



The [statewide COVID-19 website](#) is a one stop shop that consolidates information from state agencies, and provides up-to-date information and guidance regarding COVID-19. DHS has also offered information on their website on [How and Where to Get Tested](#).

If you're not busy, please make a call, send a card, or write a letter to someone you know who lives alone or may need assistance.

Please, let them and your family know that you are thinking of them, and that we are here for each other.

Bless each of you during this difficult time of uncertainty and suffering. Take good care!

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## Protests Continue in Milwaukee and Across the Country



Photo credit: Mike De Sisti / Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Beginning Friday and each day since, protests have been organized throughout the City of Milwaukee, and in other cities across the state.

Protesters demand justice for the death of George Floyd, who was killed in police custody in Minneapolis, MN. All four of the police officers who were present during the arrest that led to Floyd's death have since been fired by the Minneapolis Police Department. Derek Chauvin, the officer who knelt on George Floyd's neck [has been charged](#) with 3rd Degree Murder and 2nd Degree Manslaughter.

Protesters were unsatisfied with the delay in holding the officers involved accountable and continue to seek charges for the other 3 officers who were present. The

protests happening across the country are intended to demand accountability from police forces and highlight the notable deaths of locals while they were in police custody or involved in altercations with the police.

There has been property damage and looting alongside the protests, but the vast majority of protesters have behaved peacefully. The property damage that has occurred has led to curfews in Milwaukee and several other Wisconsin cities, and Governor Evers has requested the assistance of the National Guard in Milwaukee and Madison. Yesterday, [President Trump announced](#) that he will be mobilizing the American military to states that have not acted with what he finds to be sufficient force, despite the fact that Governors have so far not requested this assistance.

There is concern among health officials that continued protests [could lead to another wave of COVID-19](#) in the various localities where protests occur.

If you should choose to engage in your constitutional right to protest, please remain peaceful and encourage others to do the same, wear a mask, and keep physical distance to the greatest degree possible for your safety and that of others. Remember that the greatest opportunity for change will take place later this summer and fall [at the ballot box](#).

*"If, going forward, we can channel our justifiable anger into peaceful, sustained, and effective action, then this moment can be a real turning point in our nation's long journey to live up to our highest ideals." ~[President Barack Obama](#) 06/01/2020.*

## **One Third of COVID cases in Milwaukee are among Hispanic Residents**

Outpacing African Americans for the highest proportion of cases, the Latino population of Milwaukee now accounts for 2,383 out of Milwaukee County's 7,182 cases. The recent surge in cases is concentrated on Milwaukee's South Side.

Dr. Ben Weston of the Medical College of Wisconsin explained that there is a significant number of tests from a testing center on the South Side that have not yet been processed, and that health officials will have a better understanding of the developing situation once the results from those tests are known.

Dr. Weston attributed the current outbreak among the Latino population to the number of essential workers that come from the community, a trend which is developing statewide. [Read more.](#)

## Years of Warnings Could Have Helped Prevent Wisconsin's Current Unemployment Crisis

Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance system is currently working to address a backlog of approximately 388,000 cases. During the Great Recession weekly claims reached nearly 40,000 at the peak, today the number of weekly claims as a result of COVID-19 layoffs is reaching more than 100,000.

This unprecedented surge in unemployment claims has come at a time when the Department of Workforce Development, and particularly the Unemployment Insurance Division is facing difficult inherited inefficiencies.

The computer system that is used in the Unemployment Insurance Division is from the 1970s, and runs software from the 1950s. Because of this, programming changes, which are necessary to implement the provisions of the CARES Act or could help the Department process claims more quickly, must be made one by one in order to avoid causing issues elsewhere in the system.

Updating this system has been explored several times in the last 20 years. In 2007, the Department decided to discontinue a project to overhaul the system after already spending over \$23 million due to rising project costs and delays.

In 2014, an [audit](#) was completed by the [Legislative Audit Bureau](#) which looked into the issues that created backlogs of cases during the Great Recession. In response to the audit, the DWD created an internet-based claim filing tool, allowing more claims to be processed online. No changes were made at the time to the Unemployment Insurance Division's staffing model or to the outdated computer system and software.

In 2019 under the current DWD Secretary, Caleb Frostman, the agency explored new systems that could fix this ongoing issue. The analysis that they conducted showed that a new system could cost between \$50 million and \$100 million, taking up to 7 years to test and implement.

Today, while politicians debate who is to blame for the current issues with processing unemployment claims so they can determine who the winners and losers are in advance of the upcoming elections, the real victims are the people of Wisconsin who have been laid off through no fault of their own.

Wisconsinites deserve a government that will make serious attempts to look forward as they develop systems like this one. We have had economic recessions and depressions, and we have seen the effect that it can have on the livelihood of our neighbors. It is time to stop cutting corners when it comes to emergency preparedness. More attention paid in the past, could have saved many people from economic turbulence today and prepared for a more robust recovery. [Read more.](#)

## Delayed Payment of Property Tax Installments Approved for City of Milwaukee Residents

This year, many residents of the City of Milwaukee were surprised to see a significant increase in their property tax assessment. Due to the economic hardships caused by COVID-19 and physical distancing, this increase in taxes posed a difficult challenge to those residents.

In response, the Milwaukee Common Council and Mayor Barrett have approved of a waiver on interest and penalties for outstanding property tax installments owed between April 1 and September 30.

To be eligible, installments must not be delinquent from before April 1. [Read more.](#)

## **The Wisconsin Supreme Court has Agreed to Hear the Voter Purge Case**

On Monday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court agreed to hear the case against the Wisconsin Elections Commission over whether it must remove about 130,000 people from its voter rolls.

The case made news last winter when an Ozaukee County Circuit Court determined that the Elections Commission had violated state statute. The judge of that court decided to hold liberal-appointed members of the commission in contempt of court, instituting fines against those commissioners and the agency generally.

The Elections Commission was successful in overturning that judge's ruling in a state appeals court in February, which found that the Elections Commission's interpretation of the statute was more accurate than the plaintiff's.

During his campaign for reelection, Justice Dan Kelly had recused himself from the decision to hear the case citing a conflict of interest. Since losing his bid for reelection, he has ended his recusal which provided the necessary vote to hear the case.

The briefing schedule in the case provides 30 days (starting yesterday) for parties to submit briefs to the court, and another 30 days for reply briefs. This means that Justice Kelly may not hear the case himself, as his term ends on July 31st, the last day for filing briefs.

[Read more.](#)

## **Tomorrow is Wisconsin Heat Awareness Day**

Just as we start feeling the heat of Summer, Governor Evers has declared June 3rd to be Heat Awareness Day in Wisconsin. Each year, heat related illnesses lead to injuries and sadly deaths in our State. It is important to look out for the very young, the elderly, and people with heart disease or high blood pressure.

Tips for staying safe during extreme heat:

- **Stay cool** — Remain inside air-conditioned buildings as much as possible during the hottest parts of the day and avoid direct sunlight.
- **Stay aware** — Watch for signs of heat-related illnesses, such as weakness, dizziness, nausea, and muscle cramps. If symptoms don't improve, seek medical

attention.

- **Stay hydrated** — Drink plenty of water. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink!
- **Stay informed** — Pay attention to local weather forecasts and extreme heat alerts.
- **Never leave a pet or child inside a parked car** — Leaving a window cracked is not enough!

[Read the press release](#) from Wisconsin Emergency Management.

## **Lake Michigan's Water Level is Higher than Average for this Time of Year**

On May 29th, Lake Michigan was 55 inches above the datum (average level) and 7 inches higher than it was at this time last year. The Army Corps of Engineers is predicting that it will rise another 2 inches by June 29, 2020.

These elevations and predictions do not include "wind setup" which is when a westerly wind blows, causing elevations to be even higher. Those conditions were what caused the damage at the Port of Milwaukee and all up and down the Lake Michigan coast in January.

See the Army Corps of Engineers' weekly [Great Lakes Water Level Update](#).

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