

Good evening. This is First Selectman Jayme Stevenson with a COVID-19 update for Thursday, January 7th, 2021.

There have been 104 cases reported between December 24th and today and 427 cases reported, in aggregate, for the months of November and December – clearly a significant time of virus transmission. Testing is at an all-time high as well. Over 12,000 tests were performed on Darien residents putting our positive rate at 3.4%. By comparison, the State of Connecticut’s positivity rate stands at 6.3% but hospitalizations statewide are decreasing. As of today, there have been 770 cases in Darien from 543 households, with a total of 25 hospitalizations and 7 deaths of Darien residents reported to date. Darien Public Schools report 21 active cases in the school community resulting in 35 quarantines. The district remains in remote posture until Monday, January 11th.

Two cases of the highly transmissible COVID strain were identified in Connecticut today. The State Health Department advises that anyone testing positive at this time should assume they have this new strain and take your illness and quarantine seriously. Genomic sequencing must be done to confirm the new strain so the State DPH will only do sample testing to determine the prevalence of the variant. The good news is that the new strain is not causing higher rates of severe illness.

Connecticut’s Vaccine Allocation Committee will be issuing final guidance on Phase 1B of their distribution plan next week. Currently, vaccines are being given to medical first responders including Post 53 and the Darien Police, healthcare workers including our town and school nurses and elderly living in congregate settings. Phase 1B will include folks 75 and over, front line essential workers, education and childcare providers, transportation workers, direct care social service providers and employees in the food, grocery, agriculture, farming and manufacturing industries.

An invitation from the CDC Vaccine Portal will be sent to eligible Phase 1B recipients within the next 2 weeks once Phase 1A vaccinations are complete. You will be able to schedule your vaccine with any available provider according to schedule availability. More information about the state’s vaccine distribution plan is available at www.ct.gov/covidvaccine and local vaccine information will be available on the Town’s Health Department web page at www.darienct.gov. As always, I encourage you to speak to your personal healthcare provider about whether the COVID-19 vaccine is safe for you.

I wish you a healthy and peaceful new year!

Thank you and good evening.