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November 18, 2020 – As the holidays are fast approaching and everyone is looking forward to celebrating with family and friends, the Ridgefield Health Department is urging you to be cautious when interacting with others as we are seeing increasing signs of community spread.

To ensure we don't inadvertently spread COVID-19 and needlessly put our loved ones at risk, please comply with the following safety tips for in-person gatherings:

1. Host outdoor gatherings as much as possible as indoor gatherings pose a greater risk.
2. Limit indoor gatherings to the immediate household members as **indoor gatherings are limited to 10 people**.
3. Ask guests to wear face coverings when they cannot social distance.
4. Make hand sanitizer available for guests.
5. Consider a shorter time frame as longer gatherings pose more risk than shorter gatherings.
6. Host gatherings only with your family and friends from your local area as much as possible. Attendees traveling from different locations increase the risk of infection and spread, especially if they are coming from or traveling to a location with higher levels of COVID-19 cases and community spread.
7. Remind invited guests to stay home if they have been exposed to the virus in the last 14 days, are showing COVID-19 symptoms, or recently travelled to an area or a state with high COVID-19 infection rates.
8. Limit the number of people handling or serving food—for example, have one person serve all food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
9. Remind guests to wash their hands before serving or eating food.
10. Use single-use hand towels or paper towels for drying hands so guests do not share a towel.
11. Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and any shared items between use when feasible and as much as possible.
12. Consider keeping a list of guests who attended for potential future contact tracing needs. If you are called by a health department contact tracer, it's critical that you answer the call to protect us all.

Your help is the key to stopping the spread of COVID-19 and saving lives. Take as many public health actions as possible: wear a mask, engage in social distancing, wash your hands, stay home if you're ill, avoid anyone who is sick, and avoid touching your eyes/nose/mouth. Such measures ensure that you can once again gather at a larger celebration next year. Be safe and stay well.