be ready.

Chrissy Eighmy, EMS Captain at the Rhinebeck Fire Department reports that our emergency personnel are in constant contact with health officials, are equipped with personal protective gear, and are thoroughly trained on how to care for and transport any patients who show symptoms.

I spoke with Tim Massie and Dr. John Sabia at Northern Dutchess Hospital. They are now holding daily briefings with constant updates on new information. Hospital staff have established safety protocols, have emergency supplies, and are fully prepared should they be needed.

Rhinebeck school superintendent Joe Phelan reports that school administrators are also in regular contact with officials at the Dutchess County Department of Health. With guidance from the experts, school officials are putting precautions in place and are developing site specific contingency plans to cope with the possibility of a local outbreak of COVID19.

EMS Captain Eighmy reminds us that the symptoms of Coronavirus resemble the flu and include fever, cough and shortness of breath. We can each contribute to prevention by:
* Frequent careful handwashing with hot water
* Covering your mouth when coughing
* Staying home when ill
* If you believe you may have been exposed via international travel, and experience flu-like symptoms, immediately check in with your healthcare provider.

The Village of Rhinebeck will provide regular updates and alerts, if they become necessary through all our normal means of communication. And, New York State Department of Health is giving daily updates here:


Gary Bassett
Mayor, Village of Rhinebeck