

Bastrop County Health Authority and Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management
conduct random Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) testing in Bastrop County

May 1, 2020 - 150 Random COVID-19 Tests, Zero Positives

Last week the Bastrop County Health Authority, in cooperation with the Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management, conducted random COVID-19 testing at 8 locations around Bastrop County. Samples were taken from volunteers who saw the collection tent and opted to be tested. After a week of working with the lab to get all the results, Dr. Desmar Walkes, the Bastrop County Health Authority, announced today that all of the test results were negative for COVID-19.

“Random testing is done so there is a better understanding of the pattern and spread of COVID-19 in the County,” said Dr. Desmar Walkes, Bastrop County Health Authority. “These tests were handled just like the other 350 we have conducted in Bastrop County and I am confident in the results.” Each of those tested will be notified by certified mail of their result.

Dr. Walkes and her medical team are considering the meaning of these results. Although 150 tests in a population of 85,000 are not enough to draw strong conclusions, the fact that no one tested positive in this sampling may mean that the virus is not prevalent in our population. It may also show that social distancing measures that have been widely practiced here are working and have slowed the spread of the virus. Christine Files, Deputy Director of Emergency Management, commented, “In my opinion these results show that our folks are actually staying home when they are sick. This is a good thing.”

The stated purpose of the random tests at various collection sites around the county was to determine how widespread the virus might be. The strategy was to collect samples from Bastrop County adults who have not been ill nor tested positive for COVID-19.

County Judge Paul Pape said, “I see this as very good news. With little or no virus indicated in the community, we can concentrate on protecting the most vulnerable in our society - the elderly and those with underlying health issues. Our thanks to all who came forward and offered to be tested.”

There are many benefits of random community testing including a better understanding of the prevalence of the virus to inform officials in planning the use of limited resources. Testing for COVID-19 will continue, and antibody testing will be added as soon as possible. As of today, there have been 84 COVID-19 cases confirmed in Bastrop County, with 17 recovered and 2 deceased.

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