



Suffolk County
First Responder Information

COVID-19

Should Firehouses Be Open or Closed?

- Opinions vary by agency, however, the majority have closed most parts of their firehouses for any usage other than response to alarms.
 - It is important to weigh the need to be a resource for your responders with the need to also protect them from infecting each other.
 - Many Agencies have opted to just leave small areas open so responders can still grab a cup of coffee or have a little normalcy while maintaining the proper social distancing guidelines.
 - Not having large areas (meeting rooms, rec rooms, fitness areas, classrooms) open also allows for consolidation of cleaning supplies and a better chance to be able to disinfect “high touch” areas in smaller spaces.
 - Regardless of open or closed, all interior doors should be kept in the open position.
 - If possible, all finger readers should be shut off for the time being

Should We Be Doing In-House or At-Home Crews?

- Consensus among agencies is that due to the inability to maintain proper social distancing and infection control procedures for personnel in-house, the recommendation is that all crews are done from home.
- Also, if possible, crew continuity should be maintained. Try to have the same four people be an at home crew for a pumper each time.
 - This way, if one person on a crew becomes infected and then infects others on the crew, just those four responders are affected, as opposed to riding with multiple responders and possibly infecting many more than the one crew.
- Remember, it is recommended that the minimum response necessary be utilized for now.
 - Example: automatic alarms can be handled by a Chief and one pumper with a maximum crew of four. Where possible, only one person should enter premises to minimize exposure.
 - Crews standing by on scene should stand outside next to apparatus socially distant

How Can Responders Get Tested?

- [Special times](#) have been set up for responders to contact Suffolk County Medical Control to speak with a physician for medical guidance and, if need be, get tested.
 - Responders can call 631-444-3600 between the hours of 0800-1000 and then again from 1600-1800 seven days a week.
 - If testing is advised, they can make same day testing happen for the responder at the drive through testing site at Stony Brook University.
- Anyone can also call the NYS COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-364-3065 for advice and testing appointments.
- NOTE- if after going through Medical Control and calling the NYS Hotline, you don't received a call back within 48 hours, have a Chief of your agency contact the FRES Watch Supervisor at 631-852-4815

When Should A Responder Get Tested?

- When a responder becomes SYMPTOMATIC, they should self isolate at home for a minimum of 7 days.
- Call 631-444-3600 during the specified times for guidance on whether or not testing is warranted, and arrangements will be made for a test to be done.
- As per CDC and NYS DOH guidelines, it is now presumed that most responders have all been exposed in some way.
 - Guidelines have shifted to allow responders to stay in service until (if) they become symptomatic.
 - Responders should be self-monitoring for symptoms, including taking their temperature twice daily.
- [See Suffolk County EMS' recommendations on responder exposure](#)
- Testing is done at no cost

I Think I Have (or tested positive for) COVID-19, What do I do?

- Self Isolate from your family
 - Self isolation means the following when possible:
 - Sleep in separate bed/bedroom
 - Stay in area away from rest of family (seal of basement area, dining room, bedroom, etc)
 - Keep all garbage separate from family
 - Have food brought to you, do not eat with your family
 - Use separate bathroom, shower
 - Disinfect any area where isolation was not possible after your use

Self Isolation Vs. Social Distancing At Home

- Asymptomatic providers don't necessarily have to Self Isolate.
- However, some measures for social distancing at home include:
 - Removing any clothing worn outside at nearest entrance upon arriving home
 - Leave shoes either outside or near door, don't walk through house with them
 - Put dirty clothes in washer or separate hamper/bag
 - Shower soon after or immediately after arriving home
 - Wash Hands, wash hands, wash hands
 - Practice six foot radius even with your family (difficult with kids)
 - Practice good cleaning measures around the house
 - Wipe surfaces down regularly with Lysol, Clorox, other germ killing products

PPE DISTRIBUTION

- A shortage of PPE exists nationwide
- There is no mass stockpile of N95s or any other PPE within Suffolk County
- As supplies come in they must be inventoried, counted and prepared for distribution
- Suffolk County OEM is tasked with providing incoming PPE to:
 - Hospitals
 - Nursing Homes/Medical Facilities/ Urgent Cares
 - EMS and Fire Agencies
 - Law Enforcement Agencies
- Agencies are urged to click the following link and fill-in **ALL** information.
 - [Supply Shortage Urgent Request Form](#)

Cleaning/Disinfecting Of Vehicles

- Proper decontamination is a two step process
 - Step 1 is the normal cleaning with regular cleaning products to remove all dirt from any surfaces.
 - Step 2 is the disinfecting of the now clean surfaces.
- Without performing basic cleaning in step one, the disinfection may not occur directly on the surfaces of the ambulance or stretcher
- The good news- Coronaviruses are easy to kill. Regular cleaning products such as bleach, lysol, and other virucidals are effective in proper disinfection.
- [See the List of EPA approved list of cleaning materials effective against Coronavirus.](#)
- While agencies have been able to use the Aeroclave machine at Stony Brook and Suffolk County EMS, it is not necessary to essentially sterilize the ambulance after each transport of a COVID-19 patient

QuizTheWhiz

We want to hear from you! Please send your questions to:

quizthewhiz@suffolkcountyny.gov

To Stay informed of the latest updates:

Text:

Signal19 to 67283