



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for January 1, 2021

Fauci: Don't Expect Normal Before Fall

(Newser) Vaccinations have begun, but the goal of resuming American life something like it was before the coronavirus struck is not within reach yet. "It's going to take several months. ... It's not going to happen in the first few months," Dr. Anthony Fauci said Thursday. "If we do it correctly, hopefully, as we get into the end of the summer, the beginning of the fall of 2021, we can start to approach some degree of normality." That prediction assumes the nation "efficiently, quickly, and effectively" carries out its vaccination program, [which hasn't happened so far, Politico reports](#). And Americans would have to stick to wearing masks, washing their hands, and maintaining social distancing, Fauci said. The nation's top infectious disease expert made the comments on MSNBC. Full story: <https://www.newser.com/story/300731/normal-is-still-months-away-fauci.html>

Florida Becomes 3rd U.S. State to Identify New Coronavirus Variant

(NPR) Florida is the third U.S. state to announce it has a case of the more contagious coronavirus strain that first emerged in the United Kingdom. A man in his 20s, with no history of travel, tested positive for the mutated coronavirus. The state Department of Health said he is in Martin County.

The man's diagnosis follows a similar case identified in California on Wednesday in which a male patient, also in his 20s, had not spent any time outside of the U.S. in the weeks prior to his illness.

The first two cases in the U.S. also adhere to that pattern. Two male members of the Colorado National Guard tested positive for the new strain — referred to as B.1.1.7 or VUI-202012/01 — and neither reported international travel. At least one of the two men is in his 20s.

There is no evidence to suggest the new strain is more deadly, nor is there research suggesting it is impervious to the effects of the vaccines that are being administered across the country.

Full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/12/31/952577326/florida-becomes-3rd-u-s-state-to-identify-new-coronavirus-variant>

42 People Accidentally Got COVID Treatment, Not Vaccine

Regeneron vials were apparently mixed with Moderna vaccine at distribution hub

(Newser) They thought they were being inoculated against COVID-19; instead, 42 people in West Virginia were mistakenly administered Regeneron's experimental monoclonal antibody treatment. The West Virginia National Guard, which is at the helm of the vaccine distribution effort in the state, confirmed that the goof occurred Wednesday in Boone County. The Guard said Thursday that the Regeneron vials were, due to human error, mistakenly put with Moderna vaccine vials at a distribution hub, and the two were then sent together to Boone County.

Though the Regeneron cocktail is supposed to be delivered via an IV rather than injection, the Guard says none of the 42 people on the receiving end of the mix-up have had any issues thus far but will continue to be monitored. The [New York Times reports](#) that while the vials do look a bit alike, both the vials and the box they come in are "clearly labeled." Both require refrigeration prior to use. The Guard noted in a [statement](#) that "these individuals will be offered the vaccine as soon as possible with a priority status."

Source: <https://www.newser.com/story/300738/in-goof-42-people-injected-with-treatment-not-vaccine.html>

Police Arrest Pharmacist Over Deliberately Spoiled Vaccine Doses

Authorities arrested a suburban Milwaukee pharmacist Thursday suspected of [deliberately ruining hundreds of doses of coronavirus vaccine](#) by removing them from refrigeration for two nights. The arrest marks another setback in what has been a slower, messier start to vaccinate Americans than public health officials had expected. Police in Grafton, about 20 miles north of Milwaukee, said the Advocate Aurora Health pharmacist was arrested on suspicion of reckless endangerment, adulterating a prescription drug, and criminal damage to property, all felonies. The pharmacist has been fired and police said in a news release that he was in jail. Police did not identify the pharmacist, saying he has not yet been formally charged. His motive remains unclear.

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/300737/hospital-pharmacist-left-out-vaccine-doses-to-spoil-twice.html>

Covid-19 vaccination tracker across the U.S.

(NBC) Two vaccines to prevent Covid-19 infections have now been granted authorization for emergency use, and every day thousands more people are becoming vaccinated. As of Dec. 31, [the Centers for Disease Control](#)

[and Prevention reported](#) that more than 2,794,588 initial doses of the two Covid-19 vaccines have been administered.

One two-dose vaccine, developed by the U.S. drugmaker Pfizer and the German firm BioNTech, was the first authorized by the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use. The first shipments [were made on Dec. 14](#). A second vaccine, which was developed by Moderna and also requires two doses, began [shipping vials on Dec. 20](#).

NBC News is tracking administered doses in each state by surveying health departments and examining daily reports. Some states have not yet reported data. Here is the data for Kentucky and its bordering states:

State	Nmbr Doses	Per 100K
Kentucky	34,376	769.44
Illinois	126,211	996
Indiana	76,000	1128.9
Missouri	66,540	1084.17
Ohio	119,401	1021.47
Tennessee	79,282	1160.93
Virginia	64,882	760.14
West Virginia#	44,885	2504.54

See the map and read more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/map-covid-19-vaccination-tracker-across-u-s-n1252085>

Note – This is one of the highest rates in the country.

**Ambulance scarcity, long 911 response times:
COVID pushes L.A. County to 'brink of catastrophe'**

(LA Times) Lengthy wait times to offload patients at Los Angeles County's critically overcrowded hospitals are increasingly keeping ambulances from being able to respond to other emergency calls, officials said Thursday — the latest repercussion of the rampant and widespread coronavirus surge that's walloping the region's healthcare system.

Sometimes, as many as 10 ambulances are queued up waiting to drop off patients, and "we've had patients waiting in ambulance bays outside of [emergency departments] for seven hours, eight hours," said Cathy Chidester, director of the L.A. County Emergency Medical Services Agency.

"We're running out of ambulances, and our responses to 911 calls are getting longer and longer," she said during a briefing Thursday.

Full story: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-12-31/back-to-back-records-push-californias-covid-deaths-past-25000>

**National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine [Webinar](#)
Crisis Standards of Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Real-time Legal Issues & Solutions
January 7, 2021 | 3:30 - 4:45pm ET
[Register Here](#)**

As hospitals and other providers experience significant patient surge at a pivotal stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [National Academy of Medicine](#) and its partners have called on federal, state/territorial, and tribal leaders and private sector actors to shift to crisis standards of care. Resource scarcities of available ICU beds, personnel, treatments, personal protective equipment, and vaccinations justify critical changes in health care delivery. Yet substantial legal and policy issues can stand as obstacles to implementation without real-time solutions.

In this session, Dr. Dan Hanfling, Professor James Hodge, and Research Scholar Jen Piatt will examine key legal issues underlying crisis standards of care. These include concerns surrounding emergency declarations, invocation, duties to care, inter-jurisdictional challenges, discrimination, licensure/scope of practice, risks of liability, documentation, and mitigation. Potential solutions to real-time issues will be offered, including through direct questions among attendees and others.

For more information, please [visit their website](#).

[Mayfield wastewater testing shows promise for more targeted measures to thwart coronavirus infections, foundation says](#)

(KY Health News) A wastewater testing project in Mayfield is helping pinpoint outbreaks of the novel coronavirus even before residents experience symptoms, and thus could allow more narrowly targeted measures to prevent further spread of the virus, the **Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky** said in a news release.

The partnership between the **Graves County Health Department**, the **City of Mayfield**, **Murray State University**, the **University of Louisville** [Co-Immunity Project](#) and the foundation began in early November.

"The project is essentially an early-warning system that gives health officials and policymakers the information they need to focus additional testing and treatment where there are specific outbreaks, thus helping avoid the need for more countywide or statewide shutdowns," said Ben Chandler, president and CEO of the foundation. "Wastewater testing can help more of us get back to normal more quickly by identifying where outbreaks are most prevalent over time."

The foundation paid for equipment to analyze samples, as part of a \$60,000 grant to the Co-Immunity Project. While early data is still sparse, the project already has identified spikes in infections ahead of the traditional clinical and testing models.

Samples are being taken from the wastewater treatment plant in Mayfield. Murray State chemistry and biology labs, led by Assistant Professor Dr. Bikram Subedi and Associate Professor Dr. Gary ZeRuth, respectively, analyze the samples to count copies of the RNA (ribonucleic acid, a genetic material) of the virus and look for changes. <Click the headline to read more.>>

----- **Nashville bombing spotlights vulnerable voice, data networks**

(AP) The [Christmas Day bombing](#) in downtown Nashville led to phone and data service outages and disruptions over hundreds of miles in the southern U.S., raising new concerns about the vulnerability of U.S. communications.

The blast seriously damaged a [key AT&T network facility](#), an important hub that provides local wireless, internet and video service and connects to regional networks. Backup generators went down, which took service out hours after the blast. A fire broke out and forced an evacuation. The building flooded, with more than three feet of water later pumped out of the basement; AT&T said there was still water on the second floor as of Monday.

The immediate repercussions were surprisingly widespread. AT&T customers lost service — phones, internet or video — across large parts of Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. There were 911 centers in the region that couldn't take calls; others didn't receive crucial data associated with callers, such as their locations. The Nashville police department's phones and internet failed. [Stores went cash-only](#).

At some hospitals, [electronic medical records](#), internet service or phones stopped working. The Nashville airport halted flights for about three hours on Christmas. Rival carrier T-Mobile [also had service issues](#) as far away as Atlanta, 250 miles away, because the company uses AT&T equipment for moving customer data from towers to the T-Mobile network.

Full story: <https://apnews.com/article/service-outages-bombings-nashville-a14babd6748fea7c43ed396801aaabf7>

----- **Microsoft says hackers viewed source code, didn't change it**

(AP) Microsoft [said Thursday in a blog post](#) that [hackers tied to a massive intrusion](#) of dozens of U.S. government agencies and private companies sneaked further into its systems than previously thought, although the intrusion doesn't appear to have caused any additional harm. The company said the hackers were able to view some of the code underlying Microsoft software, but weren't able to make any changes to it.

Microsoft played down any risk associated with the additional intrusion, noting that its software development relies on code sharing within the company, a practice called "inner source." Likewise, Microsoft said it doesn't rely on keeping program code secret as a security measure and instead assumes that adversaries have seen its code and uses other defensive measures to frustrate attacks.

The company said it found no evidence of hacker access to customer data and no indication that its systems were used to attack others.

Full story: <https://apnews.com/article/hacking-software-42226eee3d5bb51a7c7c7baabb178cd40>

----- **Goodbye, Flash: The web application everybody used - and hated**

(NBC) Adobe Flash, the web application behind a host of bright animation and games in the '90s and the aughts, finally officially kicks the bucket in 2021. Adobe will [stop updating and patching](#) Flash Player on Thursday and begin to block it Jan 12. Microsoft [will block it](#) from almost all versions of Windows with the start of the new year, and major browsers such as [Chrome](#) and [Firefox](#) will block Flash extensions, joining Safari, which

already does. It's the long-awaited demise of a technology from an earlier era of the internet, a relic from when there were fewer industrywide standards for audio and video formatting

Full story: <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/internet/goodbye-flash-web-application-everybody-used-hated-n1252607>

No bomb located in RV in downtown Lexington

(WLEX 18) — On New Year's Eve, Lexington police alerted people to avoid the downtown area of Short and Market St. Initially, Lexington police said they were investigating the area.

Around 7:40 pm Thursday, an officer noticed a large RV parked in a downtown parking lot. Given the circumstances, an explosives detection canine was brought in, and it "alerted" to the vehicle. The downtown area was evacuated and the police department's Hazardous Devices Unit responded to the scene. Officers made contact with the driver of the RV and no explosives were located.

See moore: <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/lexington-police-investigating-situation-downtown>

Water State of Emergency in Hazard

(WYMT) On Wednesday, Acting City of Hazard Manager Tony Eversole issued a State of Emergency for the city due to water shortages. Cold weather caused water lines to break which caused crews to work on the city's two main tanks.

"If one of those drops then the whole system could go down, so that's why we had to do what we had to do," said Eversole. Once tanks start losing water, Eversole said it is a domino effect. Nearly 400 customers out of 10,000 are without water.

"We bought over 10 thousand dollars worth of bottled water to those areas," said Eversole. "If you don't have water, you're important to us, we want to get it on."

Read more: <https://www.wkyt.com/app/2020/12/30/state-of-emergency-declared-for-hazard/>

Distillers won't be penalized for making sanitizer

(CNN) Distilleries that helped out in the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic by [making alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) won't have to pay a hefty fee the government charged them this week by mistake.

When hand sanitizer was in short supply in March, hundreds of distilleries jumped in and made it themselves. In order to do so, they had to register as drug makers, which have to pay user fees every year to the government.

Earlier this week, the US Food and Drug Administration, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, charged each of the distilleries a \$15,000 fee, according to a senior HHS official.

But the department rescinded that fee on Thursday, claiming it was charged to distilleries by mistake.

Read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/31/politics/distilleries-hand-sanitizer-fine/index.html>

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 added or deleted, 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.