

Connie Gurtner

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2020 11:55 AM
To: 'clerk@cityofcolby.org'
Subject: Cheese Days

Importance: High

Hey Connie,

We received your message this morning. We are running on minimal staff today, so I am unsure when we'll be able to call you, but I thought I'd respond via email for now so you are not left hanging 😊

The State provided interim guidance which I have copied & pasted below. I also included the direct link to this guidance & a CDC link. Our Health Officer & our Department fully supports the following DHS guidance:

Interim guidance on large gatherings: At this time, DHS does not advise large gatherings, and there is no projected timeframe available as to when this advisory would change. Event planners should work closely with local/tribal health departments and local/tribal law enforcement on any future plans and decisions.

Public health experts agree that large gatherings of people in sustained, close contact greatly increases the risk for spread of the virus among those who attend the events and to the communities these individuals return to after the event. The communal nature of such events makes it especially challenging to accommodate the physical distancing and sanitation recommendations required to slow the spread of disease. This includes but is not limited to fairs, festivals, parades, and conferences.

Given the state of COVID-19 transmission in Wisconsin, DHS recommends you not engage in public or private gatherings of people that are not part of a single household or living unit. This recommendation will change as the state progresses through the different phases of Wisconsin's roadmap outlining public health principles to decrease COVID-19 cases and death.

DHS provides criteria that the state will use to guide communities as people begin to interact. For example, to move out of the initial gating criteria and into Phase 1, the plan identifies that a sustained downward trajectory of individuals with symptoms, a sustained downward trajectory of positive cases as a percent of total tests, and a robust health system capacity should all be present. As the state progresses through each phase, the recommended maximum size of gatherings also increases. An example is an event with 250 or more people in attendance should only be held once the state has entered Phase 3 of reopening.

In terms of planning events for this summer or fall, the best guidance is to *proceed with caution*. Work with your local/tribal health departments and consider all possible options given the potential for large group gathering cancellations due to COVID-19. Wherever possible, DHS urges event organizers to host virtual or other non-contact events that can build the same sense of community and celebration.

Resources:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/protect.htm> (Direct link to this info)

[CDC Information for Event Planners and Individuals](#)

At this time, our Health Officer has not enforced a local order and she doesn't want to. However, I do want you to know that she could at any time. Even though the State's Safer at Home Order is gone, at a local level, we can be more restrictive r/g guidelines & rules. Again, we do not want to do that.

At this time, all we can do is provide recommendations which are made with the general public's health & safety in mind – that is always our #1 priority.

Several of our staff did see the FB survey recently. I recall one question asked about a one-night event vs the typical 3 days. We would not recommend going that route, as that would encourage a larger group of people to get together at the same time. That option would almost be "worse" than having the normal 3 day event.

If you were to move forward with the event we would not stop this from happening (at this time) however because you would expect a mass amount of people, it would not be feasible to ensure safe social distancing (greater than 6 feet); which poses a very high risk of disease transmission. Just for some background, a person who tests positive for COVID-19 is infectious (meaning they can spread the virus to others) two days prior to their symptom onset. So even if you advertise and promote only "well" people to present to Cheese Days, that doesn't really ensure a lower risk of disease transmission as well people can be infectious.

At this time the State has recommended to suspend all youth summer sporting events. I have not seen anything come out (there is so much guidance & it's constantly changing) regarding adult summer sporting events; but would imagine they would be discouraged as there is close contact via shared sporting equipment.

The decision lies with your committee/board/office, however we regretfully recommend that Cheese Days be canceled. If it is decided that the event will happen, we would ask that you consult with our department.

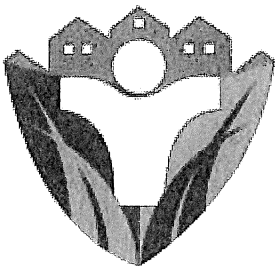
If you have any questions moving forward, you can outreach to Brittany Mews, our Health Officer. Best way to get a hold of her is via her work cell phone at (715) 937-4302.

Thank you,

[Redacted Signature]

Clark County Health Department
517 Court Street, Room 105
Neillsville, WI 54456

Neillsville Phone: (715) 743-5113
Greenwood Phone: (715) 267-6100
Neillsville Fax: (715) 743-5115
E-Mail: kelsey.wussow@co.clark.wi.us



**Clark County
Health Department**

Visit Our Website