



Joe Parisi
County Executive

County Of Dane
Office Of The County Executive

May 26, 2020
Contact: Ariana Vruwink
608-267-8823

Dane County to Launch First Responder COVID-19 Testing Program

County Secures Thousands of Test Kits to Help Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Police, and Fire Protect Front Line Workers

Dane County will purchase and distribute COVID-19 test kits to help keep first responders across the county safe, County Executive Joe Parisi announced today. The county will acquire test kits and make them available for police, fire, and EMS departments that provide 911 emergency response in Dane County.

"Our first responders are called into precarious, uncertain situations every day and COVID-19 adds an entirely new dynamic to that daily risk," Parisi said. "Being able to closely monitor those at a higher risk not only offers peace of mind for our responders and their loved ones but also those they're asked to care for."

The kits will be purchased and administered by Dane County Department of Emergency Management. They will be distributed under the guidance of medical personnel that already partner with each of these public safety agencies. Responders seeking reassurance after a potential exposure can request test kits through their departments or continue to contact their primary health care provider. Positive results will be reported to the Department of Public Health, reducing the risk of unintended community spread by responders who come into contact with vulnerable populations.

"Access to timely testing is one of a number of tools needed to slow the spread of COVID-19," Parisi added.

Dane County will initially acquire 3,500 tests for this project and may modify based on future COVID-19 spread in the community. The test kits will be purchased from the Madison-based Exact Sciences.

Dane County Emergency Management's Division of Emergency Medical Services assists with coordinating training, data collection, and protocol development. The Division works closely with 21 community-based ambulance services across the county. Those EMS agencies are staffed by more than 1,500 professionally trained individuals who responded to a combined 43,027 calls in 2019.

"I want to express my sincere appreciation to the leadership of County Executive Joe Parisi and Chief of Staff Josh Wescott on this critical initiative to keep emergency responders and frontline workers safe and prepared to carry out their duties and serve our citizens," said Dane County Emergency Management Director Charles Tubbs. "Carrie Meier, Dane County's Emergency Services Coordinator has done an excellent job keeping the entire county equipped with PPE and shall continue to be the lead for Dane County with both PPE and the testing initiative."

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