

“The poetry was all in the anticipation—for there is none in the reality.”

--Mark Twain, *Roughing It*

Phase I of Reopen CT began on Wednesday, May 20, as promised. After the longest two months that I can remember, what we have waited for is here. The very thought of sitting down for a meal prepared by our local restaurateurs is enough to make me jump for joy and sing from the mountain tops. It is not an easy task for our restaurants and shops to navigate the requirements dictated by the state to be open, and we are working with whoever needs assistance. I am looking forward to seeing people on our sidewalks (in masks, of course) and cars in the parking spaces. But seeing our shops open and being allowed to dine out does not mean that our sojourn is ended; quite the contrary. The country, the state, and the town are still operating under a state of emergency. It is anticipated that confirmed cases statewide will increase as a result of the businesses reopening together with the fact that testing is becoming more available for all Connecticut residents and that the State of Connecticut will be testing all residents and employees of nursing homes, whether they have symptoms or not. Phase II is currently scheduled for June 20. Until then our public gatherings are still limited to groups of five or less. Capacity in our shops is limited to 50%. It is still recommended that those of us in high risk groups should continue to stay safe and stay home. Facemasks should continue to be worn in public at all times. Distancing practices should not be relaxed. The best place to learn details of Phase I is here:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery/general-reopen-051920.pdf?la=en

<https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/Sector-Rules-for-May-20-Reopen>

[Hair Salons & Barbershops](#) (to open June 1)

[Museums and Zoos](#) (Outdoor Only)

[Offices](#)

[Restaurants](#) (Outdoor Only)

[Retail & Malls](#) (*updated 5/16*)

New Restrictions at State Parks and Beaches Ahead of Memorial Day Weekend

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) says state parks will remain open with restrictions and inland beaches will be closed. Swimming is permitted only at shoreline state parks, but all inland beaches and swimming areas in state parks will remain closed. DEEP says this will help maintain social distancing guidelines at shoreline beaches.

State park beaches will be operating under limited capacity. Visitors at shoreline parks must maintain 15 feet of space from other beach-goers (blanket-to-blanket). This distance will allow for a 6-foot radius around each person or family and a 3-foot walkway in between groups. There will be no lifeguards on duty at shoreline beaches at this time. Bathroom buildings will not be open at state parks but most locations will have portable toilets available.

State campgrounds will remain closed until at least June 11. For more information on the new guidelines, click here: <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/05-2020/Governor-Lamont-Announces-Connecticut-Shoreline-State-Park-Beaches-Will-Be-Open-Memorial-Day-Weekend>

We are working hard to release guidance about our own Deep River Parks and will likely take our lead from the State.

Thermometers Available Free to Small Businesses, Nonprofits, and Places of worship:

The State of Connecticut, together with CONNSTEP and CBIA have partnered to help distribute donated infrared thermometers to eligible small businesses. The thermometers, which can support workplace screening and health checks, are available free to Connecticut employers with 100 or fewer employees. Eligible businesses can request a thermometer **through this website**. ---- <https://www.ctcovidresponse.org/thermometer-request>

Organizations can request thermometers through [ct.gov/coronavirus](https://www.ct.gov/coronavirus) in the “Access to Personal Protective Equipment” section or through the following links:

- **Small businesses:** Any small business in the state that has between 2 and 100 employees are eligible to receive one thermometer per physical address. Eligible businesses seeking to request thermometers should [click here](#).
- **Nonprofits:** Nonprofits located within Connecticut are eligible to receive one thermometer per physical address. To request thermometers for nonprofits, [click here](#). Social services and direct care nonprofits may request a thermometer through the process outlined [in this memo](#).
- **Places of worship:** Places of worship are eligible to receive one thermometer per physical address. To request thermometers for places of worship, [click here](#).

Thermometers will be delivered to municipalities where organizations are located; municipalities will then contact specific organizations to tell them when and where to pick up the requested equipment.

New Drive Through Test Sites:

CVS Health is opening 13 new COVID-19 test sites at select CVS Pharmacy drive-thru locations in Connecticut today, in addition to the 12 opened last week. This will increase the amount of coronavirus testing being done – an important step toward reopening more Connecticut businesses in the weeks and months to come.

The new sites will utilize self-swab tests and will be available to individuals meeting Centers for Disease Control and Prevention criteria, in addition to age guidelines. Patients must register in advance at www.CVS.com in order to schedule an appointment.

Patients will be required to stay in their cars and directed to the pharmacy drive-thru window where they will be provided with a test kit and given instructions; a CVS Pharmacy team member will observe the self-swab process to ensure it is done properly. Tests will be sent to an independent, third-party lab for processing and the results will be available in approximately three days. The nearest CVS Testing locations to Deep River are as follows:

CVS Pharmacy, 1057 Boston Post Road, Guilford, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 15 Chestefield Road, East Lyme, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 54 East High Street, East Hampton, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 2639 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 323 Cromwell Avenue, Rocky Hill, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 2005 Norwich-New London Tpke, Uncasville, CT
CVS Pharmacy, 1657 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT

Shoreline Soup Kitchens Meal Site Openings

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens and Pantries announced that it has opened two meal sites with curbside pickup of meals to go. Volunteers will make curbside deliveries in Deep River and Centerbrook.

- Thursdays at Deep River Congregational Church, located at 1 Church Street in Deep River, from 5 to 6 p.m.
- Fridays at Centerbrook's Trinity Lutheran Church, located at 109 Main Street in Centerbrook, from noon to 1 p.m.

I see poetry most every day in our community. Sure, the reality of Phase I is not what we might have hoped for, but I see every day how hard our businesses are working to be ready for us when we venture out, and please let's venture out, albeit carefully. I am fortunate to witness the generosity of our citizens helping to keep our Food Pantry shelves full. I know our quiet volunteers shopping or running errands for our most vulnerable citizens. I see poetry in this reality every day. And I look forward to Phase II when more significant openings will take place, including lodging and hotels, gyms, dance studios, outdoor events of up to fifty people, movies and museums, sports, and limited indoor restaurant service.

Jonathan has taken to calling me the "Nagger in Chief," and that's ok. As the season changes and the weather warms please remember to maintain social distancing. It will be easy while in our gardens, but not so much so when we go to the park or to the beach or to the landing or to the transfer station. Please, keep your neighbors in mind. Keep your distance, six (6) feet sounds about right. Keep your group activities to no more than five (5) people or less. Keep washing your hands; it does help stop the spread. And please, please, please, wear your mask.

Be safe, be well, be kind
Angus