

The Governor's most recent executive order, EO 7BB, has dictated what many of us were already doing when out in public; to wear a mask whenever we were unable to avoid close contact. The new order requires that beginning at 8:00 PM on Monday April 20, 2020 any person in a public place in Connecticut who is unable to or does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service or means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area.

I am hopeful that we will become much more proficient in smeyeling at each other as we pass. We have been stripped of the very sameness that is a small town's hallmark: the comfort of knowing who will be waiting for the WALK signal to safely cross on the way to school. We may not know Deep River's entire population by name, but the sight of a familiar face or a friendly wave's distance down the sidewalk qualifies for membership in our extended family. We took for granted that when we patronized our local shops we would know—and be known.

The message is the same, stay the course. We are succeeding in “flattening the curve,” and ensuring that our hospitals are not overwhelmed, but at the same time, the Country, the State, and the Town remain under States of Emergency. Despite mixed messages from media, both commercial and social, it is important that we continue to take social distancing seriously. We meet weekly with our local Health District as well as bi-weekly meetings with our Emergency Operations Group. Deep River appears to be holding steady, but now is not the time to stop the proactive measures we have been working so hard to maintain. All indications are that we are entering the peak of this COVID-19 outbreak for our area. Now is the time to resist the urge to return to “normal.” We are not there yet! Simply put, it is too soon. How each of us behaves can affect other's health, and we help keep each other healthy by staying home.

Simultaneously, we are working hard to keep our parks open to the public. I fully believe that staying active is how we keep our minds and bodies sound. In order to do so we need to adhere to the guidelines set forth by the CDC and the State. Gatherings of over five are not allowed. We need to adhere to a six foot separation. Best to look to the following link to find advice and guidelines that will help us all keep safe:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcom](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcom)

You will find a link to executive Order 7BB here: [\*\*Executive Order No. 7BB\*\*](#)

Be well, do the five, stay safe.

Peace