

Cloth Mask Use

April 12th, 2020

Federal and State Health officials have asked us to stay home as much as possible and to practice social distancing when we do venture out. **Please wear a cloth mask when you go shopping or are in places where there are other people.**

Fremont County Public Health (following the new recommendations of the CDC) is now asking people to voluntarily wear masks whenever in public spaces. This includes places such as grocery stores, pharmacies, retail stores of any kind, sale barns, car dealerships, etc.

These are the beneficial properties of cloth masks:

1. They make it hard to touch your nose and mouth, thus providing great protection for what is the biggest infection vector in most situations -- hand-to-face transmission.
2. They reduce the exposure of your nose and mouth to viruses.
3. **They reduce the chance that others will get infected from you when you are sick and don't know it (and when you are sick and do know it).**

Cloth masks can be made of many easy to find materials. For a step by step instructions please check out <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

For safety purposes, cloth masks should not be placed on children under 2, on anyone who has trouble breathing or cannot remove the mask by themselves.

Public Health will be asking businesses to encourage their employees to wear a mask while at work and asking patrons to consider wearing masks prior entrance into the store.

Remember wearing a cloth mask is a voluntary ADDITIVE measure to try to prevent the spread of the COVID virus. You should still do the following:

- 1) physical distancing of greater than 6 ft especially around non-household members
- 2) washing hands frequently
- 3) not touching our faces as much as possible
- 4) cleaning all high touch surfaces at least daily, but more is better
- 5) minimizing trips to public places by planning ahead before going to the store and stocking up on what you may need for 1-2 weeks
- 6) minimizing visitation with non-household members

Other tips to ensure protection of your health include

- 1) Wash your hands anytime you take off your mask
- 2) Don't touch the front of your mask if possible

3) Put the cloth mask in the laundry at least daily. (or wash with warm water and soap).

Wearing a mask helps prevents the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Please do your part to protect community members and essential workers by wearing one. Thanks so much!

Dr. Brian Gee Fremont County Public Health Officer