



September 21, 2020

For immediate release

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**First COVID-related death reported in Box Butte County brings total Panhandle deaths to nine  
Panhandle total: 810, Active: 85, Recovered: 716, Deaths: 9**

A male in his 50s with underlying health conditions is the first COVID-related death in Box Butte County, this brings the total deaths in the Panhandle to nine.

“We are deeply saddened to hear of his death. We wish his family and friends peace and comfort during their time of loss,” expressed Kim Engel, Panhandle Public Health District Director.

Please continue all of the important precautions to protect you, your loved ones, and your community from the spread of COVID. Wear a mask when possible, stay at least six feet away from others, monitor for any symptoms, and stay home if you are not feeling well. Please practice these safety tips out of an abundance of kindness and humility for others.

Unified Command confirms 16 more cases of COVID in the Panhandle since last reporting on Thursday, September 17. The investigations are complete, all close contacts will be quarantined and actively monitored for symptoms by public health officials.

<b>Children 19 and under: 5</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Exposure Type</b>
<b>Box Butte</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Community Spread</b>
<b>Scotts Bluff</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Close Contact</b>

<b>Adults: 11</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Exposure Type</b>
<b>Box Butte</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Close Contact</b>
<b>Cheyenne</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Community Spread</b>
<b>Morrill</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Close Contact</b>
<b>Morrill</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Community Spread</b>
<b>Scotts Bluff</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Close Contact</b>

Unified Command confirms 18 more recoveries in the Panhandle:

<b>Recovered: 18</b>
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County	Total
Box Butte	6
Cheyenne	1
Dawes	4
Grant	1
Morrill	2
Sheridan	4

#### Testing information and access for the Panhandle area:

- You can sign up for the following free testing at [Testnebraska.com](https://www.testnebraska.com) or 402-207-9377:
  - Box Butte General Hospital in **Alliance**: Monday-Friday, 9-10am
    - Ambulance Bay on the east side of the emergency department, watch for the green arrows
  - **Chadron** Community Hospital: Mondays & Fridays, 7-9am
    - Collections are at 821 Morehead Street (Old Hospital ER Entrance next to Wilson Park)
    - **Other testing opportunities for symptomatic patients may be available through the hospital as ordered by your Primary Care Practitioner, call the hospital at 747-2466 with questions.**
  - **Gordon** Memorial Hospital: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2-4pm
  - Regional West Health Services in **Scottsbluff**: Mondays & Fridays, Noon-4pm; Wednesdays, 2-6pm
  - **Sidney** Regional Medical Center: Tuesdays & Thursday, 7-9am
- Community Action Health Center in **Gering**: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, 7-8am
  - Testing is free, sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/yvdxr5mc>
- Morrill County Community Hospital in **Bridgeport**: Daily
  - Call 308-262-1616 for testing, same day results
- Contact your local hospital or clinic for information on testing access.

#### March 2-September 21, 2020

- **Total Tests Conducted: 13,588**
- **Positive: 810**
- **Cumulative Positivity Rate: 5.9%**
- **Recovered: 716**
- **Active Cases: 85**
- **Deaths: 9**
- **Active Hospitalizations: 6**
- **Total Cumulative Hospitalizations: 81**

Panhandle Public Health District, Region 21, 22, and 23 Emergency Management, and Scotts Bluff County Health Department are working as a unified command on this evolving situation. Essential updates will be regularly communicated to the public and community partners.

For the most up to date information from the CDC, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, learn, work, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community. Visit our website [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org).