



On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program

# WisCon Words of Wisdom

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## WI COVID-19 by the Numbers

Total Positive Cases	661,239
Total Deaths	7,599
Total Individuals Hospitalized	35,735

[DHS's Wisconsin Summary Data](#)

Numbers Updated 08/31/2021

## WI COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution by the Number of Doses

Total Administered	6,101,712
Johnson & Johnson	254,081
Moderna	2,431,498
Pfizer	3,416,133

Check out the [latest data about Wisconsin's progress!](#)

## Upcoming Webinars

Labor Day— No Webinar This Week	9/6
<a href="#">COVID-19 Update &amp; National Preparedness Month</a>	9/13
<a href="#">Put a Plug In It—Hearing Protection</a>	9/20
<a href="#">Emergency Exit Routes</a>	9/27

## WisCon Continues On-Site Service

As COVID-19 case activity, primarily caused by the Delta variant, continues to rise WisCon is still here to serve you. Previously we were providing on-site service based on county level data for case activity level and percent positive by test provided on the Wisconsin DHS website. Now we are open to providing on-site services in all Wisconsin counties. To qualify for an on-site visit under our COVID protocols, facilities must be free of COVID-19 cases and symptoms 14 days prior to the scheduled visit. The assigned consultant will ask additional screening questions related to the facility's COVID protocols.

WisCon's current protocol also requires consultants performing on-site activities to wear, at minimum, a face covering at all in-door locations.

We will continue to offer virtual assistance including via Zoom, WebEx, and Microsoft Teams.

## Emergency Action Plans

Having a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for your business can help keep employees safe, keep the business open longer, and reopen more quickly in emergency situations. Emergency situations that Wisconsin business owners may encounter include, winter weather, severe storms, tornadoes, power outages, fires, extreme summer heat and flooding. COVID-19 has also exposed the benefit of having a plan to respond to infectious diseases.

Required sections of an EAP include: Procedures for; reporting a fire or other emergency, emergency evacuation, for employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate, to account for all employees after evacuation, for employees performing rescue or medical duties, and the name or job title of every employee who may be contacted by employees who need more information about the plan or an explanation of their duties.

## Spotlight Corner— George Gruetzmacher

George has been with the program for many years and currently serves as WisCon's Outreach Specialist. He has over 30 years of field experience as an Industrial Hygienist and over 19 years of teaching as an Adjunct Instructor/Faculty in the OESH Department at UW – Whitewater. He has multiple degrees including a B.S. in Aeronautics and Astronautics, a M.S. in Industrial Engineering, and a PhD. George holds many credentials including Professional Engineer, Ergonomist, Certified Industrial Hygienist, Certified Safety Professional and is an AIHA Fellow. George has family roots in the Merrill/Wausau Area, and lives in Sun Prairie.



## Remembering September 11, 2001

Many Americans could probably tell you where they were on September 11, 2001, when they heard the news that our country had been attacked and watched the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center complex fall. I recall sitting in Mrs. Davis' 5th grade art class when another teacher came in the classroom and had Mrs. Davis turn on the TV. We watched in horror as the events unfolded on the screen. As a direct result of the crashes and subsequent collapse of the twin towers 2,753 individuals were killed. An additional 184 individuals were killed as a result of the attack on the Pentagon and 40 more individuals were killed when a hijacked plane crashed in a Pennsylvania field.<sup>1</sup> Many emergency responders across the country flocked to New York to help with rescue, recovery, and clean-up efforts.



DoD photo by: PH2 JIM WATSON, USN

Date Shot: 13 Sep 2001 via [pingnews](https://www.pingnews.com)

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, we want to remember the lives of those lost so suddenly. During this time, we should also remember those individuals who participated in rescue, recovery, and clean-up efforts in the weeks and months that followed. It is estimated that "more than 91,000 rescue, recovery, and clean-up workers, and

volunteers were exposed to the environmental hazards at Ground Zero..."<sup>2</sup> Many suspect that these individuals did not have access to appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the hazards at hand.

Today, NIOSH, as part of the CDC, administers a limited federal health program called the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program, which is authorized through 2090. This program provides

no-cost treatment and monitoring to individuals who are directly impacted by the 9/11 attacks for health conditions that have been certified to be WTC-related.<sup>3</sup>

The top certified WTC-related conditions include Chronic Rhinosinusitis, Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease, and Cancer. The top certified cancers include non-melanoma skin, prostate, breast – female, and melanoma.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.cnn.com/2013/07/27/us/september-11-anniversary-fast-facts/index.html>

<sup>2</sup><https://www1.nyc.gov/site/911health/enrollees/rescue-recovery-workers.page>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/wtc/about.html>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/wtc/ataglance.html#top10Conditions>

## Recent COVID-19 FAQ's

### Why are fully vaccinated people getting COVID-19?

This is due to the fact that like most vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccines aren't 100% effective at reducing breakthrough or transmission.

### What is a breakthrough infection?

A breakthrough infection is when a fully vaccinated person becomes sick with the illness they are vaccinated against.

### Why get vaccinated if there is breakthrough infection?

Because fully vaccinated people with a breakthrough infection are less likely to develop serious illness than those who are unvaccinated. This means someone who develops a breakthrough infection is far less likely to be hospitalized or die than people who are unvaccinated.

### Why should vaccinated people wear masks again?

CDC is recommending even those who are vaccinated wear a mask because those who experience vaccine breakthrough infections can still be contagious and pass the disease to others.

### I've heard about the Delta variant of COVID-19. What is a variant?

Viruses are constantly changing through mutation. When a virus has one or more new mutations its call a variant of the original virus.

### Why is the Delta variant of concern?

The Delta variant is of more concern because it is more infectious than the previous strains. This means that the virus is more transmissible than the original strain of COVID-19. This is why we are seeing a enormous surge in cases.

### Are symptoms of the Delta variant different from regular COVID?

With the Delta variant, the symptoms seem to be a little more mild. There have been fewer reports of loss of taste and smell and more reports of symptoms like headache, runny nose, sore throat and fever.

### If I am vaccinated do I need to still get tested for COVID?

Yes, vaccinated individuals should be tested for COVID if experiencing symptoms even mild ones. They should also be tested if they are a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID.

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