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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

2,298 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Monday, March 1 the Anson Health Department posted that Anson County had 2,298 reported cases of COVID-19. 57 of those cases were active. At that point they had discharged 2,241 cases, 2,188 to baseline health and 53 deaths. (The same number of deaths as last week.) The Health Department is now vaccinating K-12 staff and Child Care Workers as part of Phase 3. **Health Director Fred Thompson, PhD gave this update,** "We continue to vaccinate Group 1 (healthcare workers), Group 2 (65+) and now Group 3. We are focusing this week on K-12 staff and child care workers, and then we will be expanding to all frontline essential workers on Wednesday, March 10.

There are several thousand local workers who fit into one of the 19 "essential" frontline worker groups as defined by the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services (NCDHHS). But, really almost anyone who is actually working. It will take some time to get them all (at least those who want the vaccine) vaccinated. After that we will move to Group 4 (adults with high risk of exposure and underlying medical conditions) and finally Group 5 (anyone who wants the vaccine) We are seeing some vaccine hesitancy in different groups, ages, etc."

Thompson continued, "While North Carolina will be receiving about 80,000 doses of the new Johnson & Johnson vaccine this week, we have not been told if/when we might get some distributed to Anson. We continue to vaccinate with the Moderna vaccine. It would help/speed things up if we had at least one other entity in the county vaccinating on a daily basis, but for now the Health Department remains the only one vaccinating on a regular scheduled daily basis. We are vaccinating 100 to 150 people daily, Monday through Friday, and that includes both first and second doses. Atrium Health continues to transfer some their Moderna allotment to us which has allowed us to vaccinate at our current levels, as we are only getting 100 to 200 first doses weekly from the state. Atrium Health took their mobile unit to Morven on Wednesday, February 24 and vaccinated 212 people which was helpful. Atrium Health will return to Morven with their mobile unit around March 22 for the second doses."

Anson Schools Curbside Meal Service

Here is information on curbside meal pick-up times for virtual students, beginning March 1:

- Ansonville Elementary, 12:45-1:45
- Lilesville Elementary, 10:00-11:30
- Morven Elementary, 11:30-12:30
- Peachland-Polkton Elementary, 1:00-2:00
- Wadesboro Elementary, 1:00-2:00
- Anson Middle School, 11:30-1:00
- Wadesboro Primary, Anson High School and Anson Early College do not have curbside service. Those meals can be picked up at any school location listed above.

Schools that do offer curbside service will send weekend packs on Thursdays. There will not be any meal on Fridays.

Online Enrollment for Anson 4-H

Welcome back to the new 4-H year! The first step to becoming an active 4-H member, volunteer, or participant during this year's 4-H program (2021) is to re-enroll. If you are a 4-H member under 18, your parent or guardian can renew your membership. *New youth members, volunteers, and participants are strongly encouraged to enroll now too. North Carolina 4-H uses an online system, called 4-H Online 2.0, to manage 4-H memberships, clubs, projects, activities, and communications. 4-H Online 2.0 accounts are family-based, which means every family creates a "master" profile with its own login ID and password. A member file is then created within the family profile for each individual involved in North Carolina 4-H. For more information on enrollment go to anson.ces.ncsu.edu or call Samuel Cole, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development, at 704-694-2415.

Raven Spencer Recognized as County Employee of the Quarter

Raven Spencer, Case Manager for 4-H Youth Promise, was recognized at the February County Commissioner Meeting as one of three county employees who received the Employee of the Quarter. Raven has been with 4-H Youth Promise since November 2018. She works with youth and offer them life skill development and whole family programming, while working closely with the Juvenile Court Counselors in Anson County. She was nominated for this award for her superior job performance and initiative. Anson Cooperative Extension Director Roshunda Terry said, "When the pandemic started to shut down all face-to-face programming efforts, Raven stepped up to initiate Anson Extension to move to being a virtual department. She developed our office You Tube page, produced our introductory video and has assisted the majority of the staff on video production, formatting and editing to make sure programmatic content was available to our clients. Raven did all of this in addition to her daily job duties and converting her own programs to a virtual format. Raven saw the problem and took the bull by the horns to shift our office into the world of technology and pre-recorded program content."



Terry concluded, "Raven is an upbeat, optimistic employee. She is never hesitant to offer help or take a role in a staff wide initiative. She is a go getter. We are lucky and blessed to have her on our staff. She is one essential puzzle piece to our puzzle that makes our staff awesome. Congratulations again, Raven. We are proud of you!"

Despite COVID-19 Setbacks, Manufacturing is the Future of the Anson County Economy

This is a release from the Anson Economic Development Partnership (AnsonEDP): For the Anson Economic Development Partnership and Anson County in general, 2020 was a year of growth and progress even through a problematic pandemic year.

The Monroe Expressway's impact continued to be felt throughout the year in the form of increased interest in residential and commercial development, especially in the western part of the county. Historically, one of the major stumbling blocks for the Anson economy has been the county's perceived distance to crucial business locations such as Uptown Charlotte and Charlotte Douglas Airport. The Expressway cuts travel time from Peachland to these destinations to about 45 minutes and from Wadesboro to just under an hour.

A very significant FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) project announced in 2019, Loba-Wakol, opened its doors. The German manufacturer and distributor of adhesives and finishes purchased the former JJ Haines campus and moved its North American headquarters there from Charlotte. The company looked at more than 60 properties throughout the Charlotte metro region before making a decision.

"I met with the Economic Development and John Marek, and those guys really did a lot to incentivize us to move our business here and be a big part of this community moving forward," Chief Operating Officer Ashley Carter said. "That was really our goal. Find a place that wanted us as a partner and that we could also reciprocate the same type of relationship."

Carter and his team are already making connections within the community, especially with the schools. The company wants to offer developmental programs and training for local students at the high school level and at South Piedmont Community College.

"We wanted to get that out in front of these young people so they know there is a nice opportunity here," Carter said. "Most of the training we do is in the flooring side of the business, so it is a natural fit ... We're really trying to get involved and let people know that there is an opportunity."

Loba-Wakol already hosts people from around the country in Wadesboro for classes and training. Those people coming from out of state turn to Anson for places to stay, eat and explore, bringing tremendous economic growth for the area.

The facility currently houses administration, sales, warehousing, and distribution light manufacturing, but by 2022 or 2023, the company hopes to add manufacturing to the campus.

Anson Economic Development Partnership (AEDP) also revealed a new business park coming to the county in September of 2020. The Atlantic Gateway Logistics Park, located five miles east of Lilesville, is a partnership between Pee Dee Electric, North Carolina South East, and Anson EDP. This business park will be the new headquarters for Pee Dee Electric, consolidating Anson and Richmond Pee Dee offices into one central location. AEDP Executive Director John Marek believes there is potential for seven more buildings at the business park.

"Those buildings range in size from about 60,000 square feet, up to about 150,000 square feet," Marek said. "Those are appropriately-sized buildings for the purposes we are talking about, which are warehouse, distribution, and light manufacturing."

About 50 acres of the land is north of Highway 74, where the electric company's headquarters will be located, with an additional 70 acres south of the highway.

The project is estimated to bring 300 jobs such as material handling, forklift operators, kickers, packagers, and shipping. Marek estimates the business park will bring between three and five million dollars in annual property tax revenue. It could potentially bring more than \$11 million to Anson's yearly payroll.

The Atlantic Gateway Logistics Park was named after the unique location on the strategic corridor connecting Charlotte and the Port of Wilmington and the Atlantic Coast.

Other businesses opened their doors for the first time, demonstrating a robust entrepreneurial spirit, even in these difficult times. A barber school, hair salon, clothing boutique, and new bakery all opened in Wadesboro. The theater showed off a new art gallery, and beloved Oliver's Restaurant reopened after renovations.

AnsonEDP continues to strive towards bringing new business to the county. The team is focused on overcoming the pandemic and creating more opportunities in 2021.

Governor Cooper Announces Easing of COVID-19 Restrictions as North Carolina Trends Stabilize

Key indicators used to guide decisions throughout pandemic show state's trends are moving in the right direction

As North Carolina's numbers continue to show improvement and vaccine distribution increases, Governor Roy Cooper announced that the state will carefully ease some of its COVID-19 restrictions. Executive Order No. 195 took effect February 26 at 5 pm and will expire March 26th at 5 pm.

"This action is a show of confidence and trust, but we must remain cautious. People are losing their loved ones each day," said Governor Cooper. "We must keep up our guard. Many of us are weary, but we cannot let the weariness win. Now is the time to put our strength and resilience to work so that we can continue to turn the corner and get through this."

"Keep wearing a mask, waiting 6 feet apart, and washing your hands. We've seen in the past how fragile progress can be, so we need to keep protecting each other while we get everyone a spot to get their shot," said North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D.

The Executive Order lifts the Modified Stay at Home Order requiring people to stay at home and businesses to close to the public between 10 pm and 5 am. The number of people who may gather indoors will increase from 10 to 25, while 50 remains the limit for outdoors. The curfew on the sale of alcohol for onsite consumption will be moved from 9 pm to 11 pm. Some businesses, including bars and amusement parks, will now be open for patrons indoors as they adhere to new occupancy restrictions. Many businesses, venues and arenas will have increased occupancy both indoors and outdoors.

Executive Order No. 195 has two general categories of occupancy restrictions: 30% capacity and 50% capacity. Because indoor spaces have a higher risk of spread for COVID-19, indoor facilities in the 30%-occupancy category may not exceed two hundred fifty (250) people per indoor room or indoor space.

30% Capacity Limit (may not exceed 250-persons in indoor spaces) Bars, Meeting, Reception, and Conference Spaces, Lounges (including tobacco) and Night Clubs, Indoor areas of Amusement Parks, Movie Theatres, Entertainment facilities (e.g., bingo parlors, gaming establishments), Sports Arenas and Fields*, and Venues.* (*Indoor event venues with more than 5,000 seats may be excepted from the 250 person limit if they follow additional safety measures up to 15% capacity.)

50% Capacity Limit Restaurants, Breweries, Wineries, Distilleries, Fitness and Physical Activity Facilities (e.g., gyms, bowling alleys, rock climbing facilities), Pools, Museums and Aquariums, Retailers, Outdoor areas of Amusement Parks, and Salons, Personal Care, Tattoo Parlors.

Safety protocols such as masks, social distancing and frequent handwashing will continue to be important as people adjust to the new order, health officials said.

NC County Covid Alert System Shows Falling Critical Community Spread

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services updated the COVID-19 County Alert System, which showed 27 red counties - a decrease from 61 red counties on the previous County Alert System - and the fewest red counties in the state since the start of the County Alert System. The update also listed 40 orange counties and 33 yellow counties.

Yellow = Significant Community Spread **Orange** = Substantial Community Spread **Red** = Critical Community Spread

Although North Carolina's key metrics remain high, they are moving in a positive direction with decreasing trends in numbers of COVID-19 cases reported each day, people being hospitalized with COVID-19, people in the intensive care unit and the percent of tests that are positive.

Anson County has dropped from Red on February 4 to Yellow. The 14-day case rate per 100,000 in Anson County was 695.4. The 14-day percent positive in Anson County was 7.6%. The hospital impact in Anson County is "low impact."

Detailed information about all 100 North Carolina counties can be found at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/county-alert-system.

March Webinars by Sandhills Family Support

Please see the following free webinars offered by Sandhills Center Family Support and Community Collaboration. If you would like to register, please contact the person located at the end of each description.

• March 10: Foster Parents and Caregivers Support Group will be held from 7-8 pm via WebEx. Contact Suzanne Maness at (910) 627-1769, toll free (877) 211-5995 or by email at connectionsfp@gmail.com for more information and to register. Registration deadline is March 8, 2021.

• March 18: Dysfunctional vs Functional Family Skills and Practices webinar will be held from 1:00-2:00 pm via Zoom. Portia Purcell, MA, NCC, LCMHC, LCAS will be the presenter. Contact Shirlyn Morrison-Sims toll free at 1-877- 776-6599, or by email at search.family.support.program@gmail.com to register. Upon registration, you will be sent the link to the webinar.

• March 19: Engaging Teens in any Setting presented by Portia Purcell will be held virtually from 12:00-1:00 p.m. Please contact Brenda Goss via email at randmontadvfsp@gmail.com or toll free at 877-211-7252 to register. Deadline to register is Wednesday, March 17, 2021 by 5:00 p.m.

• March 23: Domestic Violence During COVID-19: How to help webinar will be held from 1:00-2:00 pm via Zoom. Jeanne Patterson with Partners Health Management will be the presenter. Contact Suzanne Maness at (910) 627-1769, toll free (877) 211-5995 or by email at connections-fsp@gmail.com for more information and to register. Registration deadline is March 19, 2021.

• March 25: Harnett JCPC Program Overview panel discussion will be held from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon on Thursday, March 25th. The Harnett County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Programs (4-H Teen Court, Dunn Police Athletic and Activities League, Jehovah's Rapha International-JRI, Harnett Co. Juvenile Restitution/Community Service Program, and Healthy Choices Program) will be giving overviews of the programs offered in Harnett County, how to make referrals, and how they impact the community. To register, contact Adrian Standish at leeharnettfsp@yahoo.com or 877-776-6702. Upon registration, you will be sent the link to the webinar.

Parks & Rec Spring Soccer Registration

Registration has begun for Anson County Parks & Recreation's Spring Soccer program. Registration runs through April 1 for the following programs:

• Micro Soccer: Ages 3-4
• Youth Soccer: Grades: K-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-12

Cost for these programs is \$25.

You may come to Parks & Recreation office (845 Airport Road) to register Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or you can visit their website at co.anson.nc.us and fill out a registration form and send it by email or text.

For more information, contact: Jeff Waisner at j(704) 695-2550 or jwaisner@co.anson.nc.us, Wendell Small at (704) 695-2782 or jwsmall@co.anson.nc.us, and Allen Jackson II at (704) 694-5751 or jajackson@co.anson.nc.us.