

From: [Mayor](#)
To: [Mayor](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Update: Phase 2 Begins in Spokane
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Nadine Woodward

The City of Spokane COVID-19 News Update for May 22

Information about Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) is evolving rapidly. We want to make sure our City employees have up-to-date information. We will provide this update, as needed, to communicate what you need to know, while we work to reduce the spread of this disease in our community and continue to provide critical public services.

Spokane Approved to Move to Phase 2

Today, Mayor Nadine Woodward and other local officials held a news conference to announce that the state has approved a move into Phase 2 of the [Safe Start Washington Plan](#) for Spokane County. The change takes effect immediately.

“Spokane is open for business,” the Mayor announced. But she stressed that we were just in the beginning steps of this process. To be successful, we need to proceed on the “safe and careful road to recovery.” More than ever, it’s important for people to use good judgment when out in public—follow social distancing directives, wear masks in public places, and wash your hands.

Phase 2 allows for gatherings of up to 5 unrelated people, in-store purchases at retail locations, and restaurants to open at 50 percent capacity, among other things. [See more information on Phase 2.](#)

In order to receive the state approval, Spokane County had to demonstrate that it had met requirements around testing, hospital capacity, isolation and quarantine availability, and contact tracing, as well as low positive case counts.

Wearing Masks

On May 20, Spokane Regional Health District Health Officer, Dr. Bob Lutz, [issued a directive](#) about the use of cloth face coverings to maintain the public’s health. **Spokane County residents at indoor or confined public settings are strongly recommended to wear cloth face coverings** over their noses and mouths in situations where they are not able to maintain six feet distance from other people who do not live in their same household. Check out this [information and video](#) from Florida Atlantic University about what happens when we sneeze.

Recreate Responsibly over the Holiday Weekend

Looking to enjoy our incredible Spokane parks and trails this extended weekend? You’re not alone!

This set of [#RecreateResponsibly guidelines](#) will help us protect ourselves, others, and places we love when we adventure outside.

They also help us prepare for any situation, such as an overly-crowded trailhead or lack of available restroom facilities. Visit the [City's Park Finder](#) for information about how to explore our 4,000 acres of parks and natural areas.

Water Department Offers Reopening Advice

The City’s Water Department is advising businesses located in buildings that have been mostly vacant for several weeks to add one more task to their to-do lists—[flushing the water pipes and moving out old, stagnant water.](#)

Businesses should flush their internal plumbing systems to ensure a fresh water supply, prior to reopening under the Safe Start Washington plan. Unused water that has been sitting in pipes for extended periods may appear cloudy or have an unpleasant taste or odor. Depending on the building and its plumbing, health risks like bacteria or other hazards also can occur.

Protect Yourself if You’re a Fraud Victim

Hundreds of City of Spokane resident have filed identity theft reports with Crime Check since the beginning of May. If you are victim, take the steps needed to protect yourself.

Use the Employment Security Department’s [automated reporting system](#) for fraud. And follow [this information sheet detailing the steps](#) to take from our HR folks. We also have [additional guidance from our EAP program](#) on how to manage identity theft. And, our EAP program offers a voluntary program called ID Shield that will provide credit monitoring and assist people who become victims of identity theft. [Here is information on the program and its costs.](#)

Employee Information Portal (covid19.spokanecity.org/)

Remember, this Employee Information Portal is a great resource for employees to stay current on what's happening with the COVID-19 response. The [Employee Information Portal](#) can be accessed from work or home, using a computer or mobile device. All of the emailed information we have sent to employees is archived here.