



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 18, 2021

Gov. Beshear Announces 28 New COVID-19 Vaccination Sites, 291 Total Sites

([Press Release](#)) On Thursday, Gov. Andy Beshear announced the state is opening an additional 28 vaccination sites, for a total of 291 sites across the commonwealth. "There is now a provider that has vaccine close to where everybody lives in the commonwealth," said Gov. Beshear.

Kentuckians can see a list of all new vaccination sites [here](#). To see a map of all regional vaccination sites, click [here](#). For more information, go to vaccine.ky.gov or kycovid19.ky.gov/ky-covid-vaccine.

The Governor also updated Kentuckians on visitation protocols in some of the state's long-term care facilities that will take effect Saturday, Feb. 20. Visitors must schedule with the facility ahead of time. Up to two visitors (if from the same household) can visit a resident at one time. Visitors need to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of the visit or of a COVID-19 vaccination. Detailed guidance will be posted [here](#) tomorrow.

With regards to COVID cases, the Governor reported 963 new cases today, with a positivity rate of 7.07%. There were 37 new deaths reported. 935 are currently hospitalized, with 260 in the ICU and 130 on vents.

See full press release for more: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=619>

Homeland Security seizes more than 11 million counterfeit N95 in nationwide scam

(*CBS News*, February 18) More than 11 million counterfeit N95 masks across five states have been seized by the Department of Homeland Security in recent weeks, and authorities say suspected victims of the scam include hospitals and medical facilities in at least 12 states. That total includes 1 million fake masks seized today at a warehouse in Western Maryland, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced Wednesday. < [Read More](#) >

One-third of troops turning down COVID vaccine, Pentagon officials say

(*Politico*, February 17) Approximately one-third of troops have declined to take the coronavirus vaccine so far, Pentagon officials told the House Armed Services Committee on Wednesday. Maj. Gen. Jeff Taliaferro, the vice director of operations for the Joint Staff, said the military has a two-thirds acceptance rate for the vaccine, meaning as much as a third isn't taking it. The vaccine is not yet mandatory for service members. < [Read More](#) >

CDC Advisers Weigh Second-Shot Delay to Quicken Vaccine Uptake

Learn more: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-02-16/cdc-advisers-weigh-guidance-for-delaying-second-covid-shots>

In lab experiment, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine less potent against coronavirus variant

Learn more: <https://www.statnews.com/2021/02/17/pfizer-biontech-vaccine-less-potent-against-coronavirus-variant/>

Related story from CIDRAP: [Pfizer, Moderna vaccines may be less effective against B1351 variant](#)

Life expectancy falls 1 year amid pandemic in biggest drop since WWII

(*The Hill*, February 18) Life expectancy fell one year in the first six months of 2020 in the biggest drop since World War II as the country dealt with the coronavirus pandemic, according to a report released Thursday. Initial data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) determined that the life expectancy fell from 78.8 years in 2019 to 77.8 years during the first half of 2020. Men saw a drop of 1.2 years to 75.1 years, while women saw a decrease of 0.9 years to 80.5 years amid the pandemic. < [Read More](#) >

Extra cleaning during pandemic may increase asthma flare-ups

(UPI) The coronavirus pandemic has turned many people into clean freaks, but new research suggests that deploying all those extra household disinfectants might be triggering asthma flare-ups.

"We became concerned with increased cleaning and disinfecting related to the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with people spending more time indoors may expose people with asthma to more environmental triggers for asthma symptoms," said study co-leader Kamal Eldeirawi. He's an associate professor in the University of Illinois, Chicago, College of Nursing. "This prompted our interest in studying the impact of disinfectants and asthma control among those living with asthma," Eldeirawi said in a university news release.

Full story: https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2021/02/16/Extra-cleaning-during-pandemic-may-increase-asthma-flare-ups/7691613485484/

**In a World First, UK Calling All Volunteers
Willing to be Exposed to COVID**

Learn more: <http://newser.com/s302653>

**NETEC COVID WEBINAR
Saliva Testing for SARS-CoV-2: Novel Strategies for Screening Programs**

February 24 @ 1 PM ET/Noon CT

[REGISTER HERE](#)

**Gov. Beshear visits Boyd County Warming Shelter;
Many describe the area as 'war zone' from severe weather**

Full story: <https://www.wkyt.com/app/2021/02/18/gov-beshear-visits-boyd-county-many-describe-area-as-war-zone-from-severe-weather/>

Carbon monoxide death in Laurel County blamed on generator

(WKYT) - Some people are turning to alternate heat sources due to the power outages. If not used properly, those can be dangerous. In Laurel County, a carbon monoxide death is under investigation. Tuesday, troopers responded to a call at a home on Spring Cut Circle. Three people were suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning. Troopers found Tony and Darlene Ragland along with their six-year-old grandson in the home. All were transported to the hospital.

Story link: <https://www.wkyt.com/app/2021/02/17/carbon-monoxide-death-in-laurel-county-blamed-on-generator/>

**Related - CDC Health Alert Network – Advisory 440
2021 Winter Storms—Clinical Guidance for
Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning**

Summary - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reminding healthcare professionals seeing patients from the areas affected by recent winter storms to maintain a high index of suspicion for carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Other people who may be exposed to the same CO source may need to be identified and evaluated.

The signs and symptoms of CO exposure are variable and nonspecific. A tension-type headache is the most common symptom of mild CO poisoning. Other [common symptoms](#) of CO poisoning are dizziness, weakness, drowsiness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.

Clinical manifestations of severe CO poisoning include cardiovascular and neurological effects: tachycardia, tachypnea, hypotension, metabolic acidosis, dysrhythmias, myocardial ischemia or infarction, noncardiogenic pulmonary edema, irritability, impaired memory, cognitive and sensory disturbances, ataxia, altered or loss of consciousness, seizures, coma, and death, although any organ system might be involved.

Although CO poisoning can be fatal, children, pregnant women, the unborn, persons with sickle cell disease, older adults, and persons with chronic illness (e.g., heart or lung disease) are particularly high risk.

Background - Severe winter storms have left millions of homes and businesses without power across the United States. Those who lose power may turn to alternate power sources such as gasoline generators and may use propane or charcoal grills for cooking and heating their homes. If used or placed improperly, these sources can lead to CO build up inside buildings, garages, or campers and poison the people and animals inside.

When obtaining a focused history of patient activities and health symptoms, exposure to a CO source may become apparent. Appropriate and prompt diagnostic testing and treatment are crucial to reduce morbidity and prevent mortality from CO poisoning. Identifying and mitigating the CO source is critical in preventing other poisoning cases.

Recommendations for Clinicians

1. Consider CO poisoning in patients affected by winter storms, particularly those in areas currently without power. Assess symptoms and recent patient activities that point to likely CO exposure. Evaluation should also include examination for other conditions, including smoke inhalation, trauma, medical illness, or intoxication.
2. Administer 100% oxygen until the patient is symptom-free or until a diagnosis of CO poisoning has been ruled out.
3. Perform carboxyhemoglobin (COHgb) testing when CO poisoning is suspected. Venous or arterial blood may be used for testing. A fingertip pulse multiple wavelength spectrophotometer, or pulse CO-oximeter, can be

used to measure heart rate, oxygen saturation, and COHgb levels in the field, but any suspicion of CO poisoning should be confirmed with a COHgb level by multiple wavelength spectrophotometer (CO-oximeter). A conventional two-wavelength pulse oximeter is not accurate when COHgb is present. For more information, see CDC's [Clinical Guidance for Carbon Monoxide Poisoning After a Disaster](#).

4. An elevated COHgb level of 2% or higher for non-smokers and 9% or higher COHgb level for smokers strongly supports a diagnosis of CO poisoning. The COHgb level must be interpreted in light of the patient's exposure history and length of time away from CO exposure, as levels gradually fall once the patient is removed from the exposure. In addition, CO can be produced endogenously as a by-product of heme metabolism. Patients with sickle cell disease can have an elevated COHgb level as a result of hemolytic anemia or hemolysis. Additional information about interpretation of COHgb levels can be found within the [Clinical Guidance](#), or call your local Poison Control at (800) 222-1222.
5. Hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy should be considered in consultation with a toxicologist, hyperbaric oxygen facility, or Poison Control Center (800) 222-1222. For additional management considerations, consult a medical toxicologist, Poison Control at (800) 222-1222, or a hyperbaric oxygen facility.
6. Be aware that CO exposure may be ongoing for others spending time in or near the same environment as the patient. These individuals should be evaluated and tested as described in this advisory.
7. Healthcare professionals treating people for CO poisoning should notify emergency medical services (EMS), the fire department, or law enforcement to investigate and mitigate the source and advise people when it is safe to return.
8. Advise patients about [safe practices related to generators](#), grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices. Stress that that these devices should never be used inside an enclosed space, home, basement, garage, or camper — or even outside near an open window or window air conditioner.

For More Information: [Clinical Guidance for Carbon Monoxide \(CO\) Poisoning After a Disaster](#)

**In Texas, a Dire Situation for Hospitals
Hospitals are running out of water**

(Newser) The [chaos in Texas](#) amid freezing weather that has left millions in the cold and dark has made its way to the state's hospitals. One issue that has caused things to become especially dire at medical centers: a lack of running water, resulting in problems ranging from low water pressure that's causing hospitals' heating systems to fail, to other logistical and hygienic nightmares.

Due to the severe cold, some pipes carrying water to hospitals have frozen and burst, and many hospitals are now desperately trying to find water from what the [Washington Post](#) calls "unorthodox sources," including water trucks, grocery store chains, park irrigation supplies, and local fire departments. St. David's South Austin Medical Center, for example, has run out of water and heat, leading the hospital to discharge some patients early, cancel "nonemergent procedures," and pass out jugs and bottles of water for patients and workers to drink and use for hand-washing, per [KVUE](#).

Staffers there have also been told to use trash bags to take feces out of toilets.

Full story: <https://www.newser.com/story/302693/in-texas-a-dire-situation-for-hospitals.html>

Related story - EXPLAINER: Why the power grid failed in Texas and beyond
ABC News: <https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/explainer-power-grid-failed-texas-75957609>

Experts warn Texas could become 'mass casualty event'

(Raw Story, February 18) For at least three days millions across Texas have suffered with no power, snow, ice, and sub-freezing temperatures. Many are now without water, while others are under a boil water order. The number of homes without power has dropped from four million to 2.6 million, but no one is saying when power will be fully restored, and it appears Texas is relying on warming weather for the fix. FEMA, under the Biden administration, has already sent generators, diesel, water, and blankets to help. [<Read More >](#)

**Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines
Extracts from [February 18, 2021](#)**

[NIH Funds Study to Evaluate Remdesivir for COVID-19 in Pregnancy](#) (NIH) A new study funded by the National Institutes of Health will evaluate the effects of remdesivir in pregnant women who have been prescribed the drug to treat COVID-19. The study, which will be conducted at 17 sites in the continental United States and Puerto Rico, aims to determine how pregnant women metabolize the drug and whether there are any potential side effects. The study is funded by NICHD, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID),

and the National Institute of Mental Health, all part of NIH. Called IMPAACT 2032, the study will be conducted by the NIH-funded International Maternal Pediatric Adolescent AIDS Clinical Trials (IMPAACT) Network.

[Pregnancy Tied to Estimated 70% Higher COVID-19 Rate](#) (*CIDRAP*) Pregnant women in Washington state were infected with COVID-19 at a 70% higher rate than others of similar ages, with nonwhite women shouldering a disproportionate burden, according to a study published yesterday in the American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology. They estimated that women who delivered 13.9 of every 1,000 newborns had COVID-19, compared with 7.3 of 1,000 state residents aged 20 to 39 years (rate ratio [RR], 1.7). After excluding 45 coronavirus cases detected through asymptomatic screening, the infection rate in pregnant women fell to 11.3 per 1,000 cases (RR, 1.3).

**CISA, FBI, and Treasury Expose Latest Tool in
North Korea's Cryptocurrency Theft Scheme: *AppleJus***

(*Homeland Security Today*, February 17) The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) issued a joint cybersecurity advisory about North Korean government malicious activity the U.S. government refers to as "*AppleJus*." The advisory highlights technical details on this specific threat activity, mitigations for networks compromised by it, and recommended proactive mitigations for defense against it. <[Read More](#)>

FEMA EMI Cybersecurity Symposium March 2021

See more: [1636 - Training Opportunity - K8515 Cybersecurity Symposium March 2021](#)

Earthquake Preparedness: USGS announces new alert system

(*The Chief*, February 17) Starting March 11, **ShakeAlert**-powered earthquake early warning alerts will be available for delivery directly to wireless devices in Oregon, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). In May 2021, Washington state will follow suit and complete the **ShakeAlert** public alerting rollout across the entire West Coast. California enabled ShakeAlert-powered alerts in October 2019. <[Read More](#)>

Roadway safety training resources for emergency operations, public safety

Roadway emergency operations are [the No. 1 traumatic risk firefighters and EMS responders face](#), according to the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). Among law enforcement officers, [motor vehicle-related incidents are a leading cause of line-of-duty deaths](#), according to a January 2021 report from the National Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Fund (NLEOMF).

In [a 2019 report](#), the Emergency Responder Safety Institute (ERSI) identified the most critical success factors needed to improve responder safety at roadway incidents, and a top priority was more effective training and education on roadway safety for emergency personnel and civilian drivers.

ERSI has developed [a comprehensive set of free resources and training](#) for emergency responder roadway safety at their website [Respondersafety.com](#). The website is managed by the Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association, in partnership with the United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the United States Department of Justice.

Some of the many roadway safety resources available on [ResponderSafety.com](#) include:

- A searchable database of incidents where responders were struck by vehicles or involved in crashes.
- Teaching topic packages for instructor-led training.
- A series brief videos illustrating safety practices.
- Public awareness materials, media kits for Public Information Officers and public educators.
- White papers on emergency vehicle visibility technology and best practices.
- An annual Safety Stand Down week with training plans and materials.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has also created [a set of free resources](#) for training and promoting awareness of motor vehicle safety issues for law enforcement officers.

The USFA provides [a collection of the most current resources, research, and initiatives on emergency vehicle and roadway operations safety](#), and links to resources from partner organizations. (Source: [USFA](#))

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.