

## Mayor's Update

### Severe Weather Warning

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Tornado Watch for all of western, central and portions of eastern Massachusetts, including Middlesex County, until 10:00 p.m. tonight. The NWS expects a line of strong to severe thunderstorms to move in after 7:00 p.m. There is a threat for a few isolated thunderstorms ahead of the line before that time.



The main threat associated with these storms is damaging wind gusts up to 70 mph. Additional threats include:

- Few possible tornadoes
- Large hail (up to ping pong ball sized possible)
- Dangerous cloud to ground lightning
- Heavy rain that may lead to street flooding

### Current Cases

There are 689 Newton residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 through Thursday, May 14, according to preliminary data, an increase of nine people from Wednesday. On Wednesday evening, May 13, we had 680 positive cases and on Tuesday evening, 675.

The phased reopening plan for Massachusetts starts next week and how quickly we move from the “Start” phase to the “Cautious” phase (and then to the “Vigilant” and “New Normal” phases) will be heavily influenced by statewide data which is available [here](#) in the Commonwealth’s Data Dashboard.

The use of face coverings will be an essential part of our lives for the foreseeable future and built into the phased reopening plans. Check out this [video](#) and [guidance](#) from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to help your family with face coverings.

### Grab & Go Meals and Food Assistance

With so many people in Newton losing their paychecks, food insecurity has skyrocketed. A partnership between the City and Newton Public Schools started with offering free “Grab and Go Meals” to our students. We expanded it to residents of all ages a few weeks ago and many are finding it helpful.

Since April 30, the all-ages Grab & Go Meals program has distributed over 19,000 meals. This triples the figure from the previous six weeks when approximately 6,000 meals were provided only to students and brings the cumulative total to over 25,000. Grab & Go Meals are available for free Monday through Friday.



A Food Assistance calendar is available [here](#) with details on available resources, including information on how to [sign up](#) for SNAP benefits, and the hours of our Newton food pantries.

Residents are encouraged [apply](#) for free and reduced lunch through the Newton Public Schools. Although schools are closed, this program provides food assistance through a debit card (the P-EBT card).

For the free Grab & Go Breakfast/Lunch Program, there are three locations open for all Newton residents and NPS students from 10 am to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday:

- Newton North High School, theater entrance (457 Walnut Street)
- Newton South High School, main entrance (140 Brandeis Road)
- 150 Jackson Road (rear parking lot)

Residents who visit the Grab & Go locations will receive 3 days of breakfast and lunch meals for each individual. People can pick up for friends and neighbors who live in Newton and are unable to get out of their homes.

Please call Newton's Health and Human Services Department at 617-796-1420 for more information about food resources and other community supports available in Newton. Click [here](#) to see services available.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Street sweeping in Newton just got better with the delivery of a new Elgin Whirlwind Vacuum Sweeper. Each street is now swept four or five times a year and this new vacuum sweeper picks up finer

particles and sediment that contain natural elements like phosphorus. (Excess phosphorous creates a lot of water quality problems for the Charles River and Crystal Lake, including algae blooms and turbidity.)  
*(Photo: With Newton DPW's Paul Aborn)*

