



Whatcom County
HEALTH
Department



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Whatcom County Health Department offers 4th of July gathering guidance

BELLINGHAM, WA – This Saturday is the 4th of July. While many look forward to this holiday and its traditions, this year is different. The sponsored fireworks shows in Bellingham and Blaine have been canceled, and large gatherings and parties are not allowed in Phase 2. The Whatcom County Health Department encourages all county residents to celebrate responsibly this year.

Celebrate safely, celebrate small

A small celebration with no more than five friends outside of your household is a great way to enjoy the 4th of July this year. If you choose to gather with a small group of friends, follow guidelines to keep it safe:

- Stay outdoors.
- Wear a mask.
- Maintain physical distance.
- Avoid sharing food and drinks.

Avoid Birch Bay

Birch Bay has traditionally been a gathering point for festivities on the holiday. **To support the health and safety of residents, please avoid visiting Birch Bay this weekend.**

"We ask locals and visitors alike not to gather in Birch Bay for fireworks this year," says Erika Lautenbach, Whatcom County Health Department Director. "We know traditions like these are fun, celebratory, and very meaningful for a lot of people. But it's simply not safe this year. It could put many others at risk, including the people who call Birch Bay home."

On average, residents of Birch Bay are over 50 years old, which means that many people in that community are at a higher risk of more severe complications from COVID-19. Case contact investigations have found that large gatherings and parties are linked to the spread of COVID-19 in our county; the goal is to avoid that in Birch Bay as a result of Independence Day.

The Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce has also [released a message](#) requesting all visitors to do their part to keep the community healthy and safe this summer.

Learn more about ways you can celebrate the 4th of July in the [Health Department news flash](#) and to find out what is allowed or not, visit City of [Bellingham Fire Marshall](#) or the Whatcom County [Fire Marshall](#) news releases, or check your local jurisdiction.

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