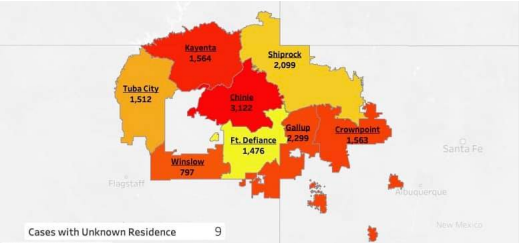
Number of record high cases reported Friday as Navajo Nation lockdown continues



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Navajo Department of Health, in coordination with the Navajo Epidemiology Center and the Navajo Area Indian Health Service, reported a record-high 351 new COVID-19 positive cases for the Navajo Nation and five more deaths Friday.

The total number of deaths is now 623 as of Friday. Reports indicate that 8,045 individuals have recovered from COVID-19, and 146,196 COVID-19 tests have been administered. The total number of positive COVID-19 cases is now 14,441, including five delayed reported cases.

Navajo Nation COVID-19 positive cases by Service Unit:

- Chinle Service Unit: 3,122
- Crownpoint Service Unit: 1,563
- Ft. Defiance Service Unit: 1,476
- Gallup Service Unit: 2,299
- Kayenta Service Unit: 1,564

- Shiprock Service Unit: 2,099

- Tuba City Service Unit: 1,512

- Winslow Service Unit: 797

* Nine residences with Covid-19 positive cases are not specific enough to place them accurately in a Service Unit.

On Friday, the state of New Mexico reported 2,993 new cases of Covid-19, the state of Arizona reported 4,471 new cases, and Utah reported a record-high 4,588 new cases.

President Johnathan said, on May 13, the Navajo Nation reported a record high of 238 new cases, but the Friday's number indicates that uncontrolled spread persists on the reservation and border towns.

Nez reflected on the state of Arizona, where unlike New Mexico, Gov. Doug Ducey has left mask mandates up to local governments. In contrast, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has implemented the toughest Covid- 19 restrictions in the country, including a statewide mask mandate.

"It is time for a mask mandate for the entire state of Arizona – the growing numbers of cases outside of the Navajo Nation is having a devastating impact on our people and it’s evident with 4,471 new cases reported in Arizona," Nez said.

Nez said the upward trend of positive Covid-19 cases has also impacted the rest of the country.

"... We have always told our people that the safest place to be is at home here on the Navajo

Nation," he said.

He explained that the administration has cautioned people daily about the dangers of Covid-19, but each individual must hold themselves accountable for their actions.

"If you do not have an emergency, if you're not in immediate need of food, and if you're not an essential worker that is required to report to work, then you are mandated to stay home," he said. "We have to do more and we have to take it upon ourselves to isolate the virus. When we move, the virus moves and spreads among the people."

The Navajo Nation's three-week stay-at-home lockdown is in effect 24-hours a day, seven days a week with the exception of essential workers, cases of emergencies, and to purchase essential items such as food and medication when essential businesses are open from 7 am to 3 pm daily.

According to the Office of the President and Vice President's Friday Covid-19 press release, Navajo Police Department will increase its enforcement of the lockdown and will patrol roadways and communities to help ensure compliance.

All essential businesses are required to ensure employees and customers wear masks, practice social distancing, disinfect high-touch surfaces, access to hand wash stations, sanitizers and gloves, and limit the number of customers in any enclosed areas, the release states.

Vice President Myron Lizer weighed in on the record-high positive cases of the virus, and said all members of the Navajo Nation need to fight the virus by following lockdown protocol.

"We have more and more people becoming infected with this virus and losing their lives," Lizer said. "Our health care system is struggling and may soon be overwhelmed. We have to do everything within our power to protect our children, elders, and those with existing health conditions. Please pray, be safe, and stay home as much as possible."

For more information, including helpful prevention tips, and resources to help stop the spread of Covid-19, visit the Navajo Department of Health's COVID-19 website: http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19 . For Covid-19 related questions and information, call (928) 871-7014 .