

**Illinois RiverWatch Network
2020 Monitoring Guidance and Considerations of COVID-19**

The Illinois RiverWatch Network is committed to the safety of all participants in our programs. In accordance with the stay-at-home order for the State of Illinois, we ask that all monitoring activities be suspended until the order is lifted. Please visit <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/> for information on the state response to COVID-19. When state and local restrictions are lifted, if you continue to have misgivings or concerns about participating in stream sampling due to COVID-19, we encourage you to Stay Home, Stay Safe. Your health is more important than a data point.

Once the stay-at-home order is lifted, if you are planning a trip to the stream, first check the following:

- Does your local Board of Health have any advisories or regulations that would prevent you from going to your site or require special protective measures? If so, follow their guidance.
- Do you or any member of your household feel unwell with COVID-like symptoms? If so, please do not sample.
- Is your sampling location accessible? If it is not on your own property, contact the owner to verify that access is currently possible. Many parks and public spaces are closed.
- If you have a sampling partner, do they live with you? If not, please have a frank and open discussion with them about expectations and make plans for your safety.
- Are there any CSOs (combined sewer overflows) upstream of your site? If so, please do not sample for at least 3 days after measurable rainfall. It is our understanding that, while unlikely, COVID may be transmitted via human waste. If this is of concern for you, please follow CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

If you choose to monitor your stream, please follow these guidelines:

- Take your temperature before you go. If it is over 100 F, please postpone your trip.
- Be sure to bring adequate food and water.
- Avoid stops for restrooms and refueling if possible.
- If passers-by stop to talk, maintain social distance and refer them to our website for further information.
- If you are sampling with a partner who is not a member of your household:
 - Take separate vehicles to the site.
 - Maintain social distancing at all times (6 feet or more).
 - Wear a face mask. Wear rubber/latex gloves if available.
 - Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer regularly.
 - Minimize equipment sharing by assigning tasks based on equipment: flag handler, note taker, net handler, golf ball handler, timer, etc.
 - For any equipment that must be shared, do not pass it hand-to-hand, but rather set it on the ground between you. Use disinfectant to wipe down equipment between users.
- If you need to temporarily modify the sampling protocol for safety, please make note of the change on your data sheet and let us know.

If you have other questions or concerns about monitoring that are not addressed in this guidance, please contact Danelle Haake (dhaake@lc.edu or 618-468-2784).