WHATCOM COUNTY
Health Department

Erika Lautenbach, Director
Greg Stern, M.D., Health Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2020

Media Contact:	Claudia Murphy, Public Information Officer
Phone:	(360) 815-2701
E-mail address:	WUC_PIO@co.whatcom.wa.us

First Whatcom County Resident Dies From Coronavirus (COVID-19)

BELLINGHAM, WA – Today a Whatcom County resident who tested positive for COVID-19 has died. The individual was a male in his 60s.

"Our sympathies go to his family and friends." said Greg Stern, Whatcom County Health Officer. "It is deeply saddening to lose a member of our community in this way."

The individual was a patient at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center. PeaceHealth confirmed that proper respiratory precautions were used by caregivers during his admission. The Whatcom County Health Department is working to identify all those who may have come in contact with the confirmed case. Close contacts may include family members, co-workers, emergency responders and others. These people will be closely monitored for symptoms to avoid further spread of this virus.

While most cases of COVID-19 are mild to moderate, approximately 15% of people infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 will have serious illness. It is vitally important that people are taking steps to protect our family members, friends and neighbors from this infection. Everyone should stay home as much as possible and limit their exposure to others. If you are at risk for severe disease, it is especially important to take the necessary steps to limit potential exposure. Vulnerable individuals should stay home as much as possible.

For more information on novel coronavirus

This is an emerging outbreak with rapidly evolving information. Updates will be made as new information is available on the Whatcom County Health Department website and the Washington State coronavirus website.

Questions for WCHD can also be emailed to covid@co.whatcom.wa.us

###