



MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office

DATE: August 24, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager *Steve McHarris*
FROM: Ashwini Kantak, Assistant City Manager
SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Update #20

The health of our employees, residents, and businesses remains the highest priority for the City of Milpitas.

Overview:

The City of Milpitas continues to implement its response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease in Santa Clara County, in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health. The previous Council update on August 10 discussed updates on County and State reporting, the mobile testing unit, employee self-health check app, summer day camps, and the microenterprise business grant program.

As the lead agency on public health, the County is regularly updating its guidance, which is available in five different languages and can be viewed [here](#). The County also has a [data dashboard](#) that is updated with all the latest information. The City continues to work closely with the County to ensure the safety and security of our community.

Key Updates:

Due to the SCU Lightning Complex fires that ignited on Sunday, August 16, the City of Milpitas has redirected resources to respond to immediate health and safety concerns. The City continued its full activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) last week, but mobilized more staff to respond to the wildfires as a distinct emergency incident from COVID-19. Due to fire personnel deployments and consideration of staff fatigue levels, the City's mobile testing unit is pausing mobile testing until September 4. Deployed personnel are expected to return to the City of Milpitas beginning Friday, August 28.

Weather conditions over the Pacific Ocean created another dry lightning strike event beginning the night of Sunday, August 23, through Monday, August 24, though the majority of the storm avoided Milpitas and Santa Clara County, landing instead in Sonoma County. A Red Flag Warning was issued beginning Sunday, August 23, but is no longer in effect as of the morning of Monday, August 24. As a result, the City of Milpitas is in no danger from new fires, while the Reservoir Fire is slowing, with containment lines protecting the City of Milpitas. The City continues to closely monitor the situation with 24/7 EOC staffing and close contact with other responding agencies. To ensure residents have access to updated, relevant information about the status of the fires, the City created a "SCU Lightning Complex Fire Information" page on the website, which can be found [here](#). The information includes a link to an interactive map showing areas impacted by current fire evacuation warnings and orders.

To assist with the need of Santa Clara County residents who were evacuated due to the CSU Lightning Complex fires, the Milpitas Library was opened as an Evacuation Resource Center, serving countywide residents. The library is not a shelter, but can assist families who are impacted by evacuations. Recreation and Community Services Director Renee Lorentzen spoke to the Milpitas Beat to clarify the resource center's function and urge continued preparedness from residents. That story is available [here](#).

Fire Chief Brian Sherrard also participated in a news story with the Milpitas Beat on Friday, August 21, to explain the principles of evacuation preparedness, potential weather hazards, and the preparation of the City of Milpitas. The article can be found [here](#), and is part of Milpitas's efforts to ensure a widespread distribution of accurate information about the fires and their impact to Milpitas.

Cooling Centers

The City of Milpitas will be operating a Cooling Center/Clean Air Center at the Sports Center beginning Monday, August 24 in response to heat and smoke conditions. The Sports Center has the capacity to hold 100 people with social distancing, and has a backup generator in case of power outages caused by nearby fires or Public Safety Power Shutoffs.

Business Assistance – Microenterprise Grants and Business Spotlight

Applications for the City's Microenterprise Grant Program closed Friday, August 21, at 6:00 p.m. More than 230 applications have been submitted for the \$200,000 in CDBG funding in partnership with [Enterprise Foundation](#). Eligible business applications will be entered into a lottery system, and 38 grant recipients will be selected.

While the City's Microenterprise Grant Program closed, staff launched a Milpitas Small Business Spotlight program encouraging residents to "shop local." Businesses can be nominated for the program by community members or business owners, with the nomination process open from August 21 through September 21. The City will hold a lottery to randomly select fifteen (15) local businesses, which will receive a 90-second video for promotional use.

The City of Milpitas also has a Virtual Business Assistance Center, which can be reached through email at businessassistance@ci.milpitas.ca.gov, and offers assistance in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Spanish.

Food Distribution

Since the Shelter-In-Place Order went into effect, over 115 seniors and counting have signed up for the Senior Nutrition Program and have started receiving meals. As of this week, more than 8,200 hot and healthy lunches have been served to seniors. The Nutrition Program also now offers seniors the option to order additional meals on Friday to take home for the weekend.

On Saturday, August 15, City employees partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank and distributed groceries to more than 800 families, exceeding the expectation of 700-750 families.

Community Partnerships: The City continues its community partner outreach to provide first responders with needed protective equipment, including hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, non-latex gloves, N95 face masks, and simple face masks in their original packaging. All donations for first responders can be dropped off at any Milpitas fire station.

Milpitas Response and Preparations

The City of Milpitas continues to operate at Stage 5 (Extremely High Response) of our Pandemic Management Plan. Operating at Stage 5 translates into the suspension of all non-essential City programs and services, the closure of City facilities, and full activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Our City's response will enable us to fulfill the four priorities of our Pandemic Response Plan:

1. **Protecting Our People:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees.
2. **Continuity of Essential City Operations:** Sustaining delivery of critical City services.
3. **Effective Communication:** Ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with our employees and externally with our community.
4. **Support the Santa Clara County Public Health Department:** Provide resource and communication support to assist the County Public Health Officer, the County, and all our partners in mutual commitment to protect the people of our communities.

Current Status on City Services and Operations:

All City facilities are closed to the public until further notice. The Office of Emergency Services continues to operate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a full activation level.

- **Police Department Public Lobby:** The Milpitas Police Department lobby is open during business hours, 8 AM to 5 PM. Supplemental safety measures are in place to ensure the safety of our staff and visitors. Community members can contact the non-emergency number (408-586-2400) for any further questions.
- **Public Meetings:** City Council meetings will continue to be set up for Council and required staff to call in. Due to the State's relaxation of the Brown Act, there will be no publicly accessible gathering space arrangements. The public may livestream the meeting on the City's [Website](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube channel](#), as well as virtually provide [public comments](#) during the meeting. The majority of Board, Commission, and Committee meetings are cancelled or postponed until further notice. Accommodations are being made to hold any essential meeting virtually.
- **City Employees:** The City is continuing to have employees work in person or remotely on essential services and other City functions. City staff has developed a self-check protocol that enables the safety of all employees. The protocols apply to all employees who are regularly coming to work to perform an essential service and may interact with the community or with other employees. Each City Department is responsible to coordinate the process for their respective employees. The self-check protocols are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and will be updated according to any changes to CDC guidance.
- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for in-person services, staff continues to provide permit and plan review services via email, website information, telephone, and tele or web conferencing. All construction is currently allowed as indicated in the latest Santa Clara County Public Health Order. However, construction activities

must implement mandatory risk reduction measures and comply with the [Mandatory Directive for Construction Projects](#) effective July 13. For detailed City services descriptions, refer to the latest [Permit Center and Inspection Services Information Flyer](#).

- **Recreation and Community Services:** All Recreation programs, classes, and facilities have been carefully evaluated to ensure public safety as programming restarts. The City has developed [an approach](#) for summer Recreation programming to restart that upholds guidance and best practices from County public health authorities. Parks are available for passive recreation only, and all Park playgrounds, picnic areas, and other shared spaces are taped off and closed to the public. All community programs and gatherings are cancelled until further notice, including private rentals in City facilities and park picnic areas. The Senior Center remains closed for programming. The center offers “to-go” lunches, as a continuation of its Senior Nutrition Lunch Program.
- **Other City Services:** Water, sewer, stormwater, and traffic signal operation services continue to operate at normal levels. Staff also continues to provide maintenance services for facilities, fleet, parks, enhanced cleaning for some City facilities, emergency services for trees and streets, and Underground Service Alert services for construction projects that are allowed under the County order. Staff continues to work with Milpitas Sanitation to ensure adequate staffing is available for solid waste collection in the City. Public Works staff are also working to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations for all public works services. The City has established a virtual Utility Call Center from employees’ homes to ensure continuity of services. Meter reading staff will continue to respond to water service calls and maintain the City’s meter reading schedule.
- **Volunteers:** The City's Milpitas Volunteer Program (MVP) continues to recruit volunteers for various community support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members looking to register as a volunteer and receive regular monthly updates on local volunteer needs can [visit our volunteer page](#).

Public Information:

The City will continue to update its [COVID-19 webpage](#) that has been established specifically for information about coronavirus. We will also be providing regular public updates through our social media accounts on Facebook, Nextdoor, and Twitter.