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Rantoul Citizens

I want to personally commend the citizens of Rantoul for the excellent practice of social distancing. As of today Rantoul has only two known cases of COVID-19. Your participation in this health issue continues to help reduce the spread of the virus. I recommend that we continue the use of personal protections methods such as face mask, distancing, and washing your hands as often as possible. We must stay the course of staying at Home. The results of these practices are becoming more apparent as the reported number of virus cases are starting to decline across the nation.

When I spoke to you last week the total number of new cases in Illinois were 986, yesterday that number had risen to 1529. Total cases in Illinois last week were 6,980, yesterday that number had increased to 15,078. Out of 102 counties reporting in Illinois 78 now have confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Here are some recent changes that were made at the state and national level:

Both the Illinois Department of Public Health and the CDC have established guidelines for the general population regarding the use of face masks. They are recommending that people wear cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Etc. including grocery stores and pharmacies. Remember this is a recommendation not a mandate.

This National pandemic forces local governments into uncharted waters of virtual public meetings. These types of meetings have been strictly forbidden in the past. Now the Illinois Governor has granted permission for elected officials to meet by remote communication. Its unimaginable how technology has become so efficient at connecting us with each other. The last 10 years of technological growth has moved our community and nation forward in our ability to offer services and communication in these challenging times.

On Tuesday of this week Governor Pritzker held a teleconference briefing with the Mayors of Illinois. He gave specific information about Illinois unemployment benefits that may offer benefits to self-employed individuals. I suggest that if you are a self-employed business owner you should check out the Relief and Economic Security (CARES) act. Even though you are not assured that your particular working conditions will meet the criteria please explore if this act offers you any opportunity.

As I mentioned to you last week our community is now in the official process of the 2020 Census. Your response to this census is vital to the operation of our community. As of today only 42% of our residents have responded to the online request. I want to emphasize the importance of your participation. The Village of Rantoul receives money from the federal government for each person represented in the census. Those dollars go to support police, fire protection, street, parks and water supply. Without these dollars the village will be faced with either reducing services or asking residents to pay more in taxes. Please take a few minutes out of your busy day and complete the 2020 Census. The easiest way is on-line. Simply go to 2020Census.gov to register your census information, you can also register by phone or respond to the census mailer you received.

I know that many of us are adjusting to the stay at home order and in particular with Good Friday occurring tomorrow and Easter approaching this weekend. Sometimes it's hard to accept this new reality. Remember this virus is irreligious. It has no boundaries and still presents a current threat to our individual and social wellbeing.

Stay safe, stay strong, stay healthy.