



Transcript – 03/22/2020 Mayor Devlun Whiteing address to citizens – Ida Grove, IA

To the citizens of Ida Grove –

I am Mayor Devlun Whiteing, Mayor of Ida Grove, Iowa.

It has come to the City of Ida Grove's attention that a news release Friday night indicated a possible or presumed case of COVID-19 within the city limits of Ida Grove. While the City is aware of this news report, we are not aware of its validity.

Our expectations, as a city, is that proper guidelines have been and will be followed, in the event of a possible or presumed case of COVID-19. This includes notifications of any individuals that may have been in close contact with any person having been asked to self-quarantine and to follow those measures for themselves and members of their household. It is up to all of us, as citizens, to support each other during these times.

To reiterate, we are not aware of the validity of this news report. We are however aware of individual cases reported in Woodbury and Sioux counties. With that in mind, we should all treat this as an eye-opening incident. As a community, we are not isolated from the COVID-19 pandemic and we need to be more vigilant, mindful and caring to support each other during these times.

I'd like to use the comparison of the current situation to a severe weather event such as a tornado. When the tornado sirens go off in our community, we immediately seek shelter and head to our basements where possible, in an effort to protect our families. Now imagine that taking these measures would be to protect your neighbors and complete strangers. While this event may not be a direct comparison to a severe weather event such as a tornado, the steps of protection to minimize the spread of COVID-19 have been defined and are necessary to follow. These measures are to help protect your family, your neighbors and all citizens of Ida Grove.

It is critical to follow all recommended guidelines from the CDC and Iowa Department of Public Health, including, but not limited to, washing your hands, minimizing social interactions and keeping the prescribed distance from others.

It is not a time in our history to question whether your civil liberties are being infringed upon. It is a time in our history to perform your civic responsibility and patriotic duty to protect each other by taking simple measures to minimize possible exposure and mitigate the possible spread of COVID-19.

We have heard unfortunate reports of teenagers socializing in close proximity and in cars throughout our community. Let me be clear, that this is not acceptable behavior during this national health emergency. As your Mayor, I implore you to follow all health measures stated by government health agencies, talk to your children, especially teenagers, that might be less likely to understand the severity of this situation and the vital role that they can play in protecting our community. As identified by health care professionals, COVID-19 has a high probability of spreading, even prior to the first sign of symptoms. I want to ensure that all citizens are aware of that fact, especially when considering intentional or unintentional interaction with compromised individuals, including older adults like our parents and grandparents. In the end, it comes down to us as a COMMUNITY. We must be united in our efforts. Support each other by taking these social distancing and hygiene measures seriously.

With that in mind, I am taking the necessary measures to further protect our citizens and closing public access to all city parks, including all playground equipment, until further notice. As a reminder, school facilities are closed, including both playgrounds at the Elementary school.



In closing, I commend our City, County, School District and medical staff and facilities in their efforts. I especially commend our local businesses and our citizens for their commitment in this effort. Support them and each other in these challenging times and please do your part. We make the difference.

Thank you.

Devlun Whiteing

Mayor – Ida Grove, Iowa