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Covid Update for Anson County

According to the latest information posted by the Anson County Health Department on Wednesday, July 13 there were 7,048 total Covid-19 cases, 109 more cases since their previous release on June 29. Also, on July 13 there were 168 active cases reported, with total deaths remaining at 99 (since March 22). On June 29 there were 170 active cases. On Friday, June 3 there were 6,714 cases, with 64 active.

If you are positive or currently awaiting test results, please stay home. If you are experiencing symptoms, please get tested.

Please note that if you have taken a home test with positive results, you are not required to report it to the Health Department. However, if you would like to report it, you can give the Health Department a call (704-694-5188) and they will report in the state system.

Covid vaccines are available for everyone 5 years old and older, including walk-in clinics. (Children 5-11 by appointment only.) Vaccine boosters are available. They are free, and all you have to do is call the Health Department at 704-694-5188 for more information. Walk-in clinics are held on Thursdays, 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m.

Vaccines for children ages 6 months to 5 years old. Call the Health Department to learn more.

N-95 masks and Rapid COVID tests are offered at the Health Department. Stop in to pick one up. (Limited supply.)

The Health Department is located at 110 West Ashe Street in Wadesboro. The telephone number is 704-694-5188.

Covid Testing Free testing is available Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. without an appointment. They are closed for lunch 12 noon to 1 p.m. Testing takes place in the old hospital parking lot at 500 Morven Road in Wadesboro. No appointment is needed and there is no charge for the Covid test. They will test anyone over the age of 1.



Anson High JROTC Cadets Complete Grueling Leadership Challenge at Fort Jackson

This is a release from the Anson High School JROTC Department: From June 12 through 18 select Anson High School JROTC Cadets attended the JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge...and challenge it was. With record daily temperatures reaching 104 degrees in the Fort Jackson, SC area our cadets performed as true warriors. They represented our school and the JROTC program with honor, commitment and unquestionable toughness.

Their day started each morning around 4:30 a.m. and they trained all day. They didn't return to the barracks at times until 8-9 at night. They were 100% successful at all tasks, which included rappelling backwards off the 40' Victory Tower, a team development course, a confidence and obstacle course, high ropes, zip line, cat walk, map reading, waterborne operations, archery and marksmanship. Two others, drown-proofing and STEM training, were the only ones held indoors.

There were no heat casualties or serious injuries among our cadets which attests to their leadership and willingness to look after each other and their subordinates when put in charge. Cadets drank approximately 10 to 12 quarts of water per day to continue with the training. Training in such an unfamiliar and harsh environment takes intestinal fortitude and courage. Our cadets overcame those hardships and collectively accomplished the mission they were given.

Not only will the cadets bring home new friendships that were forged in a tough environment, they will bring home a better understanding of overcoming challenges as leaders and members of a team with a common goal. One of our cadets excelled into the top 10% of the 173 attending cadets. Cadet Staff Sergeant Prince Vang was a first time go at all tasks and scored higher than most upon completion. Once Cadet Vang accomplished this he was selected to compete in the "best of the best" competition which he won his place and brought the title of "Honor Graduate" back to the Bearcat Battalion.

SFC(R) Leroy Williams and SFC(R) Shane Zelker are very proud of these cadets and the Anson community should be as well. BEARCAT BATTALION!

Insider Information

This is a release from John Marek, Director of the Anson County Economic Development Partnership: By the very nature of what we do, economic developers have access to inside information about new and potential business and development projects. Maintaining the confidentiality of the companies and individuals involved is crucial to the process but can sometimes be interpreted as overly secretive or even slightly suspect by the general public.

Here at AnsonEDP, we strive to be as open and transparent as possible. In that spirit, we share with you today a piece of inside information that could make you and your family a pretty penny over the next few years; think very seriously about the construction trades.

If you are a high school student, run, do not walk, to the CTE department and ask what you can do to get on the construction track. Whether your interest is in electrical, plumbing, HVAC, or general construction technology, good jobs will be waiting for you when you graduate with experience and certifications. And those jobs will be here in Anson County, so you will no longer need to drive an hour to the job site.

Between the residential construction in Peachland, the two new spec buildings AnsonEDP is putting up, and a handful of other construction projects currently or soon on the books, there will be a demand for 80 to 120 new construction workers in the county over the next five years. Jobs paying, on average, \$25-\$30 per hour; more for workers with specific trade skills.

And those opportunities are not limited to high schoolers. Anyone can take FREE classes at SPCC that will put them on the fast track to a good construction job. FREE Career in a Year programs ranging in length from 16 weeks (Construction Technology) to 10 months (Heating Fundamentals Certificate) are a great place to kick off a construction career. I talk with construction companies, plumbers, and electrical and HVAC contractors virtually every day, and they all tell me the same thing; I would hire a dozen qualified applicants this minute and start them tomorrow if I could find them. Completion of one of these courses, a little practical experience, and a decent work ethic will get your foot in that door!

Troy Woman Sentenced in Crash that Killed Kim Ingold

Bethany Haywood of Troy, NC, the truck driver who crashed into the car of Kim Ingold in 2019, killing the beloved Anson High School teacher, accepted a plea bargain in the accident. Haywood's plea resulted in 36 months of supervised probation for felony death by motor vehicle and an additional 36 months of supervised probation for a DWI charge. Haywood was also charged with reckless driving to endanger and driving left of center, but those charges were dismissed in the plea bargain. Haywood is currently serving a five month sentence in prison as part of the plea bargain.

The accident happened on September 7, 2019 on Highway 24/27 in Biscoe, NC. Haywood, 31, was driving east in a tanker truck, and, according to the the NC Highway Patrol, she fell asleep which resulted in her truck sideswiping an approaching car as the tanker crossed the center line, then Haywood's truck struck Ingold's car, killing Ingold. Haywood's speed was estimated at 55 miles per hour.

Haywood faces up to over 8 years in prison if she violates the terms of her probation.

John Witherspoon Awarded Certificate of Appreciation

Recently John Witherspoon was recognized for his many years of service to the Anson County Partnership for Children (ACPC). ACPC Board Chair Shelby Emrich presented Witherspoon with a Certificate of Appreciation.

ACPC Executive Director Caroline Goins said, "The Anson County Partnership for Children would like to thank John Witherspoon for his 16 years on the Board of Directors! During that time John served in many roles, including chair and treasurer, and on ad-hoc committees. You have made an enormous difference in the lives of young children and families!"

John Witherspoon is pictured here with Shelby Emrich.



Recognize the Symptoms of Heat Illness

Heat-related illnesses should not be taken lightly.

They can range from fatigue and cramps to heat exhaustion and heat stroke and can increase the risk of complications from other illnesses such as coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, emphysema or asthma. Symptoms to watch for are:

- Cramps due to excessive sweating typically develop in the thigh muscles indicating a deficiency of electrolytes. Taking in electrolytes through fruit or sports drinks can help alleviate this.
- Heat exhaustion symptoms include nausea, chills, dizziness, and dehydration. Once you notice these symptoms, stop what you're doing and cool off. Apply wet towels to help your body cool.
- Heat stroke is much more serious. Symptoms include a lack of sweat, headache, rapid pulse, altered mental state, confusion, lethargy, seizures, and even unconsciousness and a body temperature over 101 F.

The body is efficient at maintaining a normal body temperature through evaporation of sweat. On really hot days, with maximum exertion, a person can sweat up to two quarts an hour. While you can't control the heat and humidity, you can control your activity level. Be aware of your own limitations. When you begin to notice the first signs of heat illness, reduce or stop activity, get in the shade, remove excess clothing, apply cool cloths to help lower body temperature, drink fluids, and take it easy. Drink plain, old-fashioned water to replace fluids if you've been outside for several hours. If you've been sweating profusely for more than a few hours, you'll need to replace electrolytes, too. Eat a banana, drink fruit juices, or drink a sports drink that provides electrolytes.

By Debbie Dillion, N.C. Cooperative Extension, Union County Center

Governor Cooper Reminds North Carolinians to Stay Prepared for COVID-19 Waves

More Transmissible BA.5 Variant Now Leads Cases

As key COVID-19 metrics increase in North Carolina and the U.S. due to the BA.5 variant, Governor Roy Cooper is reminding North Carolinians to stay prepared by being up to date on vaccines and boosters, having a supply of tests and seeking treatment if they test positive.

Consistent with trends seen in data from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, BA.5 is now the most common variant, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has labeled 41 of North Carolina's counties as high COVID-19 Community levels. This variant is causing repeat infections, even in those who have recent past infections from other variants, and infections in people who are vaccinated. Vaccines remain highly effective in preventing severe outcomes including hospitalization and death from COVID-19.

"While Covid variants continue to infect people, we have the tools to protect ourselves from the most serious effects of this virus," Gov. Cooper said. "Get vaccinated and boosted, wear a mask indoors in crowds if you believe you need better protection and if you become infected, talk with a health professional quickly about effective treatments like Paxlovid. Cases are on the rise with this latest BA.5 variant so I encourage all North Carolinians to know their risk and take steps to protect themselves."

While COVID-19 metrics will continue to rise and fall, it remains important to prepare and protect yourself. Getting vaccinated and boosted — including a second booster if you are eligible — is still the most effective tool to reduce the risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19, as well as long COVID. Get prepared by:

- Getting your booster if you haven't yet and by getting your second booster if you're eligible.
- Having a supply of at-home tests on hand. Stop the spread by testing more often and taking precautions if you are positive.
- Free at-home tests are available from the federal government and community sites and your insurance will cover eight free at-home tests per person per month. Find other testing locations and ways to receive at home tests at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/FindTests
- Having a plan on how to seek treatment if you test positive. Find out now where treatment options are near you: covid19.ncdhhs.gov/FindTreatment
- Adding a layer of protection by wearing a mask in crowded indoor settings or if you are at high risk for serious COVID-19 complications.
- Increase ventilation of indoor spaces by opening windows.

NCDHHS has made access to at-home tests more convenient by establishing Community Access Points in all counties, where people can pick up free at-home tests. Current information on how and where to find tests, including CAPs, in North Carolina is available at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/FindTests.

If you do test positive for COVID-19, treatment is available, especially for high-risk people who are likely to get very sick. Antiviral pills like Paxlovid and Molnupiravir should be taken within five days of symptoms beginning. The monoclonal antibody bebtelovimab is less effective against this variant, and the supply is limited. These treatments must be prescribed by a medical professional. More information on treatment, including Test to Treat locations, is available on the NCDHHS website.

"North Carolinians know how to batten down the hatches and get prepared when hurricanes approach. When COVID-19 case counts are rising, it's especially important to protect yourself," said NCDHHS Secretary Kody H. Kinsley. "We know what to do now. It's time to make sure you are boosted, make sure you have tests on-hand at home and make sure you know where treatment options are near your home."

For more information on COVID-19 trends in the state, visit covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard.

Toys for Tots Masquerade Ball

The Toys for Tots Masquerade Ball will be held this Saturday, July 23, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Lockhart-Taylor Center. Tickets cost \$20. All proceeds will go directly to Anson County Toys for Tots

If there are any questions, please contact Vancine Sturdivant at 704-294-0480.