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Mayor urges residents to wear face masks in public

MORRISTOWN - Mayor Timothy Dougherty is urging all Morristown residents who go out in public wear protective face masks, in an effort to help slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

“As new information becomes available from the state and federal government, the WHO, and the CDC concerning the spread of the virus, I urge everyone to take these necessary steps to slow its spread,” Mayor Dougherty said.

The Mayor stresses that the public do not purchase masks intended or reserved for medical staff and professionals; this includes N95 and surgical masks. Our first responders need these masks. It is our responsibility as residents to ensure they have access to them.

The Mayor also said anyone performing essential tasks such as food shopping should wear these face coverings, following the example other cities and nations. The face coverings do not have to be hospital grade but need to cover the nose and mouth. For example, fabric covers like scarves or bandanas and neck gaiters which can be washed and reused.

Today’s recommendation is not a substitute for the state’s stay-at-home order. Residents should not leave their homes unless for reasons outlined by the Governor’s Office, such as for emergencies or for food or gas.

Morristown is the latest municipality to push for facial protection. Earlier this week, mayors across the country began urging their residents to wear protective masks in public, including Mayor Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles, California, and Mayor Bill de Blasio in New York City.

“The recommendations that Mayor Garcetti and Mayor de Blasio have made to their residents was a step beyond the CDC’s guidelines,” said Mayor Dougherty. “And while we all continue to follow the CDC for guidance, there are additional actions we can take independently to help slow the virus.”



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Wearing a mask does not replace or act as an alternative to current physical distancing protocol, handwashing procedures, or any other guidelines produced by the CDC. Residents should take today's suggestion in tandem with existing safety practices.

As of April 3, 2020, the Town of Morristown has confirmed 95 cases of COVID-19 in town. Morris County has confirmed 1,082 cases.

"We are all in this together. We must be smart, safe, and diligent. We must consider the health and wellbeing of ourselves and those around us," said the mayor. "And we must listen to the experts - they are the ones guiding us through this new reality and I thank them every day for their care and wisdom."

The Town of Morristown reminds residents to heed the advice of medical professionals. Follow the Center for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), the World Health Organization at [who.int](https://www.who.int), the State of New Jersey for updates at [covid19.nj.gov](https://www.covid19.nj.gov), and The Town of Morristown online at [townofmorristown.org](https://www.townofmorristown.org), and on Facebook for regular updates.