COVID-19 (Corona Virus) has received a lot of attention from the media.  COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and which has now been detected in 65 locations internationally, including in the United States. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).  As of 4:00 p.m. yesterday, in the United States, there were 80 cases in 13 states with 9 deaths.  There are currently no cases reported in Pennsylvania.  The majority of the cases are on the west coast.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

* Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
* Avoid shaking hands.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
* Stay home when you are sick.
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
* If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Useful links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>

<http://www.co.washington.pa.us/180/Public-Safety>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

We will keep you apprised.

Be Safe,

Jeff

Jeffrey A. Yates, Director

Washington County Department of Public Safety