

This summer I went swimming
This summer I might have drowned
But I held my breath and I kicked my legs
And I moved my arms around
I moved my arms around

The Swimming Song - Loudon Wainwright III

Summer 2020 is one for the books, that is for sure. And if ever there was a time when we might have felt like we were drowning it might have been these past seven months. But we held our breath. And we kicked our legs. And we stayed afloat.

It felt good to get outside; we are blessed to live in an area that affords us multiple outdoor activities and spaces. At the same time, we were able to abide the discomfort and to do what we knew was necessary, those now-familiar amendments to our daily routines that have been essential to the protection of ourselves, and equally important, the protection of our neighbors.

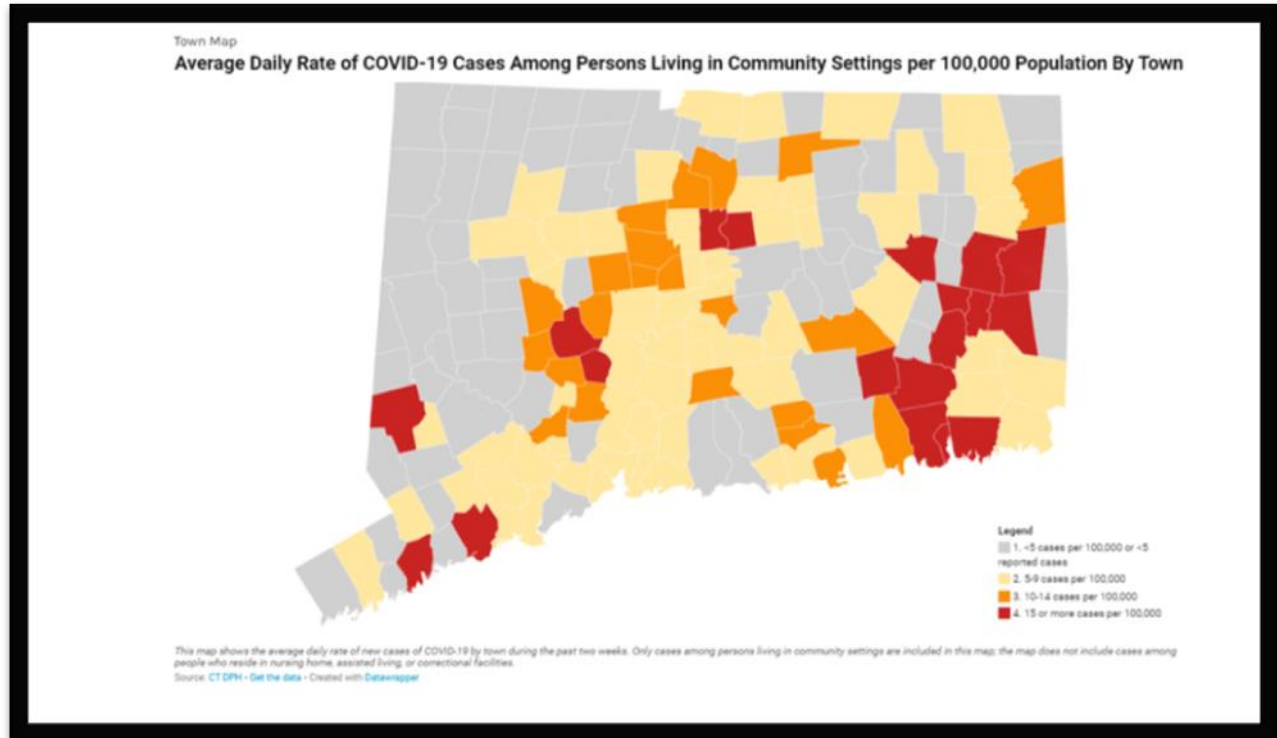
As a result, we have limited the spread of this insidious virus through our community. Deep River has thus far been successful in keeping our COVID 19 cases low. But, along came Autumn, and the restlessness that warns of winter's onset. Schools have reopened (though in a manner that is jarringly unfamiliar); sidewalk dining grows more a challenge than a pleasure. Distancing is increasingly difficult as we prepare to move inside. It is time, once again, for us to update you concerning our changing situation.

We are receiving new information from the State Department of Public Health.

- The State Department of Public Health has created a new Community Rating System
- The system classifies towns and cities based on:
 - 1) population, and
 - 2) number of residents testing positive for COVID-19 on a two week rolling average.
- Towns and cities that have increased positive COVID-19 cases are designated as YELLOW, ORANGE or RED.
- The State will make these designations public each Thursday at 5 PM.
- When a town or city is classified specific actions are taken.
- ***This new State rating system does not impact the status of our public schools.***
- ***No matter what "color" a town or city is, a different rating scale is used by the ALL Superintendents of Schools to make decisions concerning in person learning activities.***

■ When a community is classified as YELLOW, ORANGE, or RED there are six (6) categories of activities that are reviewed. They are: - Department of Public Health Response - Individual Response (That's YOU!) - Community Response - Organized Group Activities - Pre K-12 Schools - Business & Sector Rules.

Here is the map of the State with the Yellow, Orange, and Red designations as of October 22, 2020:



The following link provides a bit more information:






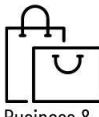
<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Data-Tracker>

Deep River has had eight (8) new cases reported in the past 14 days. This is the highest positivity rate yet for Deep River.

On Thursday at 5:00 pm Deep River was placed in the Orange category.

The following chart informs us what we need to do when Deep River is designated Yellow, Orange, or Red:

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH TOWN-LEVEL COVID RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

	Yellow 5-9 cases per 100k per day	Orange 10-14 cases per 100k per day	Red 15+ cases per 100k per day
 DPH Response	Outreach to Local Health Department	ENCOURAGE TESTING FOR ASYMPTOMATIC RESIDENTS	
		Weekly calls with Local Officials	Issue Public Health Alert
 Individuals	Masks, distancing, extra precautions for high risk	HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS SHOULD STAY HOME, STAY SAFE	
		Avoid larger events, limit time with non-family members	Limit trips outside home, avoid gatherings with non-family members
 Communities	Scale up public awareness, social media	Scale back public events	Cancel public events and limit community gathering points; Reverse 9-1-1
 Organized Group Activities	Move activities outdoors where possible	Limit group sizes; Postpone indoor activities where mask wearing or social distancing cannot be maintained	Postpone all indoor activities; Postpone outdoor activities where mask wearing or social distancing cannot be maintained
 Pre K-12 Schools	Re-Enforce and monitor safety measures with staff, students and families	Maximize spacing, mask wearing, ventilation and hygiene to support in-person learning	In collaboration with Local Health Department and Superintendent, consider more distance learning above 25
 Business & Sector Rules	REMAND STAFF TO ASSESS THEIR SYMPTOMS DAILY AND NOT REPORT TO WORK IF THEY ARE ILL		
	Phase 3 with enhanced enforcement	Phase 3 with enhanced enforcement	Municipal option to revert to Phase 2

**CT DPH would like to remind everyone of the 3 W's:
Wear your mask, Wash your hands, and Watch your distance!**



As a community Deep River has had amongst the fewest confirmed cases in the state, and the same can be said about Middlesex County. We have worked hard to achieve that statistic. We need to continue that work. We need to exercise caution. Despite our efforts, we have not reached the end of this journey. Please keep in mind that despite the efforts to continue to open up, the Nation, the State, and the Town are still operating under a state of emergency. Please, do not relax your efforts. The weather is turning, and we will soon need to get our cold weather clothing out. The difficulty of staying home, of isolating ourselves will increase. We need to get out. We need to say hello to each other (at an appropriate distance, or course). If you do not feel a need to distance, to wear a mask, to distance because you feel safe, please keep your neighbors in mind. They may not feel as safe as you do. I will paraphrase Dr Fauci when he speaks of our responsibilities to ourselves and to others:

“This virus has a range from 20 to 40 percent of those affected having no symptoms, to some getting mild symptoms, to some getting symptoms enough to keep them at home for a few days, some are in bed for weeks and have symptoms even after they recover, others go to the hospital, some require the use of oxygen, some require intensive care, some get intubated, and some die. So you have a situation that is very confusing to people because some people think it’s trivial — ‘It doesn’t bother me, who cares?’

We have a dual responsibility. We have a responsibility to ourselves, because I think that thinking that young people have no deleterious consequences is not true. We’re seeing more and more complications in young people. But even though the majority — the overwhelming majority of them — do well, what you can’t forget is that, if you get infected and spread the infection, even though you do not get sick, you are part of the process of the dynamics of an outbreak. And what you might be propagating, inadvertently — perhaps innocently — is infecting someone who then infects someone else who is someone who is vulnerable. That could be your grandmother, your grandfather, your sick uncle, who winds up dying.”

So, here is the old mantra, it works: Wash your hands. Keep your distance whenever you can. Wear your mask. If we all follow these simple steps we will not only move Deep River out of the Orange and into the grey, we will keep her there.

Be careful, be well, be nice
Peace
Angus