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Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Post-Tornado Response
Health department activates mobile clinic to serve Gaylord

Given the large numbers of residents congregating to support clean-up efforts and the recent increase in COVID-19 cases, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) is distributing free at-home test kits from its mobile clinic this week in Gaylord. The mobile clinic will be stationed in the Walmart parking lot from 8-11 a.m. and the Home Depot parking lot from noon-2 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, June 1 and 2.

Depending on demand, the mobile unit will be more fluid on Friday, June 3, stopping in busy parking lots to distribute the free tests. Look for the blue and green mobile lab with the HDNW logo to receive your home test kit.

“We are aware that the extreme devastation of the tornado has increased the risk of exposure to the BA.2 variant,” said Dan Thorell, Interim Health Officer for HDNW. “It has created a need for people to stay in shelters and with friends and family. There are also people uniting to clean-up debris, repair homes and businesses, and volunteer with the Otsego County United Way and the American Red Cross. As a result, we have acquired more at-home test kits to ease people’s concerns of having to find or buy them in local stores.”

The mobile clinic – in service since the beginning of the year – helps HDNW adapt to the changing needs of residents in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. As part of the greater emergency preparedness community, HDNW is working behind the scenes to support Gaylord WIC recipients who may have lost supplies or their cards, help answer calls from people needing help, and to offer mental health services to those who ask for help processing losses from the tornado.

“We are part of the Gaylord community. We are here to offer our support in tangible ways,” said Holly Campbell, Deputy Health Officer for HDNW, whose office is in Gaylord. “We hope the test kits will help people feel assured and will equip them to make decisions on whether to see their physicians for the anti-viral medications if they test positive.”

The mobile lab was purchased with a grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. It has become a primary tool during the pandemic, being used as a testing clinic and for physical exams.

To determine the location of the mobile unit on Friday, call 800-432-4121.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

Cutline: The Health Department of Northwest Michigan mobile clinic will be distributing free at-home test kits for COVID-19 in Gaylord Wednesday and Thursday, June 1 and 2.

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