



March 23, 2020

Happy Monday everyone,

I hear there may be snow in our forecast today. I am so ready for spring. But our son's birthday is April 7th and there's almost always snow that day, so I should know better than to hope for spring mid-March!

First some **GOOD NEWS** to report: Both of the residents (one in independent living and one in Linden) who were tested for COVID-19 **are negative** for the virus. That means we have no suspected cases of COVID at Wake Robin at the moment. This obviously could change at any point, but for now, everyone who was tested has been cleared for the virus. I know this was worrisome for many of you, so I wanted to share this news as soon as we received it.

So, **please continue to take all the precautions** we have suggested - Wash your hands often; don't touch your face; social distance from others; stay out of groups. There seem to be several interpretations of what we meant in our instructions to "lay low." Since the Governor has not ordered everyone to stay inside, we are not requiring that right now. Whereas we would **strongly discourage anyone having visitors** to their independent homes, I can't absolutely say you can't. But we'd prefer no visitors in your homes/apartment buildings, not only for your safety but for the safety of your neighbors too. If you have visitors over for a walk outside, please maintain the 6-foot separation. Any visitors going into apartment buildings must be screened at the front desk in the community center before entering an apartment building. Your children and delivery people from grocery stores or restaurants can drive up to your building to drop off groceries/food/other essentials, but we'd ask that you wait outside for these deliveries, receive them yourself, and bring them back into your home. Feel free to go for a drive yourself to see what's happening in the outside world, but don't interact with others and follow all the same recommended rules.

The one exception to this rule (there's always one!) is for residents who require an essential caregiver. These individuals may be a family member or may be from an outside agency. These caregivers have been preapproved by Health Services and

are allowed to go into homes to support a resident. They are always screened at the front desk before heading over to the residence where they are providing support.

Now, there are a few residents who may at some point be asked to actually **self-isolate** by the Health Department or a doctor, but that is because they have tested positive for COVID themselves, come into contact with a possible COVID infected person, been on a cruise or came back from a country with travel warnings or have another contagious illness. That means they are not to leave their apartment/cottage for 2 weeks or until cleared by a doctor. Medical meals will be delivered. Mail will be delivered. No visitors would be allowed. No walks outside.

I hope this helps clarify our instructions.

We have had several questions from residents concerned for our employees. Rest assured we are being extra attentive to their needs right now. No one has been laid off. A few are caring for an older parent and/or children and obviously want to be extra cautious. We have a solid plan in place to meet people where they are in relation their own particular needs. Staff are confident that if they can work and wish to work, we will have work for them to do. This includes paying employees who are asked by their doctors to self-isolate and cannot be here, or those who are absent in order to manage childcare. We are offering flexible schedules, work from home options where possible, and shifting jobs to where they are most needed and most comfortable. Through it all we are collecting and sharing State resources for them and their families, expanding our emergency loan, and keeping all benefits in place. We obviously recognize that our staff are our most critical resource so we are doing everything we can to make sure they and their families are ok during this crisis.

I had a terrific Zoom call today with some Maple residents. This was a previously scheduled in-person visit I was making to that neighborhood that we switched to a virtual chat. There were over 20 people on the call and by all accounts it went very well. So it appears we have the technology for medium sized groups to chat together. I'll start getting these set up by neighborhood so we can meet and talk together in lieu of seeing each other around campus. We may run a few tutorials so people can get more comfortable with using the tool. Stay tuned for more info on that.

We have a great need for some masks and gowns for healthcare staff in Linden. Several of you have expressed a willingness to sew these for us. We have ordered gown material and it should be arriving later this week. There's a gown pattern that

MaryBeth created, and there is a mask pattern that has been shared by the CDC that we can make also available. I understand elastic to wrap the mask around the ears might be in short supply, but one creative seamstress used elastic hair ties instead and that seemed to work fine.

An important warning from our friends at COVE (Committee of Vermont Elders): **Beware of criminals pretending to be from the World Health Organization (WHO).** The following is information from the World Health Organization. Criminals are disguising themselves as WHO to steal money or sensitive information. If you are contacted by a person or organization that appears to be from WHO, verify their authenticity before responding. The World Health Organization will:

- never ask for your username or password to access safety information
- never email attachments you didn't ask for
- never ask you to visit a link outside of www.who.int
- never charge money to apply for a job, register for a conference, or reserve a hotel
- never conduct lotteries or offer prizes, grants, certificates or funding through email

The only call for donations WHO has issued is the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund, which can be found at <https://www.who.int/>. Any other appeal for funding or donations that appears to be from WHO is a scam. Beware that criminals use email, websites, phone calls, text messages, and even fax messages for their scams. You can verify if communication is legit by contacting WHO directly. Contact information and directions on reporting a WHO-related scam can be found at <https://www.who.int/>.

Phishing: malicious emails appearing to be from WHO. WHO is aware of suspicious email messages attempting to take advantage of the COVID-19 emergency. This fraudulent action is called phishing.

These “Phishing” emails appear to be from WHO, and will ask you to:

- give sensitive information, such as usernames or passwords
- click a malicious link
- open a malicious attachment.

Using this method, criminals can install malware or steal sensitive information.

A composting update: Green Mountain Composting has informed us that the “Biodegradable/Recyclable” bags are NOT compostable at their site. They are

made from natural gas, not plants! Also, the Plastic Wrap Recycling Corp. has confirmed that these bags do not qualify for the Plastic Bags recycling program. You must put them in Trash. You may tie up your trash in them and dispose of in the Bagged Trash Bin.

Don't forget to sign up for Written Cup if you are missing our weekly get-togethers. This will be dedicated to good news, happy activities, our staff profile of the week, some updates, and some fun community challenges. No depressing news allowed! So let Sherri know if you'd like to be added to her email distribution list - srigby@wakerobin.com.

Thanks again everyone for your continued support and kindness. So far, so good!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha E. Maksym', with a large, sweeping initial 'M'.

Martha E. Maksym
President and CEO