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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advisory

[SONORA] – State and Federal health authorities continue to monitor an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) which originated in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The health risk to the general public in Tuolumne County, in California, and in the United States remains low, though the situation is rapidly evolving, and it is important to stay informed and prepared.

The County is conducting preparedness and response activities according to existing plans and current guidance, and in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Department of Public Health, regional partners, and local healthcare and community partners.

“While there are currently no cases of COVID-19 in Tuolumne County, Tuolumne County Public Health is working closely with local health providers and state health authorities to monitor this outbreak,” said Dr. Eric Sergienko, acting Tuolumne County Health Officer.

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that are common among animals and humans. The novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that was not previously seen in animals and humans. Since it is a new strain, there is no immunity in the human population. Typically, human coronaviruses cause mild to moderate respiratory illness. Symptoms are very similar to the flu, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

In some cases, COVID-19 can cause more severe respiratory illness. Although we are all at risk for catching COVID-19, older persons and those with chronic lung disease and/or weakened immune system are at a higher risk of severe illness.

“Because there is no vaccine available at this time, everyone can do their part by taking precautions that help prevent the spread of all respiratory viruses,” said Dr. Sergienko. He asks that the community take the following steps commonly used to help avoid illnesses like the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

- Stay home from work or school and limit contact with others if you are sick with fever and a cough
- Clean surfaces that are touched often, like toys and doorknobs, etc.

Tuolumne County Public Health will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates to the public as needed. The following are links to more information:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- <https://www.facebook.com/tuolumnecountypublichealth>
