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Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 27, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday updated Kentuckians on the state’s continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

“I know, at this point in our battle against COVID, the weeks can be really long. What I’d ask is, keep it up. Keep wearing the masks,” said Gov. Beshear. “All the experts say it’s working, not just in general, they say it’s working here in Kentucky.”

‘Fast 4 at 4’

Gov. Beshear began today’s briefing highlighting a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

1. Today, Gov. Beshear announced three new economic development projects – in three different regions of the commonwealth – that will bring 258 jobs and \$32.65 million in investment to Kentucky.

“Even with COVID-19 and significant short-term unemployment, we are seeing long-term investments in the commonwealth that are going to create jobs long after this pandemic is over,” said Gov. Beshear. “We have a chance to emerge stronger and to make sure when we move out of COVID, we don’t crawl, we don’t walk – we run.”

- Clermont Distilling Co. plans to construct a new distillery in Bullitt County. Phase I of the project will comprise a \$13.4 million investment creating 22 Kentucky-resident, full-time jobs, paying an average \$56 per hour, including benefits. These jobs include management and operations positions.

The distillery will be located right off Interstate Highway 65 at the Clermont/Bardstown exit, on 15 acres alongside Kentucky Highway 245 leading to Bardstown.

“This is great news for Kentucky’s signature bourbon industry,” said Gov. Beshear. “I want to thank Lee and his team for recognizing that paying good wages strengthens families and communities.”

Company leaders expect to begin construction on the distillery in spring 2021 with the potential for significant future expansion.

“As a fifth generation Kentuckian, our family has deep ties to the bourbon industry through various bloodlines. This project brings us great excitement to have our new distillery joining the iconic Kentucky Bourbon industry. The land chosen for Clermont Distillery had been held by the same family for over 90 years and became available for purchase at the most perfect time,” said Clermont Distilling founder Lee Wilburn.

- Separately, a [\\$7 million investment by HVAC Distributing LLC](#) in Graves County will increase the company’s presence in the region with a new warehousing location in the Hickory Industrial Park and the creation of 175 full-time jobs.

“We welcome this new location as the latest in a key industry in Kentucky that has become more important than ever in this pandemic,” said Gov. Beshear.

The distributor of heating, ventilation and air conditioning products plans to expand to a 100,000-square-foot spec building to meet growing demand and reduce shipping time and costs. HVAC Distributing handles products for well-known brands such as MRCOOL and GeoCool.

“We are truly thankful for this opportunity that allows us to adapt quickly to growing market demand across our industry,” said Jason Ingram, managing member of HVAC Distributing.

The company is among the more than 540 logistics and distribution facilities

located throughout the commonwealth, which employ nearly 75,000 people.

- The Governor also announced Danieli Corp. plans to open a 61-job facility in Ashland in one of the buildings on the former AK Steel campus.

“This area has been hit hard. We’ve seen closings of a number of plants. This project, actually in one of those former plants, is an exciting new opportunity that shows that there is not just hope, but there is a future reality with new and good jobs,” said Gov. Beshear.

Danieli, an Italian-owned company employing more than 10,000 people globally, will refurbish, remanufacture and repair steel mill equipment in Ashland.

The new operation is scheduled to open in late 2021.

2. Gov. Beshear [announced today](#) the City of Auburn and Logan County Fiscal Court officially broke ground on the Auburn wastewater treatment plant expansion.

The upgrades will better serve Champion Petfoods USA Inc. and make Auburn more attractive to future investors.

Using a \$1.5 million Community Development Block Grant from the Department for Local Government, the expansion will provide the first updates to the plant in roughly 30 years. It will encourage greater economic growth, residential expansion and industry development in the area.

“There is no more important a time to encourage economic development projects across the commonwealth,” said Gov. Beshear. “As we work to rebuild our economy while continuing to keep Kentuckians safe from COVID-19, we must continue to invest in our infrastructure to make our communities even more attractive to future investors.”

3. Today, the Governor reminded voters they now can go to www.GoVoteKy.com to request an absentee ballot for the Nov. 3 general election, if they are concerned about COVID-19 and voting. He encouraged all Kentuckians to make a plan to vote, either by-mail, in-person during early voting or in-person on Election Day.

“Please vote. You can request an absentee ballot right now. If you’re nervous about COVID, if you live with somebody like I do who has a pre-existing condition, if you’re around people who are susceptible, go to govoteky.com and request one,” said Gov. Beshear. “If you believe you haven’t been heard, your opportunity is voting.”

4. Finally, Gov. Beshear asked Kentuckians to take advantage of the free COVID-19 testing available at sites throughout the commonwealth.

“We have to keep it up on testing,” said Gov. Beshear. “It’s so important. If we want to do the things we want to do, we have to prevent COVID’s spread. Not all the testing spots we have are being filled.”

For information on more than 200 testing sites, [click here](#).

Rocky Adkins’ Father Back Home after Battling COVID-19

Today, Rocky Adkins, senior advisor to Gov. Beshear and a former state representative, shared that his father, Jess Adkins, 84, is home after contracting COVID-19 and spending two weeks in the hospital and one week at Cardinal Hill for rehabilitation.

“I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the front line workers in Kentucky. I’m happy to report that yesterday, my dad was able to return home,” said Adkins. “My son Brandon, who tested positive also, is doing great and has not had any serious side effects. I’m proud of both of these fellows. They remind us we need to check on our neighbors. I’m thoroughly convinced that if not for my son watching out for him, my dad probably would have lost his life.”

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Aug. 27, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 45,978 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 775 of which were newly reported Thursday. One hundred thirty of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 14 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was a two month old from Jefferson County.

“We’re tracking again about what we’ve seen the last several weeks,” said Gov. Beshear. “Did you ever think we’d be to the point where 775 wouldn’t sound abnormal? It means that we do have to push to have fewer cases, but it does show that we are doing a lot of testing.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported eight new deaths Thursday, raising the total to 910 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Thursday include an 84-year-old man from Allen County; an 84-year-old man from Barren County; an 80-year-old woman from Green County; a 70-year-old man from Hardin County; a 90-year-old man from Lewis County; a 74-year-old man from Madison County; an 89-year-old woman from McCracken County; and a 75-year-old man from Warren County.

“Let’s make sure that we light our homes up green, we ring our bells. There’s an amazing woman who works in the Secretary of State’s office that walks in the rotunda every day, rings her bell 120

times, one for each county, making sure that she is paying homage to the loss that is out there everywhere,” said Gov. Beshear. “Let’s make sure we continue to do the same.”

Rocky Adkins added, “Even as my dad returned home yesterday, there are 910 people who aren’t returning home.”

As of Thursday, there have been at least 848,937 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.80%. At least 9,731 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

“There are still some out there claiming kids don’t get the virus or transmit the virus. Here’s what I’d tell them: there are 130 kids 18 and under on today’s report,” the Governor added. “That’s a trend we have to pay attention to. Today we’re reporting 11 high school-aged kids in Warren County. Eleven kids in one county alone. I hope that contact tracing is going fast, because that school system is open.”

For additional information, including up-to-date lists of positive cases and deaths, as well as breakdowns of coronavirus infections by county, race and ethnicity, [click here](#). To see all recent daily reports, [click here](#).

Information about COVID-19 and schools is also being made available. To view the reports, [click here for K-12](#) and [here for colleges and universities](#).

More Information

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov, kycovid19.ky.gov and the Governor’s official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor’s news conferences at teamkentuckytranslations.com.

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