

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 20, 2021 ~

Quantifiable Traces of COVID -19 Detected in all City Of Watertown Wastewater Sources

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The Jefferson County Public Health Service is using every means scientifically possible to survey for COVID-19 prevalence in Jefferson County. In July 2020, the department formed a partnership with the City of Watertown to submit wastewater specimens to Quadrant Biosciences in Syracuse to test weekly and determine COVID-19 quantifiable prevalence in the city and surrounding communities that utilize the city's wastewater treatment facility. The city's wastewater treatment facility services approximately 55,000 people.

In the samples tested 8/17/2021, quantifiable COVID-19 virus was present in influent points A & B of the city's wastewater facility.

These reports, in line with the spike in cases currently happening in Jefferson County, demonstrate a significant presence of virus, support the increase in transmissions currently happening, and are a prediction of further increased cases and hospitalizations over the next 7-14 days.

It is critically important that everyone follow and practice CDC guidance, including obtaining vaccination; masking (both if you are vaccinated or unvaccinated) when indoors in public; distancing (while masked) from individuals in public, at school, and in the workplace; and disinfecting, including handwashing, and sanitizing commonly touched areas including door knobs/handles, faucets, light switches, etc.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, please, stay home. Do not go to work. Do not attend school. Avoid all public areas. Seek testing if you have symptoms for COVID-19, which include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

To find a testing site near you, visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>.

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