



**Immediate Release – August 13, 2020**

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**Loup Basin Public Health Department Launches Public Risk Dial for COVID-19 Risk**

Burwell, NE – Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) has unveiled a district-wide, color-coded risk dial for determining COVID-19 risk. The risk dial was initially developed as a tool to help schools determine their risk level for having in-person learning. The risk dial can be beneficial to the patrons of LBPHD's district as well going into the fall where experts expect to see a rise in COVID-19 cases across the State.

The dial, which is being shared by many of the health departments in Nebraska, was originally developed by Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. The main factors that are considered into the dial rankings are:

- Trend in the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests over recent weeks.
- The capacity of the regional healthcare system, including the availability of critical medical equipment such as ventilators.
- The presence of large clusters and/or community spread of COVID-19.
- The availability of testing and the time it takes to receive results.
- The availability of LBPHD staff to contact all positive individuals within 24 hours and given isolation and quarantine guidance.

Currently, the risk dial represents the nine-county district as a whole. It does not look at each individual county and due to the large geographic region of the district the possibility of a color variance from one side of the district to the other exists.

This week's district wide dial shows a moderate risk (yellow zone). The public can expect that the dial will be released each Tuesday on the health department website at [www.lbphd.org](http://www.lbphd.org).

Over the past two weeks, LBPHD's district has seen 24 cases reported. As of Thursday, August 13, 2020 the total number of cases in the district since the start of the pandemic is 127 with 108 recoveries and 8 deaths, leaving the district with 11 active cases.

Loup Basin Public Health Department serves nine counties including Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard, Loup, Sherman, Valley and Wheeler.