

The Nass Report



Wisconsin State Government and the 11th Senate District

August 7, 2020

Wisconsin DHS Covid-19 Data System – A Big Mess!

The Case of Walworth County

As you may recall, I have been releasing information regarding various issues with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Covid-19 data system. To date, we have identified more than 30,000 (and growing) backlogged Covid-19 negative test results not included in the state system.

The failure to include the negatives dramatically inflated the rate of positive results on a daily basis, the 7-day rolling average and the 14-day rate, since June. In recent days following the public outcry, the backlogged negative results are quietly being entered by local and state public health officials into the system, and not surprisingly our positivity rate is falling significantly.

Walworth County and Covid-19

On August 6th, the Walworth County Health Department reported that 4 residents were currently hospitalized due to Covid-19 and 28 other residents with confirmed cases of Covid-19 were recovering at home. Again, the county data confirms that there are only 32 test-confirmed active cases of Covid-19 in Walworth County (as of August 6th).

Current Update for Walworth County

Update: 08/06/2020 - 3:30pm

Walworth County statistics as of 8/6/2020.

Total number of laboratory confirmed cases	1,286**
Cases currently hospitalized	4
Cases currently isolated at primary residence	28
Cases recovered	1,232
Deaths	22
Negative Tests (*From DHS COVID-19 Website)	15,895

However, according to the flawed data system operated by the Wisconsin DHS, Walworth County is rated as having “high” Covid-19 activity. The Wisconsin DHS under the leadership of Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm gives the impression of Walworth County being overrun by Covid-19 cases, but local county data makes clear that there are currently 32 test-confirmed active cases of Covid-19. Only four of those cases are in the hospital.

Walworth County has a population of about 104,000 residents. Since March 2020, the county has reported a total of 1,286 test-confirmed Covid-19 cases. That means 1.2% of the Walworth County population has been confirmed as having Covid-19. For comparison, as of August 6th, there have been 15,895 negative tests of Walworth County residents.

The distorted representation of Walworth County by the Evers Administration is not an isolated incident. The vast majority of Wisconsin counties are rated as having “high” or “medium” Covid-19 activity by state DHS, even though the real data in each of those counties just doesn’t support those designations.

Why would the Evers Administration distort the Covid-19 situation in Wisconsin? Two simple answers: control and politics.

Governor Evers and DHS could not have justified the new emergency declaration and the statewide mask mandate without utilizing the skewed numbers resulting from massive backlogs in entering Covid-19 negative test results. Additionally, the skewed state numbers and slanted state rating system for counties provides cover for Secretary-Designee Palm to continue her efforts in pressuring more local governments to enact damaging mandates on businesses, churches and social gatherings.

Unfortunately, we have seen the Evers Administration follow the playbook of Democratic governors in other states looking to create chaos in the Covid-19 response for partisan purposes and in limiting how quickly the economy recovers with eyes on the November election.

It is not a coincidence that in nearly every state with a Democratic governor there has been growing public resistance to the abuse of governmental powers that infringe upon the freedoms of citizens in their daily lives. That battle has been underway in Wisconsin with the Evers Administration and a number of local public health departments since the spring.

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