

Message from the Mayor, May 21, 2020

Coronavirus impact unchanged for full week before Memorial Day

Congratulations Chatham Township! We have had no new confirmed cases of Coronavirus and not a single Covid-19 related death in more than a week.

Our last recorded new infection and our last recorded death were both reported on Tuesday, May 12.

Chatham Township has been hit hard with a total of 130 confirmed cases and 29 tragic deaths since the start of the pandemic, making it difficult to cheer about this week's success. Too many families have been touched by the loss of a loved one or the loss of a job, and all of us have been touched by the loss of our freedom of movement.

But while we can't cheer, we can feel a quiet sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. All of our sacrifices of staying home and maintaining social distance has paid off. Fighting Coronavirus has not been easy, but our efforts were not wasted.

What happens next?

Significantly, this latest measure of Chatham Township's success comes on the eve of Memorial Day when we remember the sacrifices made by those who fought successfully against our nation's previous threats. Staying home and missing a few restaurant meals in no way compares to the ultimate sacrifice made by those we remember on Memorial Day. But even that is a cause for optimism. If our country can overcome the life and death struggles of all our previous armed conflicts, then certainly we can overcome the challenges of this coronavirus pandemic.

Every state across the country is relaxing its pandemic restrictions this week, some with more caution than others. For each of us personally in Chatham Township, the key word needs to be caution. Health experts tell us the pandemic will not be controlled until we get a vaccine, and could come roaring back if we are not careful. With so many in the community working so hard – not just for themselves but for each other – we don't want to undo all of the good we've accomplished.

This will be far from a normal Memorial Day weekend. We all can enjoy the opportunities that are allowed under the newly relaxed pandemic restrictions. But please do it carefully. Continue to maintain safe social separation of six feet, wear masks in public, wash hands frequently, stay at home when ill and contact your physician when necessary. Do it for yourself, but also do it to protect those who are older or have underlying health problems and are far more vulnerable to this potentially fatal virus.

We have not yet defeated the coronavirus pandemic, but the lack of new infections shows that we in Chatham Township are making progress toward that goal. We can't let down our guard and undo all of the good we have accomplished.

On this Memorial Day, remember that our sacrifices during this pandemic are nothing compared to the sacrifices of many who have given us our way of life. But what we do, and what we refrain from doing, can still save lives.

Please be careful, exercise good judgment and stay safe.

Michael Kelly

Chatham Township Mayor