

## Meeting Provides Insight into State's Views on Riverdale Septic Systems

 Posted on Wednesday, January 15th, 2020 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.



OUTMAN

**By Rosemary Horvath**  
**Herald Staff Writer**

Property owners in Riverdale may have to wait until spring before the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy reassesses the area's water quality flow from private septic systems into county drains and on to the Pine River.

At least that's the takeaway expressed by State Senator Rick Outman and Riverdale residents Bob Lombard and Mikie VanHorn, following a meeting with state officials last week.

Outman, the 33rd District State Senate Republican, arranged the Jan. 8 meeting to review the grassroots effort Riverdale residents have put forth by identifying and rectifying its failing septic systems.

Property owners with problematic systems have either disconnected or filed for replacement permits. Some properties are on "pump and haul" status.

The local effort was mounted three years ago after Seville Township first learned the Riverdale area had violated requirements of the Clean Water Act as evidenced by high levels of E. coli bacteria showing up in drains and a river tributary which was identified as human waste.

Riverdale citizens along with the township have worked to avert having to install and maintain a municipal wastewater treatment system, which is a preferred EGLE solution.

However, "They (EGLE) are not opposed to on-site disposal systems," Outman told The Herald in a recent phone interview.

Lombard agreed, stating that "EGLE is not on a tangent for a municipal system. They said they believe a private system is okay."

Meanwhile, the Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department and EightCAP Inc., a community action agency serving four counties, including Gratiot, have partnered to provide financial assistance to help eligible Riverdale residents currently paying to have their septic tanks pumped.

MMDHD Environmental Health Director Liz Braddock said funding is available "to assist homeowners with the cost associated with having to frequently pump out septic tanks since the properties recently disconnected from the storm drain and do not have septic disposal fields."

EightCAP President Dan Petersen said his group is a secondary partner and that funding is a community services

block grant providing assistance to pump the septic systems. "We're reaching out to landowners," he said. Outman said he got the impression EGLE is amenable to private septic systems as long as the contamination has ended.

As owner of an excavating business that installs septic systems and drain fields, Outman said winter weather has caused the delay for EGLE to reassess the situation in Riverdale. Spring is a better time to install on-site systems because "they can be dicey when the soil is wet. We'll go into a holding pattern until the weather breaks."

Outman is well-acquainted with the Riverdale area as his mother grew up there and her father built the Riverdale Tavern, which has remained in the family.

Lombard said only three properties needing a septic permit are left. Another three with permits are waiting to learn the direction EGLE takes. Two other troublesome properties are vacant.

Volunteers continue to sample drain water and tests show bacteria levels have dramatically fallen, Lombard said, adding that Riverdale residents "have gone above and beyond" a degree of cooperation.

Lombard echoed what residents have claimed, which is that Michigan is the only state in the nation without a state standard for septic systems, so how can they be held accountable for not knowing what steps to take for maintenance?

Requirements are set at the county level and enforced by the local health department.

Lombard and VanHorn created and now maintain a database identifying the status of every Riverdale property with regard to septic system status.

## Humane Society moving out of county building

Human Society of Mid Michigan is no longer accepting animals

ELISABETH WALDON  
ewaldon@thedailynews.cc

STANTON — The Humane Society of Mid Michigan is in the process of moving out of the

Montcalm County-owned former animal shelter facility and is no longer accepting animals due to a lack of funding.

Humane Society Director Angela Hollinshead told the Daily News that her organization began transitioning to a foster-based model of operations last October. While the Humane Society will continue on its own, Hollinshead said she plans to be

entirely moved out of the county-owned building in the coming week and the Humane Society will no longer accept any animals from Montcalm County Animal Control or law enforcement officials.

“We are not going to be using the Animal Control building anymore,” Hollinshead said.

Continues on Page 3



Cats up for adoption at the grand opening of the Humane Society of Mid Michigan in October 2017. — DN file photo

# Humane Society moving out of county building

Continued from Page 1

“We’re moving out.

“This isn’t a move that we wanted to make,” she emphasized. “It was a hard decision for us to make. This has been my desk for 12 years. This is a sad move for me. I would rather have a walk-in open admission Humane Society that could take every animal needed in Montcalm County, but we just can’t do that. We just can’t afford it. We really hoped that long-term we could help all the strays, but we just can’t continue to do it. We’ve provided a lot of care and a lot of free services to the county and they’ve been great to work with, but we’re at the point where we can’t sustain being open admission.”

The Humane Society operated out of the county-owned building without having to pay rent in exchange for taking in animals from the county. The Humane Society took in about 500 strays last year on an operating budget of about \$75,000, all funded through donations and grants, but “Donations are declining,” Hollinshead noted.

“The problem was the financial burden of taking every sort of stray without money from local municipalities,” she said. “The county does not pay us to do this. We’ve provided care free of charge to the animals that the county has brought in, we’ve done it for free since the beginning.”

Montcalm County commissioners voted last autumn to increase Animal Control Officer Autumn DeVries’ hours from part-time to full-time, meaning even more animals are being brought in to the county-owned building, where Hollinshead and a kennel attendance are the only staff.

“We’ve been seeing some large scale animal seizures from our Animal Control officer, cats and dogs,” Hollinshead said. “That’s not something new, but it is something that we’re going to continue to run into. Now that our Animal Control officer for the county is full-time, we’re running into more animal cruelty cases being picked up, which is just



Montcalm County Animal Control Officer Autumn DeVries enjoys the summer sunshine with Jack, a young pit bull rescue dog, outside the former Montcalm County Animal Shelter in Stanton in June 2017. — DN file photo

## MONTCALM COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL HISTORY

**MAY 2016:** The Montcalm County Board of Commissioners voted down their own proposal to shutter Animal Control and the animal shelter after hearing from a standing-room-only audience who were overwhelmingly against the idea.

**OCTOBER 2016:** County commissioners voted to cut Animal Control’s budget by 33 percent, resulting in a part-time kennel attendant losing his job, Animal Control Director Angela Hollinshead and Animal Control Officer Autumn DeVries both taking pay cuts and the animal shelter seeing a reduction of hours open to the public.

**JUNE 2017:** County commissioners voted to formally recognize Hollinshead’s newly created Humane Society of Mid Michigan and to allow the Humane Society use of the county’s animal shelter

building due to the pending elimination of the county’s Animal Control department.

**OCTOBER 2017:** Montcalm County Animal Control was eliminated as part of county budget cuts, along with the county’s animal shelter. The Humane Society celebrated its grand opening in the county’s former animal shelter building.

**DECEMBER 2017:** Montcalm County began contracting with Gratiot County for animal control services.

**JULY 2016:** County commissioners voted to hire a part-time Animal Control officer, bringing DeVries back to work for the county and ending the county’s contract with Gratiot County.

**OCTOBER 2019:** County commissioners approved increasing DeVries’ hours from part-time to a full-time Animal Control officer.

more than we can handle.”

Hollinshead said a few weeks ago, Animal Control seized about 40 cats from a Montcalm County home.

“From what we’re hearing, the owner signed them all over,” Hollinshead said. “They were all very sick, they were all carrying diseases. Unfortunately, I believe the county made the decision to euthanize them. None of the cats would have been able to be adopted out. A lot of them were in very poor shape.”

Hollinshead said Animal Control also recently seized 17 dogs from a Montcalm County residence. That case is pending in court, meaning the dogs re-

main housed in the former animal shelter building.

Hollinshead said Montcalm County will now have to apply for its own animal shelter license with the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development as the current license is in the name of the Humane Society. She said she is open to contracting with Montcalm County if county officials were ever to request bids for contracting animal shelter services, which would guarantee a reliable income.

“When people bring a stray dog in, most Humane Societies say, ‘Take it to your Animal Control shelter.’ But we don’t have that here so it makes it

harder on us and your community when we have to turn those animals away,” she noted. “There’s a reason nobody does it for free, it’s a huge strain on your resources. It really saddens me that we don’t have a resource in our county for strays. We have a lot of stray dogs and there’s no place for them to go.”

Montcalm County Controller-Administrator Bob Clingenpeel told the Daily News that he and other county officials are currently in discussion with the Humane Society.

“We are confident that we can work something out,” Clingenpeel said. “They have played a vital role in our community and we desire to continue to work with them in the future.”

The Humane Society will continue to operate as a non-profit organization, working with 15 to 20 already established pet foster homes in the area. Hollinshead is working on planning some community outreach projects for this spring, such as promoting pet adoption days and microchip and vaccination clinics.

“We’re not going anywhere,” Hollinshead said. “I really want our supporters to know we are still there, we’re still going to help our community in different ways, we’re just not going to be able to take care of the animals the county brings in anymore. Ideally, we would build. We have been looking for property for several years to build a dog park and ideally, we could build on that property.”

Hollinshead estimated the Humane Society has helped 1,200 to 1,500 animals since the Humane Society began working with the county in late 2017.

“It’s been very rewarding,” she said. “I wish we could do more, I wish we had enough funding and enough support to stay here and have regular walk-in hours again, but unfortunately the funding just isn’t there.”

The next Montcalm County Board of Commissioners meeting will be 6 p.m. Jan. 27 at the Montcalm County Administrative Building in Stanton.

# Community Effort Brings Study to Fruition

 Posted on Thursday, January 23rd, 2020 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

## Management Plan Indicates Human Bacteria Main Source of Contamination in Upper Pine River Watershed

**By Rosemary Horvath**  
**Herald Staff Writer**

A finished project spanning eight years of Julie Spencer's work-life made her downright ecstatic announcing to the Gratiot Township Association that the Upper Pine River Watershed Management Plan will be released to the public in a few weeks.

"Now we have proven there is a problem with the river," the Gratiot Conservation District administrator said. The 405-page study analyzes the 309-square-mile watershed encompassing portions of Mecosta County where the Pine River begins and sections of northeastern Montcalm County, northwestern Gratiot County, and southwestern Isabella County.

DNA source tracking indicates bacteria pollution from human sources is the highest followed by swine, then bovine. Equine is insignificant, according to the study.

The UPRW is part of the Saginaw Bay Watershed and the Pine and Chippewa rivers are among its priority sub-watersheds. Portions of southern Gratiot County fall into the Upper Maple River Water Management Plan overseen by the Clinton Conservation District.

Spencer intends to circulate business-type cards printed with ordering information through E&S Graphics in Ithaca. There will be two prices: one for a black and white book and another for a colored version.

Ordering also will be through Amazon or to download for free as a PDF document from the conservation district website.

Spencer expects the document to be used to usher in state and federal funding to provide remedial solutions for restoring water quality.

She said the document will help fund "big dollar" projects such as planting cover crops, installing filter strips, and building larger manure lagoons.

While the plan identifies solutions and costs, any private or public group can use the plan as a basis for their own grant proposal to fix problems. Spencer said the Conservation District can act as a match and as a fiduciary on their behalf.

Based on water samples administered by the Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (formerly MDEQ), and Alma College over the years, it comes as no surprise DNA source tracking shows human as the highest source for Escherichia coli or E. coli which is identified as a primary pollutant of concern in the UPRW.

"Human septage is considered to be of higher risk to human health than livestock manure, and thus is not considered acceptable, even at low concentrations," the plan noted.

It adds that human was frequently the most prevalent host source of bacteria detected through quantitative MST (Microbial Source Tracking) and that illicitly connected septic systems, failing septic systems, and septic systems installed at a high density are considered a priority source due to the risk presented to human health.

The data also suggests that E. coli pollution is of concern during both dry and wet weather events. The higher concentrations following wet weather events indicate a large amount of the E. coli is being transported from agricultural sources through overland runoff, agriculture drains, and livestock direct access into the waterways. Overland runoff sources include livestock and manure from farms and fields.

A recommendation considered a high priority is hiring a Watershed Coordinator to manage the implementation of the plan's many recommendations.

A coordinator would promote participation in the MSU Extension and Michigan [Farm](#) Bureau certified hauler's program scheduled for 2020. This program reviews good manure spreading practices one of which is to avoid manure land application on frozen or saturated ground.

Controlling runoff management also includes working with Amish farming communities to provide technical assistance.

Wetland restoration would play an important role as well. Wetlands and vegetated riparian buffers help filter pollution.

Spencer has a 2-page summary detailing the history of aiming for a comprehensive strategic plan for the UPRW that officially began in 2012. However, the declining condition of the Pine River got noticed in the late 1970s as riverfront residents noticed sedimentation buildup, an increase in vegetation, and stream bank erosion. Failing septic systems had become an issue even then.

Organizing efforts have been chronicled by Spencer. In spite of state funding agencies passing over the Upper Pine River grant applications, Spencer and volunteers didn't lose hope, regrouped, and gathered more information. Jane Keon of the Healthy Pine River group and Aaron Snell from Streamside Ecological Services who also helped assess the Flat River Watershed plan offered continued support.

Finally, funding for another planning grant became available again in 2017 through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Act. A contract was signed the following year and the fieldwork began.

The grant of \$141,700 was matched with volunteer manhours from various organizations valued at \$28,000.

Spencer will have a PowerPoint presentation at the Conservation Districts annual meeting and banquet on Feb. 20 at the Gratiot-Isabella RESD in Ithaca. Reservations are \$12 each and two for \$20. Seating is limited.

# Daily News

Saturday, January 25, 2020

## MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT PUBLIC NOTICE

of

### FINANCE COMMITTEE AND REGULAR BOARD OF HEALTH MEETINGS FOR 2020

*Finance Committee meetings held at 8:30 a.m. and Regular meetings held at 9:00 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of every month, except for December.*

February 26th	Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns
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October 28th	Administrative Offices, Stanton
November 25th	Clinton County Branch Office, St. Johns

Finance Committee at 9:30 a.m., Regular Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

December 16th Gratiot County Branch Office, Ithaca

This meeting is open to all members of the public under Michigan's Open Meetings Act. The Mid-Michigan District Board of Health will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired, interpreters, and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon one (1) week's notice. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Mid-Michigan District Board of Health by emailing, writing, or calling:

Cynthia M. Partlo, Board Secretary,  
Mid-Michigan District Board of Health, 615 N. State Street, Stanton, Michigan 48888-9702, (989) 831-3610  
E-Mail: [cpartlo@mmdhd.org](mailto:cpartlo@mmdhd.org)

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# Clinton County News

## Sunday, January 26, 2020

MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
of  
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# Daily News

Thursday, January 30, 2020

## Coronavirus test results negative

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan  
District Health Department

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) reported on Jan. 27 that test results on three possible cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus came back negative. A specimen from a fourth possible case, from Washtenaw County, was sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing.

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that can infect people and animals. They are a common cause of mild respiratory illness, or “the common cold,” in people. Occasionally, coronaviruses from people and animals mix together, creating a new strain. These new strains usually cause worse illness in people.

An example of one of these new strains is the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Cases started in Wuhan, China last December and as of Jan. 27, number more than 2,800 in 15 countries, with 81 deaths. This is a fatality rate of approximately 3%. There have been five cases in the United States but no spread of the illness from these cases.

Other examples new strains of coronavirus include the severe acute respiratory disease coronavirus (SARS-CoV). In 2002-2003, it caused 8,437 cases and 813 deaths, a fatality rate of approximately 10%. In 2012, another novel coronavirus named Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) was identified as a cause of severe illness. It caused over 2,400 cases and had a fatality rate of around 35%.

Coronaviruses, including 2019-nCoV, are spread by droplets created by coughing or sneezing. This is the same way influenza is spread. While 2019-nCoV is a serious public health situation, only those in direct contact with someone ill are at risk. It is recommended that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Hubei Province, China. It is also recommended that people traveling to other parts of China avoid contact with people who are sick and practice good hand hygiene.

If you have been in China within the last two weeks and develop symptoms of 2019-nCoV, which include fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider. Symptoms should appear within two to 14 days after being exposed.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure to this virus. But everyday actions can help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces.

## Federal Funding Backlog Not Currently Affecting Velsicol Cleanup

 Posted on Wednesday, January 29th, 2020 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

**By Emma Selmon**  
**Herald Staff Writer**

Despite recent headlines about Superfund sites going unfunded across the country, chemical cleanup activities in St. Louis are continuing as planned.

According to figures released in late December from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 34 Superfund sites are waiting for federal dollars, putting the backlog of unfunded Superfund sites at a 15-year high. The associated press reported that this figure has nearly tripled under the current administration, with only 12 sites on that list in 2016.

One of the sites on the list is the Velsicol burn pit in St. Louis, a five-acre site located across the Pine River from the former Velsicol plant site. But according to Jane Keon, chairperson of the Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force (CAG), there's a simple answer as to why that project isn't funded.

They're not ready for the money yet.

Because of the energy needs of the in-place thermal treatment project currently underway at the former Velsicol plant site, the in-place thermal treatment project at the Velsicol burn pit can't be started until the fall of 2021 at the earliest, according to the EPA.

"There just isn't enough electricity to do two projects at once," Keon said.

The Velsicol Chemical Corporation, formerly known as Michigan Chemical Corporation, operated in St. Louis from 1936 to 1978. A manufacturer of various chemical compounds including the pesticide DDT and the fire retardant PPB, Velsicol's toxic footprint in Gratiot County has become one of the costliest Superfund sites in the country.

Initially, the Velsicol burn pit was considered to be a part of the former plant location's Superfund site, but in 2010, it was finalized as an independent Superfund site on the National Priorities List. The burn pit, which served as an offsite disposal area where industrial wastes were incinerated weekly, is located in an out-of-bounds area within the Hidden Oaks Golf Course. It is not a part of the golf course and is not maintained by the course's owner.

The burn pit poses no immediate risk to users of the golf course, according to the EPA.

Keon isn't sure why the burn pit is included on the list of unfunded Superfund sites, but she has her suspicions. She thinks it may be because the site would be ready for remediation if it weren't for the energy limitations posed by the project at the other site.

"The design work is completed, everything's a go," Keon said. "We are just waiting for money, except for the fact that we don't really want it yet because we can't use it yet."

At the burn pit, all of the preliminary planning has been completed. Additionally, the EPA has contacted 11 homeowners whose private well water could be affected by the planned in-place thermal treatment. Keon said that nine of those homeowners agreed to switch over to water from the Gratiot Area Water Authority (GAWA) as a "preventative measure," and that the EPA will cover that cost.

According to information from the burn pit's Superfund information website, ash piles have also been removed. Across the river, cleanup is continuing as planned at the former plant site. Keon said that she thinks both the CAG and the EPA were "very pleased" with the results of the in-place thermal treatment that was completed at Area 1, although the project "brought up a whole lot more contaminants than were projected."

According to a report included in CAG's January meeting minutes, 56,000 pounds of contaminants were removed in Area 1 — more than double the 25,000 pounds the EPA expected.

The EPA is now working on in-place thermal treatment in Area 2, which has been split up into multiple phases. The report in the CAG minutes indicated that the heating process for Phase 1 has begun, and they expect the ground and water to reach boiling point in mid-February. So far, they have brought up 1,500 pounds of contaminants; the EPA expects to remove a total of 50,000 pounds in total from this area.

Keon said that Area 2 includes the location where the DDT was produced, which is "part of the reason" why the EPA is expecting to extract more contaminants there. They have also identified higher concentrations of a toxic compound called DBCP in that area.

“It’s a dangerous chemical,” Keon said. “Just breathing it — just a small amount in the air — can cause a man to become sterile. Who know what else it does?”

So far, funding for the Area 2 projects have been secured, but there are still a number of other projects at the former plant site that have not yet been funded. Keon said that they will have to seek funding for Potential Source Areas 1 and 2, an excavation project near M-46, and “the various chemical oxidation locations on the plant site.”

Keon said that according to Remedial Project Manager Thomas Alcamo, funding is easier to secure at sites like the former plant site where cleanup has already begun. And while it can’t be predicted when the burn pit will receive funding, for now, progress is continuing to be made towards a cleaner and healthier environment in the middle of the mitten.

# Mid-Michigan District Health Department Board Organizes for the New Year



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**By Rosemary Horvath**

**Herald Staff Writer**

The Board of [Health](#) for the Mid-Michigan District Health Department voted last week to retain the same officers for another year.

Gratiot County Commissioner George Bailey is continuing as chair along with Montcalm County Commissioner Betty Kellenberger as vice-chair.

The 6-member board is composed of two county commissioners from each of the MMDHD's service areas of Gratiot, Montcalm, and Clinton counties.

Other members are Commissioners Bruce DeLong and Dwight Washington, from Clinton; Chuck Murphy from Gratiot, and Adam Petersen from Montcalm.

Also at the brief organizational meeting held at the Stanton office, the board scheduled finance committee meetings for the year starting at 8:30 a.m. followed by regular board meetings at 9 a.m. These sessions take place on the fourth Wednesday of the month except for December. Location revolves by county.

In addition to standard business, the board received reports from Medical Director Jennifer Morse highlighting the seriousness of influenza and vaping.

Morse highly encouraged the public to still get the flu vaccine, stating "it is not too late. The flu vaccine still is the most effective benefit."

This flu season has been unusual because it began early and the Influenza B strain hasn't occurred in 27 years, therefore resistance is low particularly among children, she said. The Influenza B/Victoria strain hasn't been in circulation for the last three seasons so immunity to it is also low.

Contact the health department for more information. There have been two child deaths in Michigan caused by influenza.

As for vaping, Michigan has reported three related deaths. Morse said the THC is associated with illness and not the nicotine. A majority of users are under age 35, caucasian, and daily users.

"Michigan tests products," Morse said, "but it is difficult to test and police everything. There is a complete lack of awareness so there is a huge effort to educate young people."

All three counties have active substance abuse coalitions that provide valuable information, she said.

Environment Division Director Liz Braddock reported on the state's ongoing investigation into the presence of harmful chemicals identified as PFAS. Residential properties tested in Gratiot County came up negative. PFAS are still present in the landfill owned by the city of Ithaca in Newark Township that the city has been directed to remediate.

Most of the investigation Braddock deals with is focused on the Grand Ledge Army National Guard Facility and areas around Ionia County's Palo area. Groundwater sampling also is taking place at the Pierson Township landfill in Montcalm County.

# Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, January 30, 2020

## MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT PUBLIC NOTICE

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# Daily News

Saturday, February 1, 2020

## Dicastal taking measures to prevent spread of China-based virus

**ELISABETH WALDON**  
ewaldon@thedailynews.cc

GREENVILLE — A Chinese-owned manufacturing company in Greenville is taking measures to prevent a China-based virus from spreading.

Dicastal North America, an aluminum wheel plant, has been operating in Greenville for the past four years.

According to Dicastal's Human Resources Manager Mark Kollar, the company is taking precautions to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) which originated in the city of Wuhan in the Chinese province of Hubei.

Dicastal's headquarters are located in

Qinhuangdao in the Chinese province of Hebei, which is more than 850 miles from Wuhan. Kollar said the employees who visit Greenville's manufacturing plant from Chinese headquarters are at least a 12-hour drive from the city of Wuhan, significantly limiting the exposure the headquarters employees have to people who may have contracted the virus.

"In the last week, many Greenville citizens and even our manufacturing plant employees have expressed concerns and possibly fear about being exposed to (2019-nCoV) in our community," Kollar said. "Our corporate leaders in China and the management team in Greenville want to assure the city of Greenville and

the surrounding communities that we are taking all precautions necessary to assure your continued health and safety. We have held discussions with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department and local healthcare officials to gain a greater understanding of (2019-nCoV), its symptoms, the guidelines to prevent transmission posted on the United States Center for Disease Control website and to also create a contingency plan to prevent (2019-nCoV) exposure to our community."

According to Mid-Michigan District Health Department Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse, there are four strains of

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# China-based virus

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coronavirus that cause the common cold and are not a cause of concern, but 2019-nCoV is a new specific strain and people do not have immunity to it.

“We do have some people in Greenville and throughout the state of Michigan testing positive for coronavirus, which is just a strain of the common cold and nothing to be concerned about,” Morse emphasized.

Morse said people who have contracted 2019-nCoV experience symptoms within two to 14 days from exposure. According to Morse, there are 9,925 2019-nCoV cases in 26 countries with 222 deaths as of Friday.

According to Kollar, Dicastal’s Chinese co-workers currently present in Greenville have been in the United States for more than 14 days and have not displayed symptoms of or been diagnosed with 2019-nCoV. In addition, Kollar said Dicastal’s parent company has temporarily prevented travel for Dicastal employees from China to Michigan for the near future. He said as the situation changes in China, Dicastal’s parent company will review the travel ban as appropriate and if any emergency travel of Dicastal employees from China to Michigan is necessary in the next several weeks,

### A CLOSER LOOK AT NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that can infect people and animals. They are a common cause of mild respiratory illness, or “the common cold,” in people. Occasionally, coronaviruses from people and animals mix together, creating a new strain.

An example of one of these new strains is the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Coronaviruses, including 2019-nCoV, are spread by droplets created by coughing or sneezing. While 2019-nCoV is a serious public health situation, only those in direct contact with someone ill are at risk. It is recommended that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Hubei Province, China.

If you have been in China within the last two weeks and develop symptoms of 2019-nCoV, which include

fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your health-care provider. Symptoms should appear within two to 14 days after being exposed.

Everyday actions can help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces.

Source: Mid-Michigan District Health Department

the employees will remain voluntarily isolated for 14 days in their homes after arrival to ensure they are not unnecessarily transmitting the virus.

“Citic Dicastal Co. Ltd. and Dicastal North America believes there is no risk of (2019-nCoV) exposure from Dicastal employees in Greenville to the community,” Kollar said. “We also believe the temporary travel ban measures and, if necessary, the 14-day isolation protocol mentioned above, are sufficient and proper to ensure the continued health and safety of the citizens of Greenville and the surround-

ing communities as the (2019-nCoV) situation continues in China and in the regions it has spread.

“We are proud to be part of the Greenville community and are thankful the city has welcomed our Chinese co-workers to the area, whether they are here for a short or longer time period,” Kollar added.

“As a valued member of the community, Dicastal North America would like to assure the city of Greenville and the surrounding area that we take your continued health and safety seriously.”

# Daily News

Thursday, February 13, 2020

## Health department offers coronavirus travel update

Submitted by Mid-Michigan  
District Health Department

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department continues to diligently follow the rapidly evolving 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak.

There have been 12 cases of 2019-nCoV in the United States, but no confirmed cases in Michigan to date. There have been over 40,000 cases and over 900 deaths reported internationally.

Nearly all cases are in China, and 75% of all the cases are in the Hubei province of China. Around 450 cases have occurred in 24 other countries. There has been one outbreak on a cruise ship near Japan, but no other cruises have had confirmed cases.

On Jan. 31, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) instated restrictions for all passenger flights to the United States carrying individuals who recently traveled from the People's Republic of China. Any U.S. citizen who has been to China in the last two weeks will be diverted to one of 11 airports, including Detroit Metropolitan Airport, to be checked and potentially quarantined for an additional 14 days. U.S. citizens who have been in Hubei province within 14 days of their return will be subject to up

to 14 days of mandatory quarantine to ensure they are provided proper medical care and health screening.

U.S. citizens who have been in other areas of mainland China within 14 days of their return will undergo health screening and up to 14 days of self-quarantine with health monitoring done by their local health department. Generally, foreign nationals (other than immediate family of U.S. citizens, permanent residents and flight crew) who have traveled in China within 14 days of their arrival, will be denied entry into the United States.

Spring break and travel will be here soon. At this time, general travel to and from areas other than China is not considered a risk for exposure to 2019-nCoV. There may be other health considerations, depending on the destination, such as typhoid, hepatitis, measles, or mosquito-borne diseases. Vaccines or medication may be recommended and are available to help prevent illness while you travel. Information based on your destination, as well as travel health notices can be found at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).

If you need a vaccination before travel, you may contact the Mid-Michigan District Health Department at (989) 831-5237 in Montcalm County.

## Video shows person bathing in Greenville Wendy's kitchen sink, employees fired

Restaurant passes inspection next day, remains open

CORY SMITH

csmith@thedailynews.cc

GREENVILLE — A video shared via social media Tuesday evening shows a person submerged in an industrial kitchen sink, playfully taking a bath ... at the Greenville Wendy's restaurant.

A 23-second video shared on Facebook, originally posted to the TikTok social media platform, shows a young man partially submerged in a ware-washing industrial sink system — normally used to wash kitchen items — laughing and joking inside the restaurant with other employees.

The Daily News approached management Tuesday evening at the Greenville Wendy's, located at 1010 N. Lafayette St., and was redirected to Christian Camp, vice president of human resources for Team Schostak, based out of Livonia.

Team Schostak owns and operates 56 Wendy's restaurants, including the Greenville location, and Camp confirmed that the events shown in the video did occur at that restaurant.

"We take it very, very seriously. We have already taken the proper steps to make sure something like this never happens again," he said. "As soon as we learned of it, which was this morning, we quickly got into action and approached every person that was involved. We've been looking into the matter all day, trying to find out what happened because we want to make sure that we are safe for our employees, and obviously our guests, so we take this matter extremely serious-



A video shared via social media Tuesday evening shows a person submerged in an industrial kitchen sink, playfully taking a bath, at the Greenville Wendy's restaurant, located at 1010 N. Lafayette St. — DN Photo | Cory Smith

ly. We've taken the appropriate steps to make sure this doesn't happen again."

In the video, one employee wearing a Wendy's uniform jokingly says "wash yourself" to the individual in the sink while throwing him an object.

That individual responds with, "It feels like, it feels like a hot tub. I'm just enjoying life," as a third person recorded the video while additional laughing can be heard in the background.

Camp would not confirm Tuesday evening whether the individual in the ware-washing system was a current employee, or if he is facing any disciplinary action or has been fired, stating he could not comment on personnel matters.

However, Camp released an additional statement Wednesday that solidified the fate of all employees shown in the video.

"This egregious behavior is completely unacceptable and counter to our safety, training and operational standards," the statement read. "Upon learning of this situation, all

employees in the video were terminated immediately and the restaurant has been completely sanitized. The health department visited the restaurant today and no violations were reported."

Liz Bradock, the environmental health director of Mid Michigan District Health Department, confirmed with the Daily News that her department performed an unannounced inspection Wednesday morning at the restaurant.

"The inspection was a result of numerous complaints that we had received via online and phone calls, and we were also contacted by a (Montcalm) county commissioner wanting us to follow up on the video," she said.

According to Bradock, no violations were discovered via the inspection.

"We made sure the facility had followed proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures, which they stated that they did," she said. "They have to clean, rinse and then sanitize any type of equipment that may come into contact with

food, or may be used in the process. The unit is a three-compartment sink area, and our emphasis of the inspection was at that area and any type of utensils nearby."

Bradock said at this time no followup inspection required, as Wendy's was open for normal business hours both Tuesday and Wednesday.

"They are routinely inspected on the schedule of every 12 months, and if they are following the procedures, they will be serving safe food."

Bradock stressed that her inspector made it clear to the restaurant that all employees need to be properly trained to serve food safely.

"We talked to the person in charge, typically a certified food manager, and in addition to that, they had additional managers in place this morning, working on some issues," she said. "We talked about the importance of making sure they have trained staff — trained in food safety — who follow proper procedure in place to make sure the food is safe."

In reviewing the situation, Camp stressed that Team Schostak was taking measures to ensure such an event does not take place again.

"We've taken the appropriate steps," he reiterated. "We've looked at everything that was involved in the said incident to make sure everything is clean — per state regulations, at a minimum — but we try to go as far and above as we can. The bottom line is, we don't want anything to make our guests feel that they can't eat at any Wendy's restaurant, or any other of our restaurants. We look at everything to make sure that everything is safe, for our employees, first and foremost, and definitely for our guests."

# Daily News

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

**The Mid-Michigan District Health Department  
Health Promotion Program  
Notice of Intent**

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department has applied for a substance abuse license through the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), Substance Abuse Program. The license will allow us to provide substance abuse prevention services and leadership opportunities for youth in Montcalm County schools, as well as wellness education for people of all ages in the community. This will enable us to better support the work of our partners including the Substance Abuse Advisory Council and the Montcalm Prevention Collaborative. Please direct comments to [mcheatham@mmdhd.org](mailto:mcheatham@mmdhd.org) or call 989-812-5237.

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