



NEWS RELEASE

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The Woodlands Township Update, March 18, 2020

The Woodlands Township publishes this update to inform residents and businesses regarding the COVID-19 and its impact on The Woodlands Township. Additionally, The Woodlands Township has launched a special COVID-19 information page that can be found at www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/covid19, formatted for both desktop and mobile devices. Please sign up for Township news and notifications at www.thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/notifyme.

The Woodlands Township Chairman Gordy Bunch will be hosting a series of Facebook Live video posts over the next several days – *search* for The Woodlands Township on Facebook. The Township is also on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, NextDoor and YouTube.

Township Board of Directors meeting for Thursday, March 19, 2020 is cancelled

The meeting of the Board of Directors of The Woodlands Township, originally scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, March 19, 2020, has been cancelled in compliance with Montgomery County's Amended Order Affecting the Occupancy of Premises Throughout Montgomery County and preventing events greater than 10 persons at all publicly held facilities across Montgomery County. The Woodlands Township is working on remote board meeting capabilities for a scheduled Wednesday, March 25, 2020 meeting.

An Important Message from The Woodlands Water Agency

The Woodlands Water Agency continues to monitor Coronavirus / COVID-19 guidance from federal and state government agencies. The emergence of COVID-19 has caused understandable questions about public health and local water supplies.

To be clear, the water supply in The Woodlands, as provided by the 10 municipal utility districts (MUDs) in our area, is safe. Water in The Woodlands continues to be certified by the State of Texas as a "Superior Water System."

According to the CDC: "The COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water. Conventional water treatment methods that use filtration and disinfection, such as those in most municipal drinking water systems, should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19."

More CDC information is available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>



Restaurant, Bars, Gyms and Theater Closures/Altered Service

The Woodlands Township has received notification that Harris County and Montgomery County have asked that all restaurants, bars and movie theaters modify or cease their services for the next 15 days.

Effective as of 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2020 and continuing until April 2, 2020, unless terminated or modified by an order, the County Judge of **Montgomery County**, Texas, deems it in the public interest to issue the following order(s):

- 1) All restaurants shall cease all onsite dining operations.
- 2) All restaurants may continue to-go, takeout, delivery, and catering operations.
- 3) Restaurants shall not allow any employee to report to work who is demonstrating signs of any form of sickness.
 - Strict hand washing and sanitizing operations must be deployed.
- 4) All bars or clubs shall cease operations.
- 5) Gyms, movie theaters, or amusement type businesses shall cease operations.
- 6) Any event sponsored or permitted by a political subdivision in Montgomery County shall cease.
- 7) Events greater than 10 persons at all publicly held facilities across Montgomery County shall cease.
- 8) Any event greater than 10 persons held at private facilities is urged to cancel.
- 9) Nursing homes and senior living centers should limit visitation of the public within their facilities.
- 10) Retail stores, private businesses, clubs or civic organizations and religious organizations to include churches, synagogues, mosques or other places of worship are urged to comply with the CDC guidelines related to 10 persons gathering in any one place or at one time.
- 11) Retail stores who sell groceries or medical supplies are exempt from this order.

[Harris County Order](#) | [Montgomery County Order](#)

Message from Waste Management

Based on the information currently available to us, we are maintaining our standard operations, and do not anticipate major service interruptions at this time in The Woodlands. The COVID-19 situation is very fluid, however, and if circumstances change that would impact upon our ability to provide services as scheduled, we will update our customers and communities. In that regard, please note that we are preparing our employees and facilities across the U.S. and Canada with potential action plans to allow us to continue to provide the services our customers need and expect. These include business continuity plans, supply chain considerations, customer support center redundancy planning, and driver backup strategies.

Message from Precinct 3

In order to reduce the risk of spreading the Coronavirus in Montgomery County, the Commissioner Precinct Three office is closed to the public until further notice. The Precinct 3 team will remain working as normal but there will be no in-person meetings for the foreseeable



future. Our staff will still be available by phone or email. Our crews will still be out continuing their road and bridge functions as usual and the recycle facility will be open.

The Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center and all South County Community Centers are closed until further notice in order to protect the populations at greatest risk of getting sick from this illness. Additionally, the Commissioner is not allowing Pct. 3 employees who have traveled by plane, boat, bus or train in the recent weeks to return to work, same for those that are or have been ill. We have extended this policy to include visits from other county offices.

If you are in need of immediate attention, please feel free to call 281-367-3977.

Presidential Guidelines

On March 18, 2020, President Trump and the White House Coronavirus Task Force issued new guidelines to help protect Americans during the global Coronavirus outbreak. Even if you are young and otherwise healthy, you are at risk—and your activities can increase the risk of contracting the Coronavirus for others. Everyone can do their part. [The new recommendations are simple to follow but will have a resounding impact on public health.](#)

Board of Directors Holds Emergency Meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors took several steps on Monday, March 16, 2020, to help slow the world-wide spread of COVID-19 through a series of decisions regarding facilities, including parks and sports fields, meetings, and transportation services. The Emergency Meeting was held at 4 p.m. Monday, March 16, 2020 at The Woodlands Township's Board Chambers to discuss matters related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic.

[Read on for additional information related to the meeting](#) | [Watch the video of the meeting](#)

Township events cancelled, parks and playgrounds closed

All Township events are canceled through May 10, 2020. All Township parks are closed, including parks, dog parks, park restrooms, spraygrounds, pools, boathouses, recreation centers and Texas TreeVentures; all sportsfield reservations are suspended; Town Center Trolley service is suspended, and The Township has restricted use of public meeting rooms through May 10, 2020.

Stay Safe on the Pathways

The Township pathways remain open. Please observe social distancing measures and utilize the following tips from the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) to stay healthy while outdoors. Please do not congregate in large groups.

- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to heading to trails — wash hands, carry hand sanitizer, do not use trails if you have symptoms, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, etc.



- Observe at all times CDC's minimum recommended social distancing of six feet from other people. Practice it and know what it looks like. Keep it as you walk, bike or hike.
- Warn other trail users of your presence and as you pass to allow proper distance and step off trails to allow others to pass, keeping minimum recommended distances at all times. Signal your presence with your voice, bell or horn.
- Note that trail and park users may find public restrooms closed — be prepared before you leave and time outings so that you are not dependent on public restrooms.
- Bring water or drinks — public drinking fountains may be disabled and should not be used, even if operable.
- Bring a suitable trash bag. Leave no trash, take everything out to protect parks/pathways staff.

The Woodlands Fire Department not accepting visitors or donations

The Woodlands Fire Department reports that they are not accepting visitors or donations. The Woodlands Fire Department has activated the Emergency Operations Center and increased response capability by adding additional response resources.

Recycling Center to Remain Open

The Woodlands Recycling Center will remain open. If residents are looking for places to recycle other items such as electronics, light bulbs and batteries, alternative recycling locations can be found in the [Recycle More Guide](#). Please note, the [Precinct 3 Recycling Center](#) is closed until further notice.

Montgomery County Update

In Montgomery County, and in the rest of the nation, testing supplies are limited. Tests are being performed at private medical offices, urgent cares and hospitals in Montgomery County that are using private labs. By law, providers (hospitals, physicians, etc.) are only required to notify Public Health of POSITIVE results. We are no longer receiving the numbers on all tests performed in Montgomery County. At this time, we have received 7 positive tests.

[Read the complete MCPHD update.](#)

HCPH | Important Updates Regarding COVID-19 Testing Sites

Harris County Public Health, along with the City of Houston and community partners are working to establish COVID-19 testing sites. We will announce the locations and procedures when details are finalized.

Despite media reports, the sites are NOT scheduled to open on March 18. Please do not show up to a location you may have heard is a testing site. Please note, testing will be for high-risk groups with symptoms that have been through a screening process only. We will provide more information on the screening process and testing process once that information is available. If you show up without being properly screened, you will NOT be tested for COVID-19, and your



presence could unintentionally put others at risk, cause delays, and interrupt the healthcare professionals who are working expeditiously to open the testing sites.

Anyone currently experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should contact their healthcare provider. Harris County residents without access to healthcare can call the triage line for COVID-19-related questions at 713-634-1110 from 9am-7pm, 7 days a week. For more information on COVID-19, please go to www.ReadyHarris.org or www.hcphtx.org.

Community Testing

The availability of drive-through testing for the community is being actively addressed. More information will be forthcoming regarding availability and locations. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider, and tell them about your symptoms and your travel or exposure to a COVID-19 patient before arriving to seek medical care. Additionally, two local hotlines have been established: 936-523-5040 (Montgomery County Public Health District) and 713-634-1110 (Harris Health System Nurse Line).

School Closures

Please note, school closure dates may change as more information becomes available. Please stay in touch with your affected school district.

- [Conroe ISD \(CISD\)](#): Closed through April 10, 2020.
- [Tomball ISD](#): Closed through April 10, 2020.
- [Magnolia ISD](#): Closed through April 10, 2020.

Food Banks

Local food banks are inventorying their resources to ascertain what will be needed in the days to come. Many Township residents have expressed a desire to volunteer or donate; please see the information below regarding those needs.

- [Interfaith of The Woodlands](#): Interfaith is continuing to provide Senior Grocery Delivery, Crisis Assistance Services and Food Pantry Assistance. The biggest need in the coming weeks is funding to purchase specific and essential foods, toiletries and paper goods in bulk from local grocery stores and The Food Bank. [Please read on to learn how you can lend support to Interfaith.](#)
- [Montgomery County Food Bank](#): The Montgomery County Food Bank's (MCFB) operations are continuing as normal. The MCFB is monitoring the situation closely and taking necessary precautions to help make sure that food and product remains safe and that our distributions and volunteer activities can continue. [MCFB is conducting a virtual food drive; please read on to learn how you can help.](#)



The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion

In response to recent recommendations established by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion will be postponing or canceling previously-scheduled events and activities.

The Pavilion administrative offices will close beginning Tuesday, March 17 (with an anticipated reopen date of Wednesday, April 1). The Pavilion Box Office (originally scheduled to reopen for the season on March 23) will now remain closed until further notice. Guests can still get information and their questions answered by emailing info@woodlandscenter.org or by messaging one of the Pavilion's social media channels.

Purchasing and Distribution of Groceries and Supplies

The Township encourages residents to act with care with regards to the purchasing of groceries and supplies. There are no anticipated grocery shortages and the food supply chain in the U.S. is well-established. Local grocers are restocking as quickly as possible from their warehouses. Please shop responsibly, purchase what your family needs as you would normally and leave goods on the shelf for your neighbor and fellow residents.

Steps to Help Stop the Spread of Coronavirus

[Non-pharmaceutical interventions](#) like hand-washing, disinfecting surfaces around your home, and staying home when you are sick are the most important response strategies. At this time, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19, and no medications approved to treat it.

The best way to prevent infection is to take precautions to avoid exposure to this virus, which are similar to the precautions you take to avoid the flu.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

For more information, please see <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus>.