



County Of Dane
Office Of The County Executive

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Parisi: Covid-19 Continues to Spread Quickly in Community, Renews Call for UW Campus to Go Virtual

Public Health Data: Rate of Covid-19 Infection in Dane County Now Three and Half Times Higher than Just Two Weeks Ago

Dane County Executive Joe Parisi today renewed his call on the UW-Madison campus to take action immediately to help slow the spread of Covid-19, which data shows is spreading faster today than ever in Dane County and the State of Wisconsin.

"Today, as our state surpasses the 100,000 case mark, we find ourselves in the midst of an unprecedented surge in Covid-19 cases fueled largely by the University System's decision to return to in-person classes.

"This decision has greatly impacted our community and others, and has now catapulted Wisconsin into the top three states in the nation for increases in the rate of infection.

"Last week, UW System President Thompson attributed the rise in cases to an increase in testing. A closer look at the facts, however, paints a much different picture.

"In the first two weeks of September, 24,790 people were tested for Covid-19 in Dane County. That compares to 32,588 tests done in the two weeks prior. That means there was a 24% DECLINE in the overall number of tests administered over the past two weeks while the total number of positive cases increased dramatically, bringing the rate of positivity from 125 per 100,000 residents to 425 per 100,000.

"Additionally, a review of counties with the highest rates of infection shows a close correlation between positive test data and the presence of a UW System school.

"We have an incredible state University system with a rich progressive tradition, but nothing that is happening now exemplifies what we have come to know as the Wisconsin Idea," Parisi said. "This implicit acceptance that some people are just going to get sick - some seriously - spread this to friends and families, and people will experience long term cardiac illness, is entirely unacceptable when individuals have the ability to make decisions right now to prevent this from continuing. The time to act is now."

"The data tells the real story of what's happening – Covid-19 is here, it's spreading, and barring a major course correction this region and state are in store for countless tales of unnecessary human suffering," Parisi said. "We have families right now unable to visit sick loved ones in the hospital because of this high prevalence of Covid-19. The data and the science are crystal clear; Wisconsin has a very real Covid-19 problem," Parisi concluded.

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