



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – April 17, 2020

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Quote of the Week

"If you could choose one characteristic that would get you through life, choose a sense of humor."

-unk



The Chief's Desk

Week seven of the siege and we are finally starting to see some light at the end of the panic. A store, an actual retail store, had toilet paper and canned goods on their shelves! No more contraband counterfeit toilet paper from wherever that type of thing comes from. Maybe remnants from a sandpaper factory???

While other agencies in the state have experienced a drop in call volume, ours seems to have remained relatively steady. It appears some call types have been replaced by others e.g. fewer vehicle crashes, but more sick cases.

As far as our current response plan for CAFMA, we are staying the course. We have not seen anything over the last week that would cause us to adjust our protocols or staffing nor do we see anything on the horizon. That said, we're ready to adjust should the need arise. I realize that the County and State continue to extend their projections for an expected peak. Unfortunately, the data being used remains horribly flawed. As I've said before, please be careful where you gather the latest and greatest information. Check your sources and ask critical questions about the information being presented.

There remains tremendous uncertainty throughout the country related to COVID-19 e.g. the "curve," how the virus spreads, when do we open the world, etc. Each day new models are released that reduce the dire predictions from the day prior. Yet, they add the caveat that while the peak did not occur within their initial, secondary, third, fourth, fifth and so on projections watch out for next week. If you are a critical thinker, you may look at some recent charts/graphs and notice that some use a date range starting somewhere between March 15th and March 20th. These tend to depict a significant increase in cases over a very short period of time. Hmmmmmm.... Is the upward slope a product of a dramatic increase in cases, or is it because that's when we started testing?

If you believe that COVID-19 was not in Arizona or Yavapai County prior to March 15th, then it may be reasonable to assume that the peak may still be on the horizon – maybe. However, it is highly probable that cases of COVID-19 existed in Arizona as early as December. If we assume that there were undiagnosed cases in December, January, February, and early March, it may be reasonable to deduce that the peak occurred at some point prior to or after we started testing – at least in some areas of the state and/or country. Using a chart or graph that begins in mid-March seemingly dismisses the probability that COVID-19 was active in our state prior to January 2020. Granted, there was no testing, so no real data exists for those months. However, utilizing charts and graphs that dismiss the potential of 3+ months' worth of spread does not provide a clear picture and only leads to increased uncertainty. If experts are that unclear, how are we the general populous supposed to keep things straight?

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Upcoming Events:

April 20 – Present at Recruit Academy, Labor Management Meeting
April 21 – Chief in Valley for Spine Doctor stuff – sick day
April 22 – Admin Professionals Day, AFCA Board Meeting, Coronapocalypse
April 22 – New Chief's Seminar ZOOM Planning Meeting, Weekly staff COVID meeting

Board Meeting:

April 27 Admin

CAFMA – 1700-1830



N95 UV Light Decontamination Case

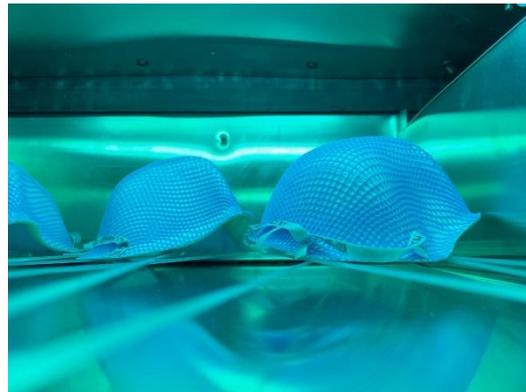
By: Chief Freitag

On one of the national Zoom meetings I attended, a panelist discussed a University of Nebraska study related to the use of UV Light to decontaminate N95 masks. A week or so later I was on an AFCA call and learned from Chief Miller out of Casa Grande that they were building some UV Light boxes based on a plan used by a Colorado Fire Department created by someone at MIT. I shared all of the information with our EMS Division as well as the warehouse. The MIT model did have study results and recommendations to ensure masks are properly decontaminated. The on-line manual came with a parts list.

Thanks to Norm Rorick, we have one box completed and another in process. Chief Doug Niemynski has run the calculations and determined that our masks will need 5 minutes in the box to ensure complete decontamination. There are three safety override switches installed to ensure the lights cannot be activated when the box is open. Doug was kind enough to put his phone in the box to get pictures of the unit in operation – and to see if he could do it without damaging his phone 😊

The first box is tentatively slated to be placed at Station 58 since it is more centrally located within Battalion 3, but a final determination has not been made. My assumption is that box two will be deployed in Battalion 6 at a location yet to be determined. EMS in consultation with our Operations Chiefs will make the final decision.

This has certainly been a great effort by all involved and will allow us to lengthen the life of our N95's thereby saving us on PPE! Depending on how this goes, the team may build more in the future.



The Corona Rules

By: Borrowed from the FB

1. Basically, you can't leave the house for any reason, but if you have to, then you can.
2. Masks are useless, but maybe you have to wear one, it can save you, it is useless, but maybe it is mandatory as well.
3. Stores are closed, except those that are open.
4. You should not go to hospitals unless you have to go there. Same applies to doctors, you should only go there in case of emergency, provided you are not too sick.
5. This virus is deadly but still not too scary, except that sometimes it actually leads to a global disaster.
6. Gloves won't help, but they can still help.
7. Everyone needs to stay HOME, but it's important to GO OUT.
8. There is no shortage of groceries in the supermarket, but there are many things missing when you go there in the evening, but not in the morning. Sometimes.
9. The virus has no effect on children except those it affects.
10. Animals are not affected, but there is still a cat that tested positive in Belgium in February when no one had been tested, plus a few tigers here and there...
11. You will have many symptoms when you are sick, but you can also get sick without symptoms, have symptoms without being sick, or be contagious without having symptoms. Oh, my..
12. In order not to get sick, you have to eat well and exercise, but eat whatever you have on hand and it's better not to go out, well, but no...
13. It's better to get some fresh air, but you get looked at very wrong when you get some fresh air, and most importantly, you don't go to parks or walk. But don't sit down, except that you can do that now if you are old, but not for too long or if you are pregnant (but not too old).
14. You can't go to retirement homes, but you have to take care of the elderly and bring food and medication.

15. If you are sick, you can't go out, but you can go to the pharmacy.
16. You can get restaurant food delivered to the house, which may have been prepared by people who didn't wear masks or gloves. But you have to have your groceries decontaminated outside for 3 hours. Pizza too?
17. Every disturbing article or disturbing interview starts with " I don't want to trigger panic, but..."
18. You can't see your older mother or grandmother, but you can take a taxi and meet an older taxi driver.
19. You can walk around with a friend but not with your family if they don't live under the same roof.
20. You are safe if you maintain the appropriate social distance, but you can't go out with friends or strangers at the safe social distance.
21. The virus remains active on different surfaces for two hours, no, four, no, six, no, we didn't say hours, maybe days? But it takes a damp environment. Oh no, not necessarily.
22. The virus stays in the air - well no, or yes, maybe, especially in a closed room, in one hour a sick person can infect ten, so if it falls, all our children were already infected at school before it was closed. But remember, if you stay at the recommended social distance, however in certain circumstances you should maintain a greater distance, which, studies show, the virus can travel further, maybe.
23. We count the number of deaths but we don't know how many people are infected as we have only tested so far those who were "almost dead" to find out if that's what they will die of...
24. We have no treatment, except that there may be one that apparently is not dangerous unless you take too much (which is the case with all medications).
25. We should stay locked up until the virus disappears, but it will only disappear if we achieve collective immunity, so when it circulates... but we must no longer be locked up for that?

Chief's Desk Continued

Some have asserted that the extreme social distancing measures have helped flatten the curve. I don't think there is any doubt that it has helped decrease the rate of spread – maybe, to some extent. However, if COVID-19 was in the state and active from December through mid-March without any social

distancing measures in place is it possible that a level of immunity has existed in Arizona? As I mentioned last week, Stanford University is undertaking a study in California researching this possibility as an explanation as to why California has not experienced the dramatic spikes that New York has realized. Given I sometimes have to check to make sure I'm still in Arizona given all the California plates on the road, it may be reasonable to assume that our situation could be similar. This line of thinking can certainly lead down a rabbit hole of questions related to the need for such extreme measures.

Please do not misunderstand; I am not saying there should be a free for all. To the contrary, given the actions taken we will need a well thought out plan to reopen our economy and get people back to work. Chief Niemynski, Engineer Poliakon, and I took part in a national Zoom meeting Thursday morning with a panel of experts from around the United States discussing how we re-open the country. While they all shared some concern about controlling the spread of the virus, they also shared concerns about what happens if we don't get the economy running again.

One panelist mentioned the deferred home and rental payment program. As she said, it's great that people out of work can defer the payments for three months, but what happens when the three months are up and now three months of rent or house payments are due? Are we prepared to deal with a massive influx of newly homeless people and or families? What about the companies to whom the rent is owed? Additionally, we have to be concerned about the increase in mental health issues, domestic violence, and drug overdoses that we've experienced.

The reality is that we have to get the economy out of park, but it has to be as part of a well-crafted plan that includes new standards reflecting what may be our new normal. In all honesty, a lot of the new normal are likely things that should have been part of the old normal.

1. WASH YOUR HANDS!!
2. WASH YOUR HANDS!!!
3. Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze (Ummm, pretty sure my parents tried to teach me these top three things as kid)
4. Disinfect shopping carts, fuel pumps, etc. – especially during flu season
5. Maybe the idea of senior hours during flu season should be something retail and grocery stores offer every year.
6. The doors and glass type coverings over vegetables and other merchandise seems a non-invasive approach and a good idea. Doors in front of the beer cooler at Fry's certainly didn't hamper my "essentials" shopping last weekend.
7. Maybe restaurants should do a better job decontaminating tables and other items after each customer #stopusingdirtyragstocleanthetable

8. We are certainly going to lose the 5 second rule as it pertains to food hitting the floor (Chief Niemyński – NO M&Ms off the floor!)
9. The advent of the new Lysol Grenade for home and office use. Pull the pin and let it go – good for COVID and Kids..... I'm copywriting the tag line so don't even think about it.
10. Nurses and doctors may want to follow the lead of firefighters/paramedics by leaving their scrubs at work in an effort to decrease cross contamination. I'm sure there's a way to have them laundered at the hospital.
11. There will likely be an increased use of both N95 and surgical masks as standard protocol for first responders and healthcare workers.
12. Continue following decontamination guidelines for the fire stations as part of our daily cleaning – same with apparatus – as a regular practice.
13. I'm sorry Dr. Fauci, but handshakes stay! I'm not bowing to anyone especially you Chief Tharp 😊 Hugs are in as well.
14. More telecommuting from home when someone is sick for those who have jobs that can be done from home.

This list is certainly not all inclusive, but I think you get the idea. Based on the data, it appears we are doing pretty well in Yavapai County. That does not mean go out and hug everyone. However, it would appear, in my opinion only, that we should be able to put Arizona back in drive as of May 1st. That is assuming Governor Ducey makes the decision to open the state – he usually does not consult me on any of his decisions, which is unfortunate for him.

As for the Yavapai County emergency management and the operations center, the workload there is manageable at the moment and being handled by a well-trained and highly professional staff. To that end, our Type 3 team members remain connected to the EOC virtually, but are back to their regular duties at their respective fire agencies. They remain at the ready when called by our Emergency Manager Ron Stauntman, or our County Health Director Leslie Horton.

Folks, I know I've been a bit critical of some of the myriad of bad data and poor modeling currently being used. It doesn't help that the news media, social media, and self-proclaimed experts continue to propagate filtered, partial, and just plain incorrect information 24 hours a day. My intent this week is to provide some points to ponder and encourage you to think critically about what you read. It is vitally important that as an organization as well as individuals we make decisions based on reason not emotion. That means not throwing caution to the wind, but it also means not being so afraid to live that we do not go outside. There are some areas of our state, especially up north, still struggling right now. COVID-19 can have very serious consequences for some, and have absolutely no impact on others. Be respectful of others while making decisions that you feel are best for you and your family.