

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

~ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 18, 2020 ~

Quantifiable Traces of COVID -19 Detected in all City Of Watertown Wastewater Sources

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The Jefferson County Public Health Service is using every means scientifically possible to survey for COVID-19 prevalence in Jefferson County. In July 2020, the department formed a partnership with the City of Watertown to submit wastewater specimens to Quadrant Biosciences in Syracuse to test weekly and determine COVID-19 quantifiable prevalence in the city and surrounding communities that utilize the city's wastewater treatment facility. The city's wastewater treatment facility services approximately 55,000 people.

In the samples tested 11/17/2020, quantifiable COVID-19 virus was present in influent points A & B of the city's wastewater facility.

These reports, in line with the spike in cases currently happening in Jefferson County, demonstrate a significant presence of virus, support the increase in transmissions currently happening, and are a prediction of increased cases and hospitalizations in the coming weeks.

It is critically important that everyone follow and practice prevention guidance, including masking when in public; distancing (while masked) from individuals in public, at school, and in the workplace; and disinfecting, including handwashing, and sanitizing commonly touched areas including door knobs/handles, faucets, light switches, etc.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, please, stay home. Do not go to work. Do not attend school. Avoid all public areas. If you need to be tested for COVID-19, call your provider first to arrange for testing that ensures you can receive a test without exposing other people.