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Joel R. Strasz
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To: All Media
From: Joel Strasz, Public Health Officer
Date: April 11, 2020
Re: **Bay County Reports First COVID-19 Related Fatality**

BAY COUNTY, MICHIGAN – With great sadness, the Bay County Health Department is reporting the first COVID-19 related fatality in our community. The deceased is elderly male resident who was hospitalized at Covenant Health Center in Saginaw.

“I am sending my deepest condolences to the family and friends of this resident who has lost their loved one. I know no words can lessen the grief that is felt at this moment, but know that our Bay County Community is sending many well wishes to you at this very difficult time. This heartbreaking loss is an urgent reminder that we, as a community, all need to be taking the social distancing and hygienic practices recommended for defeating this virus with the upmost seriousness in order to keep all of our residents healthy,” said Bay County Executive Jim Barcia.

“This is a tragic reminder of how serious a threat COVID-19 is to our community, said Public Health Officer Joel Strasz.” It is critical that we band together to protect each other and work cohesively to slow the spread of this virus. It’s important that every Bay County resident be aware of, and avidly use, prevention methods including hand washing, avoiding touching your face, covering your cough or sneeze with the crook of your elbow or tissue, avoiding contact with those who are symptomatic, and most importantly staying home if you are sick or could have been exposed to someone who is.”

As of this morning, Bay County currently has 53 positive cases of COVID-19, including this reported death. Most of these individuals are recovering from their symptoms at home, and at this time, we can confirm that there are four positive case that have fully recovered.

In order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, please follow these recommendations from the Center of Disease Control:

1. Wash your hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
4. Avoid handshakes.
5. Avoid contact with people who are sick.
6. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
7. Wear a mask or other face covering to avoid the possibility that you might spread the virus to others.
- 8. IF YOU ARE SICK, STAY HOME.**

For the latest and most accurate information regarding the COVID-19 please go to the Bay County Health Department website at www.baycounty-mi.gov/Health and the Center for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov.