

Acushnet Fire chief: “Acushnet, we have a problem!”

“Acushnet, we have a problem!

“The image below is a screenshot of the August 5th state report which showed Acushnet as having 103 positive Covid cases by that date. My kids consider March 13th as the official date Covid began as that was their last day of “real” school. Using those dates as bookends, we had 103 cases in the first 145 days of this crisis.

 Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard – Wednesday, August 5, 2020
Count and Rate (per 100,000) of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Tests Performed¹ in MA by City/Town, January 1, 2020 – August 5, 2020

City/Town	Total Case Count	Case Count (Last 14 Days)	Percent Change ²	Total Tests	Total Tests (Last 14 days)	Total Positive Tests (Last 14 days)	Percent Positivity (Last 14 days)
Abington	248	6	No Change	3264	349	6	1.72%
Acton	174	<5	No Change	4182	667	4	0.60%
Acushnet	103	<5	Decrease	1746	212	4	1.89%
Adams	35	0	No Change	1147	208	0	0%
Agawam	506	19	Decrease	6865	1034	25	2.42%

Acushnet Fire & EMS photo.

“Today, Joe Correia, the Acushnet Health Agent, informed me that Acushnet has had 206 cases reported in December alone! We have doubled in 22 days what it took 145 days at the beginning of the pandemic to achieve.

“Acushnet, we have a real problem.

“Let’s put aside the distracting questions that always arise from reports like this; how sick are they, how many deaths, how many double counted results. That is noise. The harsh reality is that Thanksgiving beat us up and if we are not smart Christmas and New Year’s will do the same. Consider the level of testing we offered in October (63 reported cases) and

November (123 reported cases). The amount of testing has been consistent but the current caseload has exploded!

“The 206 December cases were not all tested by the town. Many people go to their doctors for testing if they are not feeling well. Others seek out other testing opportunities. What I do know, because I speak with the positive residents who we do test, is many are surprised by the news. They thought they just had a cold, a sinus infection or allergies. This means they were shedding the virus unknowingly for a period of time before the test. Community testing caught it and allowed them to do the right thing.

“Our local hospitals are stressed. Talk to any of the Acushnet residents who work at Tobey, St. Luke’s, St. Anne’s or Charlton. Talk with any of our EMS staff who bring patients of all illnesses and injuries to emergency rooms that are chock full. Thanksgiving beat us up and if we are not smart Christmas and New Year’s will do the same.

“The return to normal we all seek is shoved backward by these numbers. The return to normal we all seek will be shoved back even further if we do not learn from Thanksgiving and do the right thing this week and next.

“I apologize for what may seem like a rant. It really is simple frustration that good people are getting hurt – from those who are ill to those who are out of work, from those who live with constant anxiety to kids who remember their last day of real school – by a relentless virus.

“Please come get tested tomorrow, Acushnet! Find out your status and then do the right thing whether your positive or negative.

“Please.” -.Kevin Gallagher

Massachusetts Environmental Police charge man after illegally killing a deer with a shotgun

“During archery season, an individual in the Town of Otis was found to have illegally killed a deer with a shotgun, after which the deceased deer was shot with a bow to give the appearance of having been harvested lawfully.

Additionally, the individual made false statements to obtain a confirmation number when reporting the deer. The individual then brought the deer to a processor where an Officer conducting an inspection observed the shotgun wound, subsequently initiating the investigation.

The following charges have been filed with Southern Berkshire District Court:

- Use of Shotgun during Archery Season;
 - Possession of Slugs/Buckshot outside the shotgun deer season;
 - Illegal Killing of a Deer;
 - Illegal Possession of a Deer;
 - False Statements to procure confirmation number/deer seal.”
-

Two New Bedford repeat breaking and entering suspects released without bail

Two New Bedford teenagers were arrested for breaking into and vandalizing up to five properties to include the Buttonwood Park Zoo and the Buttonwood Senior Center. Both were released without bail by the judge.

18-year old Christopher Desousa and 19-year old Isaiah Malik Poindexter, both of New Bedford, were arrested on Dec. 17 in relation to a series of five break-ins in the Buttonwood Park area between Nov. 11 and Dec. 17.

Desousa and Poindexter were both charged with numerous counts of larceny, several counts of break and entry, multiple counts of property-related offenses, destruction of property, and vandalism as a result of the overnight breaks. Both were released without bail by Judge J. Harrington after arraignment at Third District Court on Dec. 17.

"I am disappointed in the quick release of these suspects, considering the spree of crime by the individuals, the victims they impacted, and the time and effort invested by our officers. I would imagine this is not comforting to the community and the officers that work so diligently to apprehend criminals and protect the community from victimization," said Chief Joseph Cordeiro.

Cumulatively, the incidents resulted in the theft of more than \$1,500, numerous electronics, and wrapped presents along with damaged property at the Buttonwood Park Zoo, Down to Earth, and the Buttonwood Senior Center.

After responding to an alarm at the New Bedford Senior Center at 1 Oneida St. on Dec. 17, Officers located two sets of fresh tracks in the snow heading south towards the woods at Buttonwood Park Zoo. Officers located three bags of presents upon following the tracks.

The tracks then continued up against the fence line heading west. At the same time, two males were located walking west on Hawthorn St. and based on Officers' findings, Desousa and Poindexter were taken into custody. Officer Kyle King was the arresting officer.

If you have any information on criminal activity in your neighborhood, the New Bedford Police Dept. wants to hear from you. You can leave an anonymous tip on our voicemail at (508) 991-6300 Ext. 1.

Bristol County Sheriff's Office erect K9 memorial stone in Dartmouth

"The employees have noticed, and now we're ready to share it with the world.

A new K9 Memorial Stone has been placed near the K9 agility course on the main drag into the Dartmouth facility. It bears the names of all our retired four-legged officers over the years, from the very beginning of the program decades ago to today.

"This is something we talked about for a long time and it's amazing to see it finally come to fruition," Bristol County K9

Capt. Paul Douglas said.

We owe some big thanks to Liberty Utilities and the Van Sloun Foundation for the generous donations, and to Derek Morse and Matthew Albanese of Tootell Monument Works in New Bedford for helping with the stone. The plan is to invite all our former K9 handlers back to the facility in the spring for a dedication ceremony.

All photos by the Bristol County Sheriff's Office:



Fairhaven Police Department seeks the public's help in identifying suspect wanted in stabbing

This is a composite sketch of a suspect involved in a stabbing incident that took place in Fairhaven on 11/26/20.

The suspect is described as a light-skinned black or Hispanic male in his mid-twenties with curly hair and patchy facial hair. The male may have also had a large mole or blemish to the right of his mouth.

If you have any information concerning the possible identity of the male depicted, please contact Dt. Janis Gurreiro of the Fairhaven Police Department at 508-997-7421.

New Bedford's Lighthouse Animal Shelter: "Let's find Mountaineer a home in time for the holidays!"

"This sweet guy came into our shelter extremely timid and shy. He slowly has gained confidence around our volunteers and really enjoys their company now. He is still timid of new people and takes a few meet and greets to warm up. We promise it's worth the wait to get to know him! He would prefer an all

adult home (kids can be scary!). He has had many sleepovers at a volunteer's house and does fantastic!

Mountaineer is great with other dogs that match his energy level, he loves a good wrestle session. He will need to live in a home with another dog to help with his confidence and of course to play with! He is an energetic boy that requires a fully fenced in yard. This guy enjoys walks with the volunteers and is happy to lead the pack toward new adventures. Mountaineer has spent most of his life in a shelter setting, he now deserves a forever family to love him.

Age: 1yo

Breed: 55lb Lab mix

Other pets: Dog friendly, has not been cat tested yet

Energy level: Mountaineer has a high energy level. He loves running around the yard like a big goofball. He will need daily exercise.”-

Lighthouse Animal Shelter

596 Hathaway Road, New Bedford, MA

www.lighthouseanimalshelter.org

508-999-7387.



Lighthouse Animal Shelter photo.

Interview new with New Bedford Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Anderson

Chris Resendes sits down with New Bedford Public Schools Superintendent Thomas Anderson to update us on the current school year and all things New Bedford Public Schools.

Prince Henry Society provides annual Christmas baskets to 198 families in need in Greater New Bedford

The Prince Henry Society's New Bedford Chapter held its annual Christmas Basket Drive to serve families in need – especially in this year of turmoil due to the pandemic, its economic impacts, and other challenges.

Volunteers of the Society worked tirelessly over the past week to fill Christmas baskets – each with three boxes of canned goods, non-perishables, meats, and milk, to feed those in need, whether via social programs, families of schoolchildren, or displaced families due to house fires. The Christmas baskets are filled with food to cook a Christmas dinner and provide beyond the holiday.

The Prince Henry Society thanks its members for their donations, as well as the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, the local fishing industry, and area businesses for their generous donations to help families in need in Greater New Bedford.



Prince Henry Society photo.



Prince Henry Society photo.

Massachusetts one of three states joining vehicle emissions pact

By Colin A. Young
State House News Service

Fewer than one-third of the state and local governments talking about forming a regional effort to staunch vehicle emissions along the East Coast have agreed to sign on to the final program from the outset, but officials said Monday they are confident the program will still be effective.

The coalition, which includes Massachusetts, settled on a carbon emission reduction target of 26 percent by 2032, which is more aggressive than any of the three scenarios presented a year ago and would add an estimated 5 to 9 cents to the price of a gallon of gas, according to officials involved in the effort.

The program would set a limit on vehicle emissions, and hold auctions for fuel suppliers that transport gasoline into Massachusetts and other states to purchase allowances for every ton of carbon dioxide that the fuel they are carrying would emit when burned.

Twelve states and Washington, D.C. began the process more than two years ago of developing a regional "cap-and-invest" program to reduce carbon pollution from cars and trucks and generate the resources needed to expand clean transit options and improve public health. On Monday, the leaders of just four jurisdictions – Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Washington, D.C. – signed on to be the program's initial members.

"The bipartisan Transportation and Climate Initiative program,

or TCI-P, will allow participating jurisdictions to invest in equitable cleaner transportation options and create significant new economic opportunities while substantially improving public health across all our jurisdictions,” Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides said. “Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and D.C. are committing to bold action to achieve our ambitious emissions reduction targets while positioning the jurisdictions and the region to grow the clean transportation economy.”

Theoharides, who chairs the coalition of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states pursuing the regional cap-and-trade program, said TCI aims to cap and reduce emissions from transportation by 26 percent by 2032 while generating annual proceeds for the participating governments that could exceed \$366 million by 2032. That money would be reinvested into clean energy and public health improvements.

“The program works by setting a cap upstream on fuels. Because fuel distributors operate in a competitive marketplace with a growing diversity of alternative fuels such as hydrogen and electricity, this price signal will spur innovation including for regulated entities to reduce the carbon content of the fuels that they sell,” Katie Dykes, commissioner of Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, said.

She added, “The total number of emission allowances will decline. Each year, resulting in less transportation pollution.”

The reduction in emissions will almost certainly come at a cost to drivers in the form of higher gasoline and diesel prices passed along from the distributors. Dykes said it has been difficult to predict exactly what TCI will mean for drivers because fuel prices fluctuate all the time.

“Should fuel suppliers pass along costs, our modeling

estimates show a potential increase of around five cents per gallon, which is far less than regular fluctuations the customers see in retail field prices,” she said. Theoharides said the group’s modeling, which was updated to reflect some of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, currently shows “an absolute maximum estimated at nine cents.”

At 5 to 9 cents, the estimated increase in fuel costs for drivers falls below the high-end forecast of 17 cents per gallon that TCI states gave last year. The Center for State Policy Analysis at Tufts University has suggested it could be even higher depending on how aggressive states choose to be in reducing emissions.

TCI is a central part of Gov. Charlie Baker’s transportation and climate agenda, and is “critical” to the efforts that will be needed to achieve his administration’s goal of net-zero emissions by 2050, Theoharides said.

The potential cost of the program for consumers scared off New Hampshire a year ago – Gov. Chris Sununu called it a “financial boondoggle” – and opponents argue the emissions reductions sought by the cap are not worth the impact on gas prices, particularly because TCI’s own projections have shown that emissions are on track to decrease by 19 percent by 2032 even without any action from the compact states.

A year ago, Theoharides said the TCI coalition had not examined how many states it would take to make a regional pact work, but said that a “critical mass” of participation from the original 12 states and the District of Columbia would be necessary to make TCI successful.

On Monday, she said having Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Washington, D.C., onboard represented enough of a critical mass and that the TCI program “can absolutely be effective with three states and the District of Columbia.”

“The states and the District participating in this program are

getting the same emission reductions that were expected if all states joined and significant proceeds to invest back into clean transportation in our economies and in our transportation systems,” she said. “All four of us have state and city goals, aggressive goals, in terms of reducing climate emissions, improving public health and then investing in clean transportation choices. And this program allows us to do that, allows us to get things started while continuing to work to get other states on board so they can realize those same benefits in their states.”

The TCI program is slated to kick off in 2022, but that year will be solely a reporting year to collect a baseline of information and the cap-and-trade program will begin in earnest in 2023, officials said.

OPINION: “I am going to vent and I hope this makes it to one of the New Bedford councilors or our mayor!!

“So I am going to vent and I hope this makes it to one of our councilors or our mayor!!!

I apologize ahead of time for this but this needs to get out!! My mother woke with shortness of breath so my brother called 911. My mother started calling out for help not wanting to die and my brother called 911 again and then again. 3 times! NO one came!

My mom collapsed in my brother’s arms after over 30 min of no

ambulance and being told by the New Bedford Fire Department that there are only 3 ambulances at night and all of them were busy in Freetown.

When the ambulance came, it was too late. OVER 30 F*****MINUTES FOR A AMBULANCE ??????????????

Oh and let me add this no police or fire dept until after the Freetown ambulance came!!!!"-Annmarie Edwards.