

Niagara County moves into 'yellow zone'

Confirmed Cases 6289 39 Unknown Addresses	Total Recovered 4477 Last Updated 12/16/2020 1:50 pm	Active Cases 1690 Last Updated 12/16/2020 1:50 pm	Total Deaths 122 Last Updated 12/16/2020 1:50 pm
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Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Monday announced Niagara County areas including Lewiston and Niagara Falls would move into his micro-cluster action initiative "yellow precautionary zone." The following restrictions come with that designation:

**Yellow Zone —
Precautionary Zone**

√ Houses of worship go to 50% capacity

√ Nonresidential gatherings are limited to 25 people maximum, indoor and outdoor; residential gatherings are capped at 10 people – indoor or outdoor

√ Indoor and outdoor dining has a four-person maximum per table, and bars and restaurants close at 10 p.m. for on-premises consumption

√ Businesses remain open

√ Schools: Open with mandatory 20% weekly testing of in-person students and faculty

A geographic area is eligible to enter a "yellow zone" if it has a 3% positivity rate (seven-day average) over the past 10 days and is in the top 10 percent in the state for hospital admissions per capita over the past week and is experiencing week-over-week growth in daily admissions, related to the coronavirus.

Niagara County's positivity rate on Sunday was 7.6% (110 positive cases from 1,446 tests). The seven-day rolling average is 8.4%.

Per the Niagara County Center for Economic Development, the full list of areas entering the "yellow precautionary zone" includes the entirety of the cities of Lockport, Niagara Falls and

North Tonawanda; the towns of Lockport, Niagara, Pendleton and Wheatfield; and the Village of Lewiston. Also included are portions of the towns of Cambria, Lewiston, Newfane, Hartland and Royalton.

The "yellow zone" regulations took effect for businesses on Wednesday, and will begin for schools on Monday.

What is a Micro-Cluster?

Cuomo announced this micro-cluster action strategy on Oct. 6. He said then, "A cluster is just that – it's a cluster of cases, a high density of cases, and it seeps and grows from that cluster almost in concentric circles. Drop a pebble into the pond, the pebble goes in, then there's one ring, two rings, three rings, and the rings continue across the pond. When you see the cluster, you have to stop it at that point. Our strategy is to crush the cluster and stop the spread, and we're announcing a special initiative to do just that. Step one, you take the most dramatic action within the cluster itself where you have the highest density of cases. Understanding that the people in that cluster interface with the surrounding communities, take additional action in the communities surrounding the cluster. Then as a precautionary measure, take action in the communities that are outlying that area."

Images and figures (as of Wednesday) courtesy of the New York State Department of Health and the Niagara County Department of Health.

On Oct. 17, Cuomo further explained, "We now have more sophistication because we've been at it for seven months. So rather than looking at COVID-19 data on the state level, regional level, county level or even neighborhood level, we are now going to analyze it on the block by block level. The micro-cluster strategy is not just to calibrate the state or the region, but to calibrate just those specific geographic areas. Target it and target your strategy down to that level of activity. It requires more testing, more targeted testing, and then you have to be responsive to the

situations in that specific locality with mitigation measures. It has the advantage of causing less disruption" than "New York State on PAUSE" and a

complete shutdown of all nonessential businesses.

North Tonawanda and a portion of Wheatfield were placed in a "yellow zone" one month ago.

WNY Doing Better – But No Time for Celebration

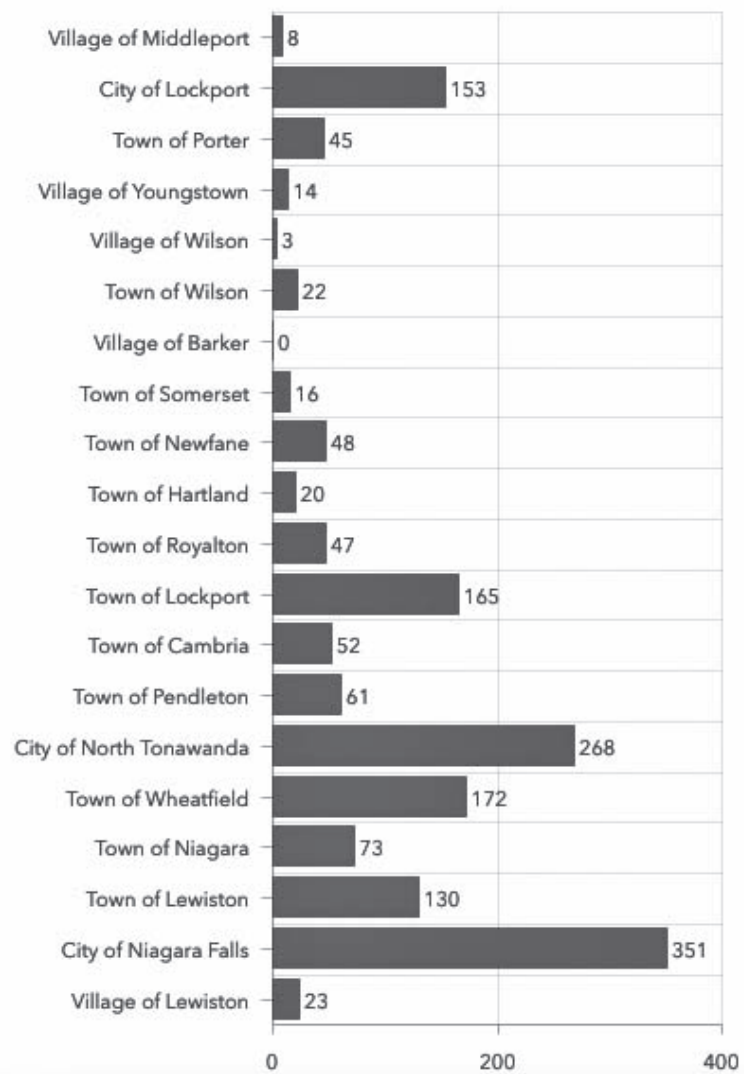
With most of Erie County in a more restrictive "orange zone," "Western New York, knock Formica, seems to have flattened and is reducing. They're .04. That is good news," Cuomo said. "We're been steadfast on the message there and I think people get it and people are understanding, and we want to get Western New York in good shape. The Bills are doing great. So that's good news."

Still, this is no time for celebration.

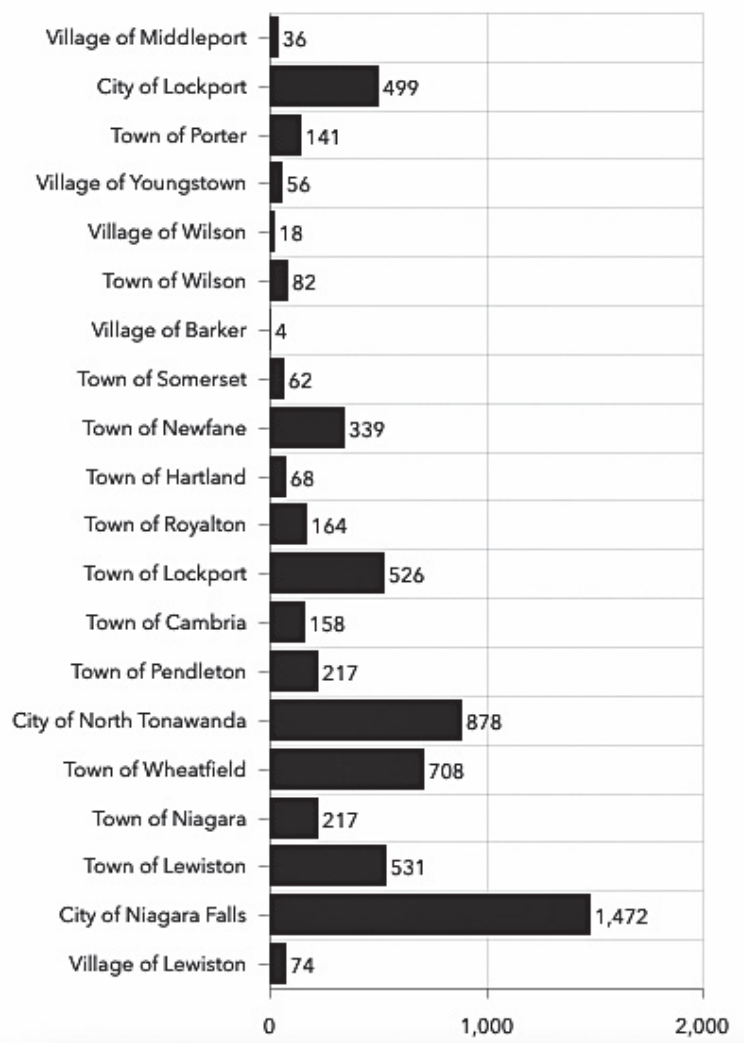
"You look at the headlines, 'New York is on a path towards full shutdown,' 'New York headed for shutdown,' 'Shutdown coming after Christmas,' 'Prepare for shutdown.' Is a close-down possible in January? Yes. Yes," Cuomo said. "First of all, anything is possible. Second of all, you look at these increases nationally, of course it is possible. You already see states, other states, closing down, big states closing down. Why are they closing down and we're not? Their numbers are higher than our numbers. ... So the states with the higher numbers are already closing down.

"But there's a big but. And that's a big but. Big B-U-T. But, no one knows because it is up to us. What will happen in three weeks? What will happen in four weeks? You tell me what you're going to do over the next three weeks or four weeks and I'll tell you what's going to happen, right? We know there's been an increase over the past few weeks. But, that doesn't determine what happens going forward. I put on a pound a week for the past four weeks. Well, then in another month I'll weigh four

Active Cases by Municipality



Confirmed Cases by Municipality



First Baptist Church
1842 - 2020
Main at Fourth, Niagara Falls, NY 14301 • 282-4666
In person or streaming on Facebook
CHRISTMAS EVE
5:30pm – Music for Christmas Reflection
6:00pm – Service of Lessons, Candlelight & Carols
ALL are welcome – www.Niagarafallsbaptist.org

LEWISTON-PORTER CHURCH DIRECTORY
Lutheran Church of the Messiah
915 Oneida Street, Lewiston
Phone: 754-4944 Fax: 754-0903
www.messiahlewisston.org
The Reverend Ashlin Marchese, Pastor
The Reverend Thomas R. Mason, Pastor Emeritus
Online worship can be viewed at MessiahLewiston.org
Come worship with us Sundays at 8:00am and 9:30am
SHARE YOUR MESSAGE CALL US AT 773-7676

pounds more. No, it depends on what you do. And that's where we are.

"There's a great quote. 'Don't speculate about the future. Create the future.' You know who said that? A.J. Parkinson, right. Don't speculate: 'Maybe this, maybe this, maybe this, maybe that.' Create the future. It is all in our control. New Yorkers can stop a shutdown; New Yorkers can save lives. It depends on what we do.

"And we just have to do it, and New Yorkers are good at doing

it. Slow the spread, manage the hospitals, administer the vaccine, slow the spread, personal responsibility, small home gatherings, it's happening in your living room. Personal responsibility, 'I'm going out, I'm just saying home and inviting friends over.' Danger. Alert, Will Robinson. You have to be smart. Personal responsibility.

"Local governments, do your job and enforce the rules. Enforce the rules and get the information to the general public."