

HOT TOPIC #28: August 10, 2020

COVID-19 updates from San Juan County around subjects on the minds of islanders

SUMMARY of CASES to DATE

This Hot Topic will provide a broad overview of confirmed positive cases to date in San Juan County. This information is very general in nature to ensure privacy, but hopefully is a useful way to convey the nature of cases in San Juan County over the last five and a half months.

Some things to keep in mind:

-It is virtually impossible to draw any decisive conclusions from a case count of only 30. As they say in the finance industry “past performance is no guarantee of future results”.

-The world of public health surveillance is not a world of certainty. Determinations are often estimates or suppositions based on available information. They may change, they may be wrong.

-For reasons detailed on the [San Juan County Case Count page](#), these numbers may differ from WA DOH or other info sources.

COVID-19 CASE SUMMARIES as of 8/10/20

TOTAL CASES: 30

BY ISLAND:

ORCAS ISLAND: 11

LOPEZ ISLAND: 3

SAN JUAN ISLAND: 16

BY GENDER:

MALE: 13

FEMALE: 17

BY AGE:

0-19 years: 2

20-39 years: 7

40-59 years: 13

60-79 years: 6

80-99 years: 2

ESTIMATED LOCATION of TRANSMISSION:

Outside of San Juan County: 15

Within San Juan County: 7

Unknown: 8*

*Of the 8 Unknown Cases:

3 appear to be false positives (based on follow up testing)

2 were likely infected by a common source, unclear if outside of SJC or not

1 unable to discern due to unclear history from patient

2 were likely from outside of SJC due to travel history, but hard to pinpoint exact cause of transmission

NUMBER of CASES that RESULTED in SECONDARY CASES: 3

Average Number of Resulting Secondary Cases: 2

Nature of Secondary Cases: All 6 Resulted from close indoor familial contact

OF 30 CASES, REASONS for INITIAL TEST:

Symptomatic: 24

Potential Exposure (includes exposure from outside of SJC): 9

Asymptomatic Testing: 3

Unknown: 2

Note: there is some crossover between symptomatic and potential exposure.

CONTACT TRACING:

Total number of individuals identified and investigated as close contacts: 147 *

* Total SJC residents that were investigated as close contacts of confirmed positives. Some are close contacts of cases that occurred outside of SJC.

Maximum number of close contacts for any one case: 12

Minimum number of close contacts for any one case: 0

Average number of close contacts per case: 4.9

Number of close contacts of SJC confirmed cases who tested positive: 6

NOTE: A “close contact” is defined as: being less than six feet apart for fifteen minutes or more. These situations aren’t always easy to quantify, and exceptions certainly occur- but that definition is the accepted standard.

WHAT DO THESE NUMBERS TELL US?

-So far, there has been no community transmission in San Juan County. The majority of cases have come from residents who traveled off-island and returned home. We need to remain vigilant.

-Limiting secondary cases in San Juan County to only 6 is a community achievement and a testament to the importance of face coverings, limited social interaction (keeping our “bubbles” small), and a rapid and effective public health response.

-All of the cases known to be acquired in San Juan County came from close household contact with an infected family member, or in one case, close household contact with an infected visitor from outside of San Juan County.

-While zero cases to date have been tied to casual contact with a “tourist” or short term visitor to the islands, it is a risk, and something that requires vigilance from businesses, workers, and the broader community.

-With 147 close contacts requiring investigation and monitoring throughout their risk window, public health surveillance is a labor intensive, but essential job.

Overall: so far, nice work San Juan County. Zero cases is always the goal, but 30 over five and a half months is worthy of being called a success. We need to stay focused and anticipate challenges to come, but the shared effort to date has led to good results. Thanks to all for ongoing sacrifice and dedication.