



# Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

## An Update from Deputy Town Manager Josh Gruber 9/9/2020

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update on what's happening around Town:

### **Disasters Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today.**

That's the theme of this year's National Preparedness Month (NPM), which is recognized each September to promote family and community disaster planning now and throughout the year. As we continue to respond to COVID-19, there is no better time to prepare for all potential disasters. With three months, including September, remaining in the 2020 hurricane season, we always remind our businesses, residents and guests to be prepared and visit our website at [hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://hiltonheadislandsc.gov) for useful tips on disaster planning.

### **Input Sought for Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The Lowcountry Council of Governments is updating the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan for Beaufort, Jasper, Colleton, and Hampton counties, and need your input on a survey regarding this topic. They want to hear from all citizens about their personal experiences and perceptions of natural hazards (i.e. hurricanes, tornadoes, floods). Each person's thoughts and experiences can really help with planning to save lives and to prevent major property damage and other losses caused by natural disasters in our region.

Please complete this survey and share it with as many people as you can!

Survey Link: <https://hurricanes.tornadoe/www.surveymonkey.com/r/LowcountryNaturalHazardMitigation2020>

The survey will be open until September 30, 2020. Responses will be kept anonymous. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Maleena Parkey](mailto:mparkey@lowcountrycog.org), PhD, Senior Planner at the Lowcountry Council of Governments at [mparkey@lowcountrycog.org](mailto:mparkey@lowcountrycog.org).

### **COVID-19 Cases in Our Community**

Hilton Head Regional Healthcare CEO Jeremy Clark gave an update on COVID-19 this morning during the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce's Weekly Tele-Town Hall Call. As of today, Hilton Head Hospital and Coastal Carolina Hospital are caring for seven patients with COVID-19. The hospitals have not seen a surge of patients with the disease, but its staff remains ready to care for those patients as well as patients with other conditions.

If you are looking for the latest figures on the number of cases of COVID-19 on Hilton Head Island, please visit [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov) or the Town's COVID-19 hub page at



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[www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19). DHEC maintains the latest data on COVID-19 cases across the state and in our community, and we integrate some of that data on our website. If you need mental health resources to deal with stress and anxiety brought on by COVID-19, visit the website for the S.C. Department of Mental Health ([www.scdmh.net](http://www.scdmh.net)).

As always, please be mindful of the following safety measures to protect yourself and others from getting or spreading COVID-19:

- Wear a mask in public.
- Distance yourself physically by six feet.
- Avoid group gatherings.
- Wash your hands often.
- Get tested.
- Stay home if you are sick.

## **Status of Free COVID-19 Tests in Our Community**

Last week, Hilton Head Hospital and Coastal Carolina Hospital began offering the COVID-19 drive-thru tests without physician orders. Since then, over 500 persons have come through without doctor's orders to take advantage of the test. Test results were turned around quickly so those persons could learn of their status and address their personal condition if necessary.

Both hospitals offer the free COVID-19 drive-thru testing from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday thru Friday. No appointment is needed and again no physician order is necessary. Typically, test results will be e-mailed within 72 hours. Participants are asked to have a valid e-mail address available. We appreciate this valuable service the hospitals are providing for our community.

## **Resources for Businesses: DHEC Launches COVID-19 Pledge Project for South Carolina's Business Community**

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is launching a new pledge project to further engage the Palmetto State's business community in the fight against COVID-19.

The project, which appears as a new feature on [DHEC's "Stay SC Strong"](#) website, encourages business leaders to curb the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace by following four major workplace safety practices that can lower the risk of infection for employees, customers and clients, and other important stakeholders.

When business leaders sign the "Stay SC Strong" pledge, they will immediately receive a social media graphic announcing their commitment to fight COVID-19, as well as a



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printable poster reiterating the four major workplace safety measures prescribed by DHEC. These valuable campaign assets will boost awareness of core safety principles and extend “Stay SC Strong” messaging across social networks in the business community.

The newly updated “Stay SC Strong” campaign website will also feature an array of resources designed to help business leaders share information about COVID-19 with others—resources that include social media graphics, email templates, downloadable postcards, downloadable workplace posters, and more.

Visit [business.stayscstrong.com](https://business.stayscstrong.com) for more information or to explore the business leader pledge,

### **Reminder: September 15<sup>th</sup> is the Deadline for Local Nonprofits to Apply for Funds to Assist Low- to Moderate-Income Residents**

Local nonprofit agencies that provide services for low- to moderate-income families and individuals are encouraged to apply for grant funds the Town recently received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). We partnered with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to distribute the \$378,000 grant. Agencies can apply for up to \$25,000. The deadline to submit applications is September 15.

The funds we received are a part of HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Agencies can use funds to assist our residents with rent, utilities, mortgage, food, transportation, childcare and other needs. Visit [www.cf-lowcountry.org](http://www.cf-lowcountry.org) for more information on how to apply for funds.

### **2020 Census: Make Today Count**

Today is Beaufort County Census Day. Please take a few minutes to complete the 2020 census and help boost the response rate for our county and region.

You have three options for completing the census:

- Fill out the paper form the U.S. Census Bureau sent to your home in March and return it by mail.
- Call 844-330-2020 (English) or 844-468-2020 (Spanish) to complete the census over the phone.
- Go to [www.my2020census.gov](https://www.my2020census.gov) and complete the census online.