

**Benton-Franklin
Health District**
www.bfhd.wa.gov

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412 West Clark Street

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BFHD MASK SURVEY RESULTS

53% Using Face Coverings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2020

KENNEWICK —Benton-Franklin Health District is conducting observational surveys to determine how many people in Benton and Franklin Counties are wearing face coverings in public places. Health District staff and volunteers spent 30 hours observing patrons leaving 15 grocery stores from June 20 – 25 and found that 53% were using a mask or face covering. Over 5,000 people were counted in seven cities, including Benton City, Connell, Kennewick, Pasco, Prosser, Richland, and West Richland in the baseline survey.

Richland stores had the highest compliance at 58.51%; Benton City had the lowest rate of compliance at 26.09%. The cities ranked as follows:

1. Richland (58.1%)
2. Prosser (57.78%)
3. West Richland (55.18%)
4. Kennewick (52.54%)
5. Pasco (50.65%)
6. Connell (33.67%)
7. Benton City (26.07%)

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Benton-Franklin Health
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Washington State Department of Health officials have said they want to see more people in Benton and Franklin Counties wearing face coverings as they consider the counties' application to move to Phase 2 of reopening businesses and allowing small gatherings.

Dr. Amy Person, Health Officer for Benton and Franklin Counties issued a mask directive that took effect on June 8. Governor Inslee ordered everyone in Washington State to wear face coverings in public starting today. "Masks prevent droplets from infected people from transmitting to those nearby," said Dr. Person. "People with COVID-19 are contagious for two days before they develop symptoms and a large percentage are asymptomatic, meaning they are still contagious but never feel sick. Counties across the state where mask wearing is more accepted have lower rates of illness."

Observers count people leaving stores who appear to be age 12 and over. Anyone with a mask visible is presumed to be in compliance, even if it's not covering their nose and mouth. The Health District will continue to conduct the surveys for the next several weeks.

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