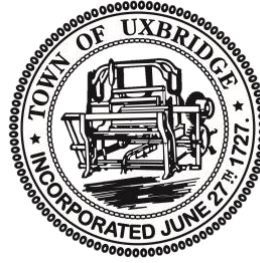


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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE UXBRIDGE BOARD OF HEALTH

3/19/2020

CORONAVIRUS PRESS RELEASE CONCERNING YOUNG ADULTS and GATHERINGS

The picture of the new coronavirus (also known as COVID-19) is changing rapidly. In order to slow the spread of the coronavirus, the Board of Health has issued the following Order:

Gatherings of groups of 10 or more are prohibited on Town Property. This Order was made at the Board of Health's public meeting on March 18th and went into immediate effect. Signs will be posted on town owned parks and open spaces and the Uxbridge Police Department will assist with enforcement.

As the Governor stated earlier this week, it is critical that everyone needs to stay home as much as possible. If a person needs to leave home, "it is essential to strictly follow social distancing guidelines by avoiding crowds, cancelling social gatherings and maintaining a safe separation of at least 6 feet from others." School closings "will have little impact on public health if these best practices are not followed in good faith." (The Governor has also ordered all early childhood centers and daycare providers to close starting Monday March 23rd.)

Why is social distancing in all settings recommended by the state and federal government so important? It cuts down on the spread of COVID-19. And just as importantly, it reduces the speed at which it spreads in order to not overwhelm hospitals with lots of new and very ill patients at the same time.

It has become clear that young adults are not spared from the impact of COVID-19. Even though most fatalities occur in those over 65 years of age, 40% of people who have required hospitalization are in the 20-54 year-old category. Many of them ended up in intensive care. They needed oxygen to breathe or fluids because they were unable to drink, likely both. These are life-saving treatments. There is new evidence that while children usually develop mild symptoms, a small percentage of infants and preschoolers can become seriously ill. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/health/coronavirus-children.html>)

After hearing from the Police Department and residents that children were gathering in large groups at parks in town, the Board of Health has decided to prohibit gatherings in groups of more than 10 people on Town property. This will go into effect immediately. Signs will be posted and the Uxbridge Police Department will assist with enforcement. While some communities have closed parks, the Uxbridge Board of Health is asking everyone to respect this rule and practice social distancing so these spaces can remain open.

The recommendation for social distancing applies to young and old. It will prevent many of all age groups from getting or spreading life-threatening illness. We all need each other to get through this difficult time. Your behavior affects everyone—friends, family, classmates...everyone. For more information and to follow updates visit:tinyurl.com/uxbridgecoronavirus.