



## Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay

**Learn the facts. Take action. Be prepared**

### **Precautions for Coronavirus Nehalem Bay area residents**

**Sponsored by: Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay**  
**Developed by: Victoria Holt**

At EVCNB our mission is preparedness. That's never been truer than it is today, when being prepared for the coronavirus pandemic can make a crucial difference in the health of our community.

There is much more coronavirus infection in Oregon than we know about. A total of 30 cases were diagnosed statewide as of March 12, but fewer than 500 people have been tested, so the true numbers are likely much higher. The state epidemiologist estimated yesterday there are actually 150-250 cases in Oregon, and that number can double each week. That means there will be up to 75,000 cases in our state by mid-May if no changes are made in community practices. Our health care system cannot handle that magnitude of serious and contagious illness.

The Nehalem Bay area is at risk. We are not an isolated community - we see numerous visitors from outside the area who frequent our grocery stores, restaurants, and shops.

And many of our full-time residents travel frequently. We cannot count on the current apparent absence of disease to protect us.

The speed at which the coronavirus will spread depends upon a number of factors. One key factor is the contact rate, the rate at which infected individuals come close enough to others to spread the disease. Each person who avoids infection breaks a link in a potential branching transmission chain. By avoiding the infection, we not only avoid passing it to a vulnerable co-worker or an elderly neighbor, we break a chain that could otherwise result in dozens if not hundreds or thousands of cases over time. NOW is the time to take precautions. It will be much more effective now than waiting until the first cases are diagnosed in our community.

### **What can each person in the Nehalem Bay area do now to avoid getting and passing on the coronavirus?**

- Avoid unnecessary personal contact with other people. If you are employed, work from home if possible. Try to conduct necessary meetings online rather than in person. Do not attend large events (the governor has prohibited gatherings of 250 people or more, but smaller gatherings are a risk as well). If you are over 60 years of age or have ongoing medical conditions, you are at higher risk of serious complications if infected. It's prudent for those of us in this group to cancel all nonessential travel and stay home as much as possible
- If you are around other people, **practice consistent and strict social distancing**: keep a minimum of 6 feet from any other person and don't shake hands. Avoid anyone who is coughing or sneezing. Don't share food or eating utensils. Avoid surfaces that may be contaminated, and don't touch your face.
- Wash **your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds** frequently and after any contact outside your home, and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. [Best practices for hand washing!](#)
- **If you are sick, stay home and away from other people**; especially stay away from those who are over 60 or have ongoing medical conditions. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, using a tissue or the crook of your elbow, not your hand. Call your health care provider or clinic ahead of time if

you plan to seek care to get advice about how to proceed. Do not show up unannounced.

This rapidly changing situation means time is of the essence. **We still have the power and the responsibility to make behavior changes that can contribute to coronavirus control.** Discuss these precautions with your family, and make sure everyone understands what to do. Now is the time to practice preparedness – for our own health and that of our community. We can make a difference.

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**Note about the author:** A resident of Manzanita, Victoria Holt is a MPH (Master's in Public Health) and PhD from University of Washington - both of these were in Epidemiology. Faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Washington for 26 years, retiring 3 years ago as Chair of the department.

**Be Prepared....Not Scared!**

**Emergency Volunteer Corps of Nehalem Bay**

**Promoting a Culture of Preparedness!**