

Longwood community,

A brief campus update as we approach the conclusion of Week 9 in the semester. Thanks to continued hard work and vigilance the number of active cases and students in quarantine has trended down substantially The last two weeks. However, national case numbers are rising, and we must stay on guard to ensure our numbers remain as low as possible. Thank you, and please don't let up when it comes to face coverings, social distancing and hand-washing. We know from experience these steps work in mitigating spread in our community.

This week the Centers for Disease Control issued new guidance regarding contact tracing, and who is considered contact exposed. The University Health Center and Quarantine Support Team have reviewed this new guidance carefully. They report it generally aligns with what we have already been doing all semester, and will continue, in terms of aggressively identifying potential contact exposures is already in line with those revised guidelines.

The CDC has also released useful guidance regarding how students in isolation or quarantine can safely experience some fresh air and time outside, with appropriate precautions and distancing in place. This is excellent news, and we are working quickly to put it into action, identifying outdoor spaces where students can spend some time under careful guidelines.

We know the risk of transmission is much lower in outdoor settings, and I'm pleased to share three outdoor fire pits have been installed on campus, with two more to be installed in coming weeks. Currently, there are operating fire pits on the Upchurch University Center patio and between Johns and Moss halls. Additional fire pits will be installed at Brown Commons in Lancer Park and on Stubbs Mall. Students may gather around them--no reservation needed. We hope this is a welcome addition to campus and students can safely gather outside to enjoy the beautiful fall weather.

Only trained monitors are permitted to turn on the fire pits, and there are a few rules regarding their use:

- Fire pits will be on starting this weekend, Thursday-Saturday, from 7-10 p.m. weather permitting. In consultation with SGA, we'll evaluate demand and usage and may adjust days and hours going forward.
- The flames are on a timer. Please do not touch the buttons or dial, and do not touch the surface of the fire pit while it's on.
- Absolutely no food is to be cooked on the fire pits, and no trash burned in them.
- As always, follow campus public health guidelines with regards to face coverings and social distancing.
- In the event of an emergency, a clearly labeled "Emergency Shutoff Valve" should be used to turn off the fuel and students should call LUPD at 434-395-2091.

I hope you enjoy these fire pits safely and responsibly!

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