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**Bay Area Residents Urged to Stay Home, Stay Safe
from COVID-19 on the Fourth of July**

With COVID-19 spreading rapidly in many Bay Area neighborhoods, health officials across the region urge residents to protect themselves and the community by celebrating from home this holiday weekend.

The Fourth of July is traditionally a time for firework displays, cookouts and parades, but this year the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many communities to cancel public events. Gatherings with others from outside your household, such as members of the extended family, are potentially risky.

Health officers from across the greater Bay Area say staying home this year is a healthy choice.

"We can all help protect our families, friends and neighbors by celebrating the Fourth of July at home this year," said Dr. Nicholas Moss, Alameda County Interim Health Officer. "Cases and hospitalizations are rising across the region and COVID-19 spreads most easily when people who don't live together gather in groups."

You can spread COVID-19 even if you don't feel that sick. You can pass the disease to someone else before you have symptoms, and even if you never develop any symptoms at all. When people who have contracted the infection come in contact with high-risk people, there can be deadly consequences.

That is why Bay Area health officers recommend people who are not members of the same household remain physically distant. The best ways to protect yourself and slow the spread of COVID-19 include:

- Continuing to stay home as much as possible
- Practicing physical distancing outside the home
- Wearing face coverings or masks when outside your home
- Avoiding gatherings with people outside your immediate household
- Washing your hands thoroughly and frequently
- Staying home from work or school if you feel sick

All Bay Area residents are also encouraged to get tested for COVID-19, and to do so immediately if they have symptoms. Check with your local health department for more information about testing and about efforts in your community to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, please visit <http://www.acphd.org/2019-ncov.aspx>

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The Association of Bay Area Health Officials (ABAHO) represents health officers and other public health professionals from thirteen jurisdictions ABAHO coordinates and communicates regional messages to save lives, promote and protect health, prevent injury and illness, and improve wellness in the region's diverse communities.