



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for December 16, 2020

Gov. Beshear joins Bipartisan Coalition of Governors to Urge Safety Before Holidays

([Press release](#)) Gov. Andy Beshear joined Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker, Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine and Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers in a social media video to encourage everyone across the region to remain safe heading into the holiday season. [Click here](#) to watch the video.

“This may be the most difficult time yet in our struggle with COVID-19, especially with the holidays approaching. Until the vaccine is available to everyone and until we eradicate this virus once and for all, we must continue working to protect one another,” the governors said. “The science is settled: The best way we can protect our front-line workers and slow the spread of this virus is to double down on mask wearing, social distancing, and washing hands frequently. If you are planning to travel or gather with other households for the holidays, we urge you to reconsider. Just one infection can cause an outbreak in your community, which could overwhelm our hospitals and put you and your loved ones at risk. We owe it to the brave men and women serving on the front lines of this pandemic to do our part and be smart this holiday season.”

This is the second time this bipartisan group of governors has joined forces in the past month to encourage people in their region to do their part to protect our families, front-line workers and small businesses. They released a [similar video](#) prior to Thanksgiving urging families to reconsider holiday travel.

----- **COVID Update for Tuesday, December 15**

New cases reported were 2,946, with 340 18 and under. There were 15 new deaths reported. Positivity was 8.3%. 1,788 are hospitalized, with 438 in an ICU and 246 on vents.

See a redesigned Daily Summary page with regional breakdowns:
<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/COVID19DailyReport.pdf>

Governor’s Press Conference on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vcXzZqeDEh4>

----- **Ohio Valley Hospitals Filling Up Thanks To COVID-19 Surge**

(WFPL) that many hospitals in the Ohio Valley are under strain, running short of bed space, especially for the most critically ill. The following graphs show how the pandemic is affecting hospital capacity in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia, and you can check out the map view [here](#). The [data](#), based on reports by hospitals to HHS, shows that the rise in COVID-19 hospitalizations is putting pressure on the health care system with hospitals in several dozen counties in the region running either at capacity or dangerously close. For this data analysis, the ReSource used the 7-day averages for hospital capacity in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia for the week starting November 27. Learn more: <https://wfpl.org/covid-impacts-ohio-valley-hospital-capacity/>

----- **New coronavirus strain spreading in UK has key mutations,**

Learn more: <https://news360.com/article/544547002>

----- **U.S. and Pfizer Are Negotiating Deal for More Vaccine Doses Next Year**

Full story: <https://news360.com/article/544538655>

----- **California virus surge brings body bags, makeshift morgues**

Read more: <https://news360.com/article/544539067>

US agencies hacked in monthslong global cyberspying campaign

(ABC) U.S. government agencies and private companies rushed Monday to secure their computer networks following the disclosure of a sophisticated and long-running cyber-espionage intrusion suspected of being carried out by Russian hackers.

The full extent of the damage is not yet clear. But the potential threat was significant enough that the Department of Homeland Security’s cybersecurity unit directed all federal agencies to remove compromised network management software and thousands of companies were expected to do the same.

What was striking about the operation was its potential scope as well as the manner in which the perpetrators managed to pierce cyber defenses and gain access to email and internal files at the Treasury and Commerce departments and potentially elsewhere.

The intrusion was stark evidence of the vulnerability of even supposedly secure government networks, even after well-known previous attacks.

The identity of the perpetrator remained unclear. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of an ongoing investigation, told The Associated Press on Monday that Russian hackers are suspected.

The Washington Post, citing unnamed sources, said the attack was carried out by Russian government hackers who go by the nicknames APT29 or Cozy Bear and are part of that nation's foreign intelligence service.

The intrusion came to light after a prominent cybersecurity firm, FireEye, determined it had been breached and alerted that foreign governments and major corporations were also compromised. The company did not say who it suspected, though many experts believed Russia was responsible given the level of skill involved.

Full story: <https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/us-agencies-hacked-monthslong-global-cyberspying-campaign-74715968>

Joe Sullivan, National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist, to Retire

For those who have been in the Emergency Preparedness business over the last 15+, you will have dealt with or heard forecasts and briefings prepared or coordinated by Joe Sullivan. While he is based at the Louisville Office, they cover all of central Kentucky from the Tennessee line north towards Henry and Trimble Counties, then into south-central Indiana. The Louisville office is also the lead for Kentucky, so they partner with offices in Paducah and Jackson.

The link that follows is an interesting story about Joe Sullivan, from his beginnings, assignments across the nation, and some interesting chapters in Kentucky's emergency preparedness history. Anyone remember the major hazmat train derailment in January 2007? The line of tornados that ripped through central Kentucky and Southern Indiana in 2012? His first day of retirement will be January 2, 2021.

Read more here: <https://www.weather.gov/lmk/joe>

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact Preparedness@kyha.com (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.