March 23, 2020

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For Immediate Release

**Athens County is responding to Governor DeWine's Stay at Home order and seeking personal protective equipment.**

Starting tonight, March 23rd at 11:59 pm, all non-essential service employees are ordered by Governor DeWine to stay at home until Monday, April 6th. The order can be found on the Ohio.gov website and identifies services that are considered essential. We encourage all local employers to read the order and determine if your business is an essential service. We encourage employers to lean toward the spirit of the law which is working hard to protect residents of Ohio from exposure to COVID-19. Going shopping, seeking medical care, and going to the pharmacy are allowable activities under the order.

For members of the community who are at home, we strongly encourage social distancing. An article on the ODH website, “Social Distancing: This is Not a Snow Day,” social distancing includes “no play dates, parties, sleepovers, or friends/families visiting each other houses or apartments.” While the governor encourages outdoor play with social distancing, playgrounds are closed. The Ohio Department of Health website also has many suggestions for families about what they can do at home such as virtual exhibits and activities checklists. We encourage you to check on neighbors and support those who are the most vulnerable by supplying food and medicine at their doorstep.

The Athens City-County Health Department is collecting personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders and health care providers. We are accepting donations of gloves, gowns, face shields, and masks. Please call ahead if you have PPE to donate as the health department is currently closed to walk-in traffic.

USE. TRUSTED. SOURCES. The potential for misinformation and rumors during times of high-profile global events/public health threats is high. Verify information before trusting.
The Ohio Department of Health call center is open for specific questions about COVID-19, 1-833-4 ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). For Athens-specific questions regarding COVID-19, contact the Athens City-County Health Department at 740-592-4431. For the most recent information regarding COVID-19, visit the Athens City-County Health Department website www.athenspublichealth.org and Facebook page, twitter@acchd_oh, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov, and the Ohio Department of Health Coronavirus page, www.coronavirus.ohio.gov.

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