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PRESS RELEASE

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Yakima Valley Libraries Will Close to the Public Beginning Tuesday, March 17

Yakima, WA - After careful consideration, and in light of recommendations by state and federal health officials regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, Yakima Valley Libraries will close all library locations to the public effective Monday, March 16 at 6pm.

It is anticipated that the library district will remain closed to the public through Friday, April 24.

According to executive director, Kim Hixson, “This difficult, but necessary, decision was made after consultation with the Library’s Board of Trustees, and is in alignment with the state-wide Executive Order issued by Governor Inslee, which calls for the closure of all K-12 schools.”

Hixson added, “While I deeply regret the necessity to limit the public’s access to our buildings, technology, and physical materials, it is our responsibility to help protect the health and well-being of our patrons.”

During the closure, library staff will still report to work, though some staff may be temporarily re-scheduled or re-assigned to different library locations, in order to assist with various projects and tasks.

Patrons who have library materials checked out can rest assured that due dates for any library items currently checked out will be extended by 28 days, and any fines or fees that accrue during the closure will be waived.

In addition, although library buildings will be inaccessible to patrons, Yakima Valley Libraries offers a robust collection of online resources, which the public will still be able to access from home or on the go, using a computer, tablet or mobile device.

Library staff are already working to add additional e-materials to the collection, and patrons are encouraged to utilize these digital resources, which include e-books, e-audiobooks, streaming video, and digital magazines.

Those materials can be found on the library website, here: www.yvl.org/e-materials.

In the coming days and weeks, additional updates and information will be available on the Library’s website (www.yvl.org), but patrons who have questions are encouraged to email the Library using the Contact Us form, here: www.yvl.org/how-do-i/contact-us.

Or patrons can call one of these three library locations, with the understanding that response times will likely be much slower than usual:

- Yakima Central Library: (509) 452-8541
- Sunnyside Community Library: (509) 837-3234
- West Valley Community Library: (509) 966-7070

Finally, Yakima Valley Libraries would like the public to know that we are diligently working to ensure that this process unfolds with the least amount of disruption as possible.

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