



Columbia County Board of Supervisors

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FROM: Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell

COUNTY 'NOWHERE NEAR PEAK'

"We haven't reached anywhere near the peak of the COVID-19 cases we expect in the county," said Columbia County Department of Health Director Jack Mabb on Tuesday.

The lack of testing kits is hamstringing public health officials and medical providers who rely on accurate information, Mabb said. He had expected more kits to come Monday, but had seen nothing as of Tuesday morning. With that, no new positive results of COVID-19 affecting county residents were added to those already identified as of Monday.

"We do plan to be overwhelmed at some point," Mabb added. "We don't know how many are out there that may already have the disease. As you can see in New York City, the number of cases rise as more tests are given. When we do get more kits, it's just going to get busier."

Director of Emergency Management Director David Harrison, Jr., said that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requests had gone out from county emergency service providers, but that the agencies are not receiving their full requests. Adding another dimension to procurement issues is the rise of fraudulent equipment hitting the market. "We have to be very careful where we make our purchases," he said.

Housing for quarantined individuals has been established, while county officials are seeking more locations, Mabb said. "Once the Department of Health quarantines someone, we are responsible for them."

In addition, large buildings that could serve as temporary hospitals for as many as 1,000 patients are being identified.

There are a lot of rumors out there," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell. "Much of it is not true. I recommend relying on the county Board of Health for the accurate, most up-to-date information."

Reliable sources of information locally, according to Murell, are the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Operations Center.

The telephone number for the county Emergency Operations Center is 518-828-1212. The EOC is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.