



Webinar: Preparing for and Responding to COVID-19 at Vermont Colleges

October 2, 2020
3:30-4:30 p.m.

During this webinar, we will:

- 1** Hear from Vermont colleges about their experience preparing for and managing cases of COVID-19 on campus.
- 2** Share an overview of the Health Department's contact tracing and outbreak prevention efforts on college campuses, hear about testing in Vermont, and get the latest on vaccine development.
- 3** Answer your questions!

Presenters:

Vermont Colleges

- **Mark Peluso, MD FAAFP**
Director, Center for Health and Wellness
Middlebury College
- **Michelle Paavola, MD**
Medical Director, Center for Health
and Well Being
University of Vermont
- **Mary Masson, MSN, APRN**
Director, Bergeron Wellness Center
St. Michael's College
- **Annika Hawkins-Hilke, MSH/MPH**
Medical Director, Student Health Center
Champlain College

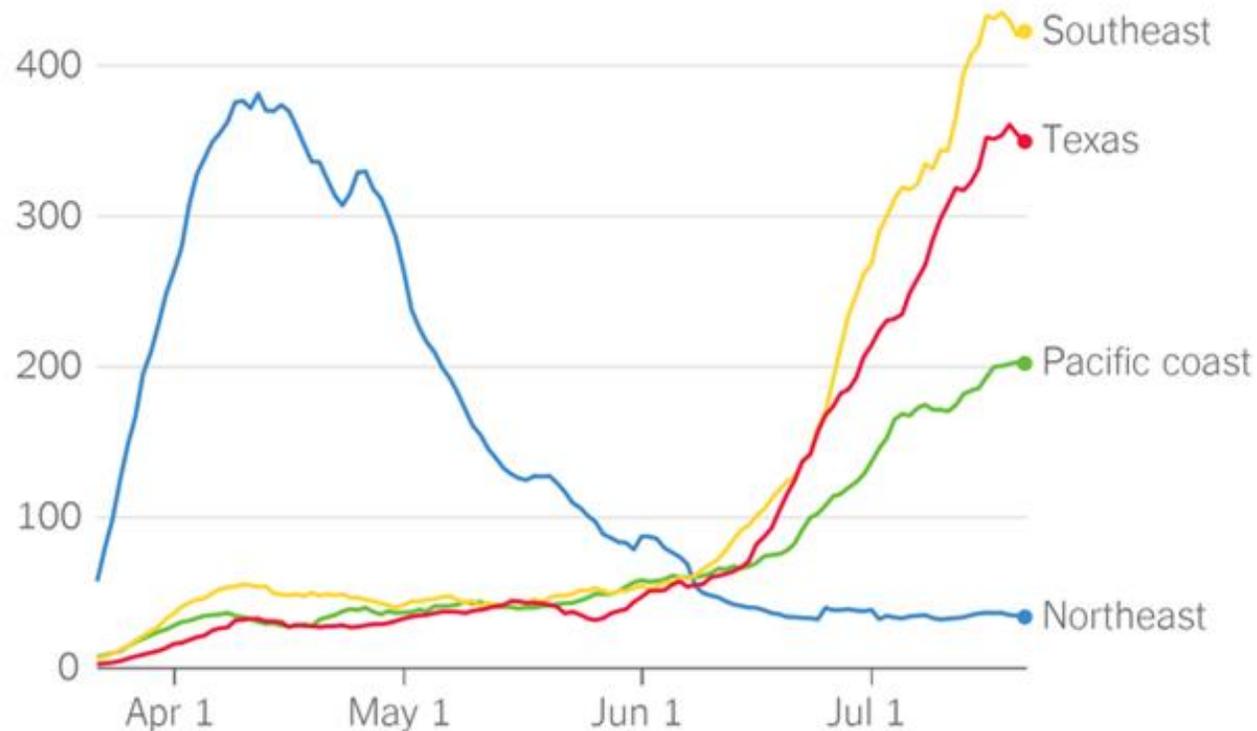
Vermont Department of Health

- **Mark Levine, MD**
Health Commissioner
- **Tracy Dolan**
Deputy Health Commissioner
- **Laura Ann Nicolai**
Deputy State Epidemiologist
- **Daniel Daltry**
Administrative Co-Lead/Contact Tracer
- **Natalie Kwit, DVM**
Outbreak Prevention and Response Team
Lead



Where We Are Now

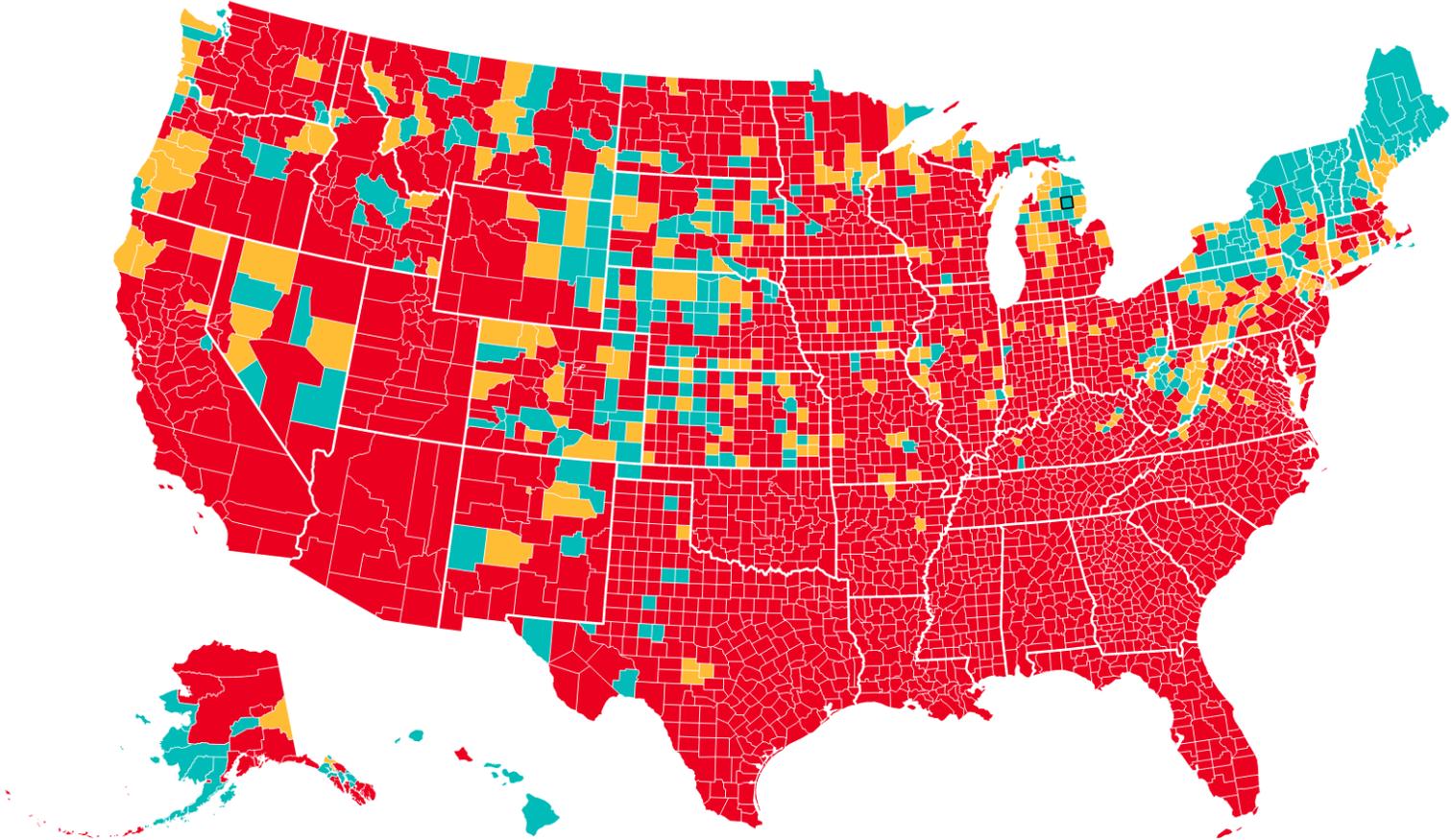
New Daily COVID-19 Cases, per Million Residents (July 22, 2020)



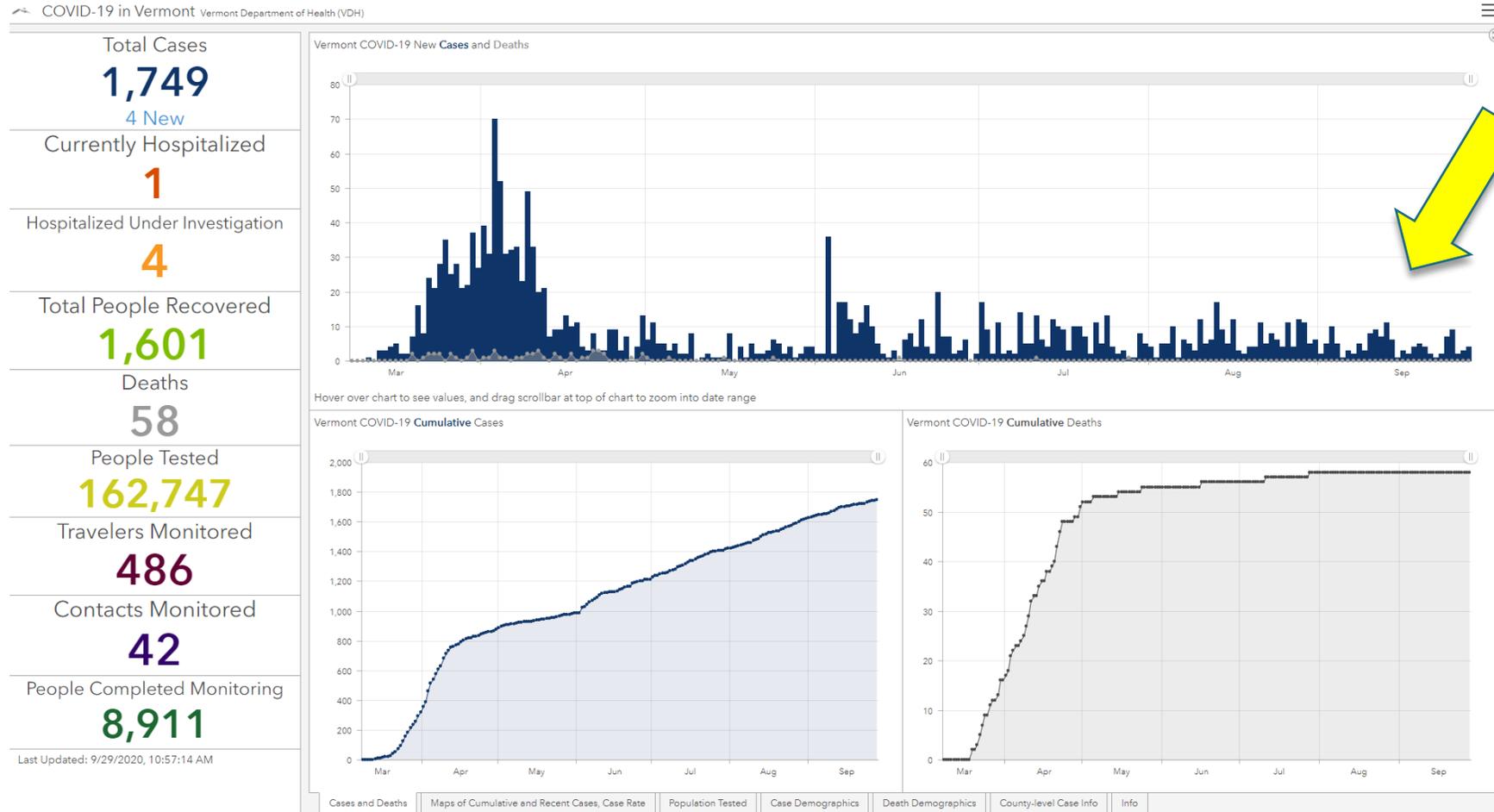
Seven-day moving averages. Southeast covers Fla., Ga, Ala., Miss. and S.C. Pacific coast covers Calif., Ore. and Wash. Northeast covers Me., N.H., Vt., Mass., R.I. Conn., N.Y., N.J. and Del.

By The New York Times | Sources: State and local health agencies and hospitals

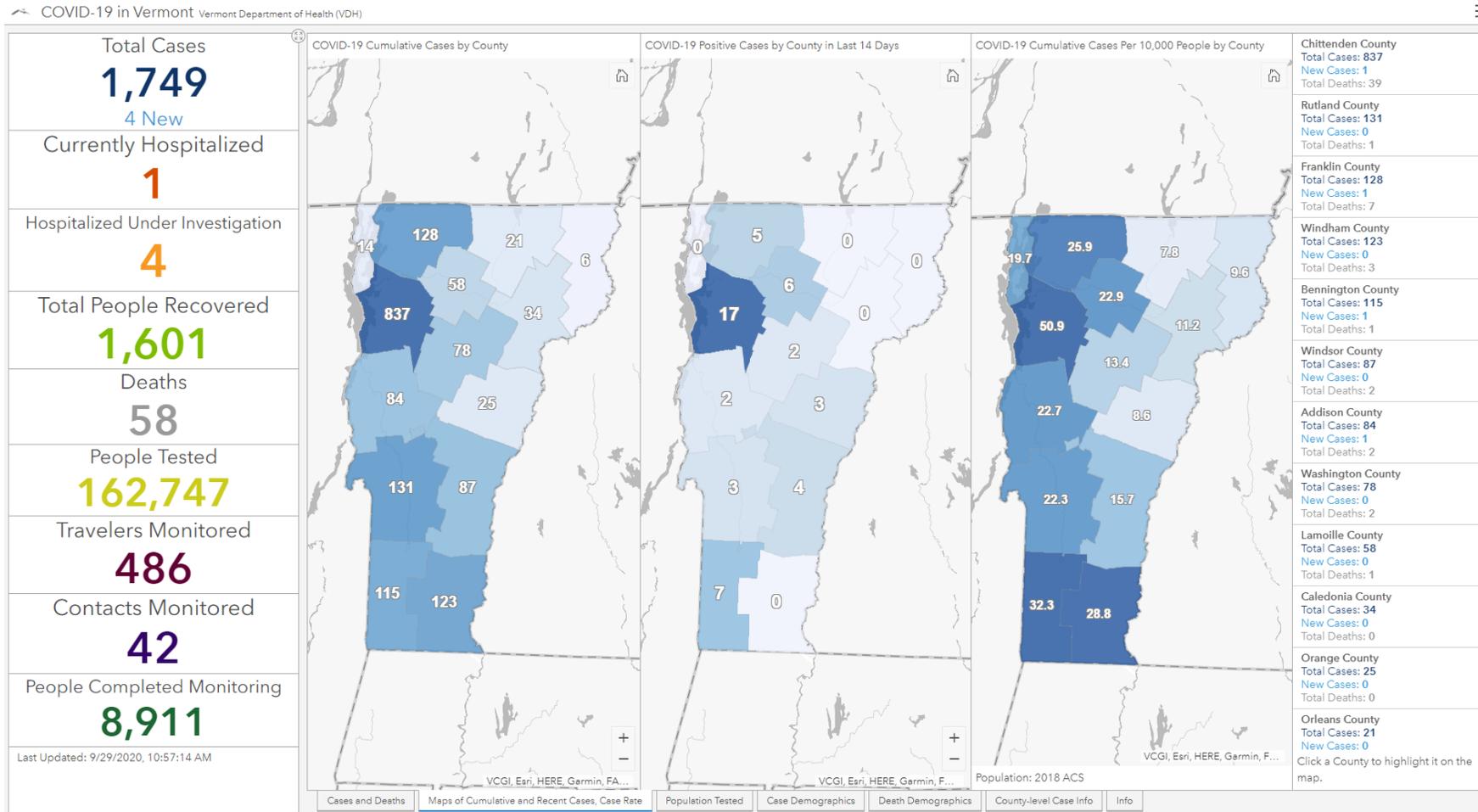
The Vermont Travel Map (mid-August 2020)



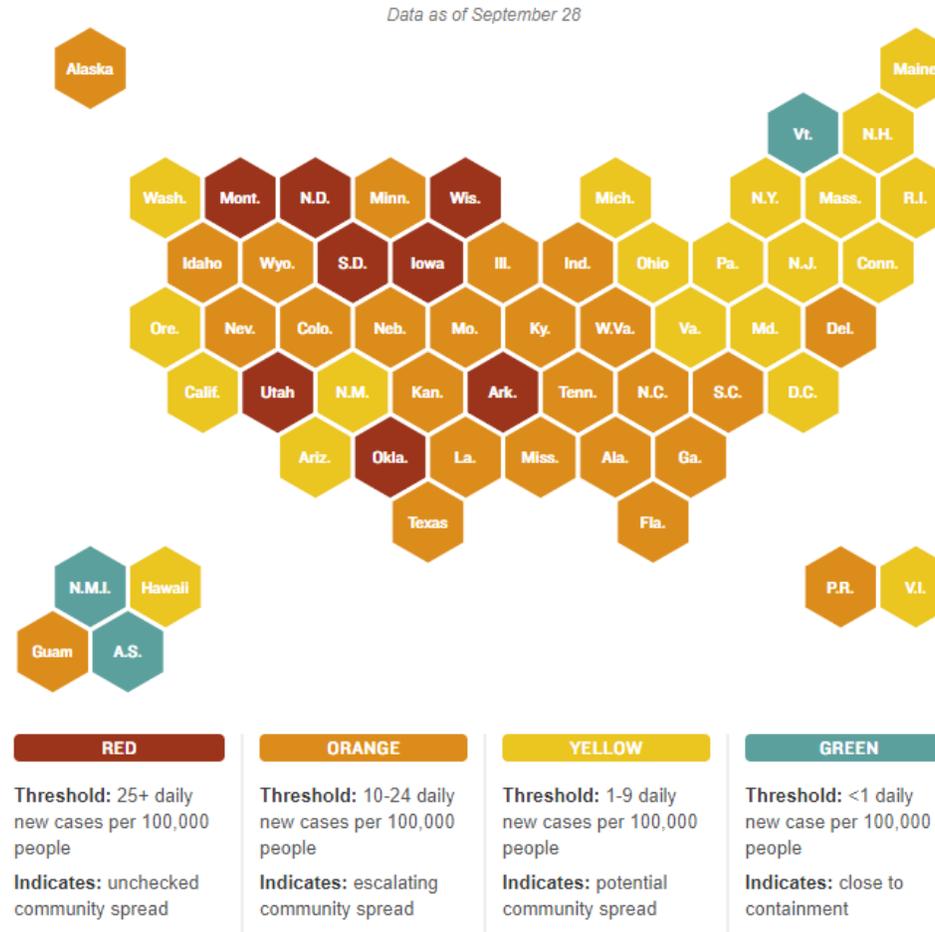
Vermont COVID-19 Dashboard



Vermont County Maps: Cumulative Cases, Recent Cases and Case Rate



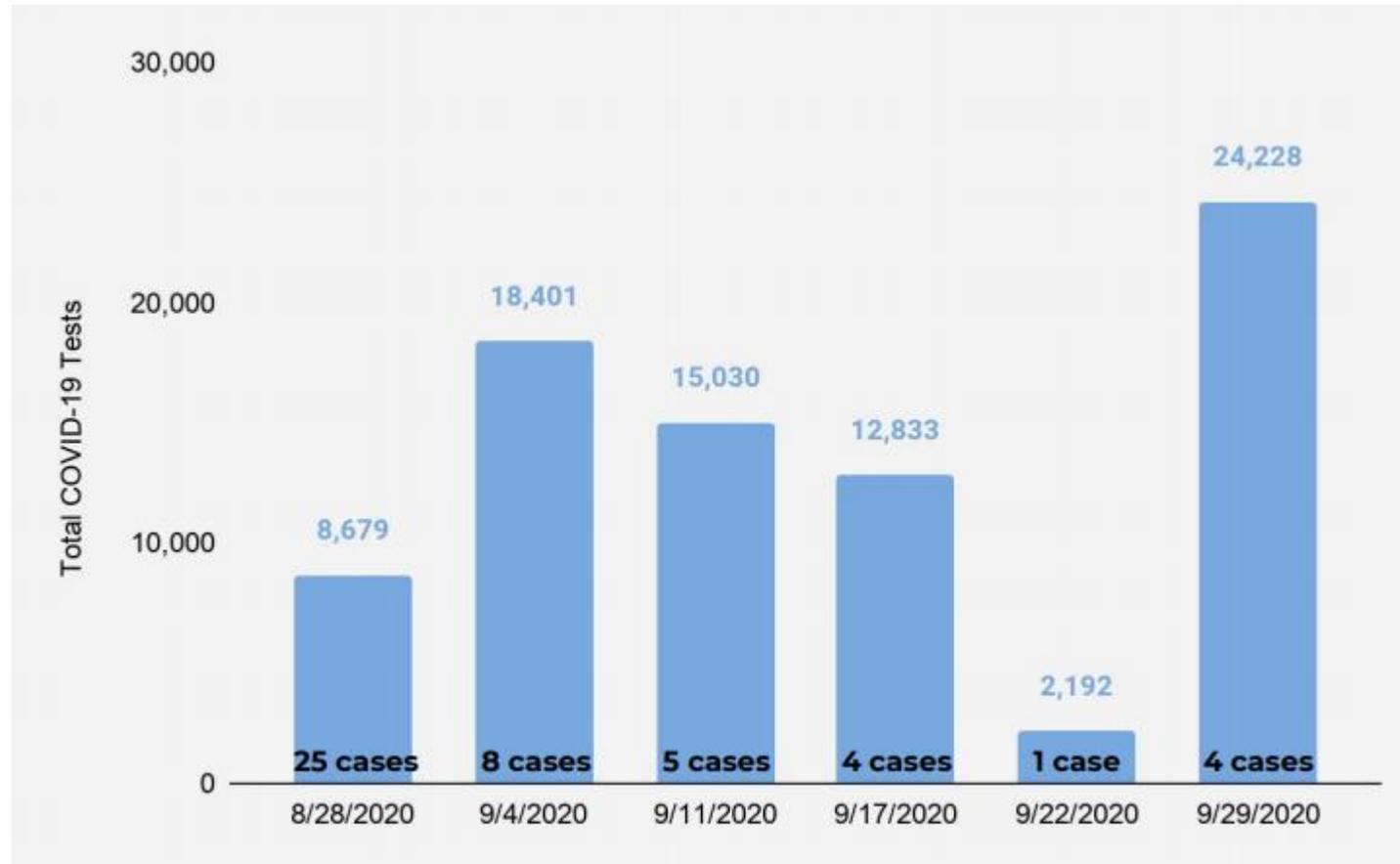
Which places have the greatest number of new daily cases?



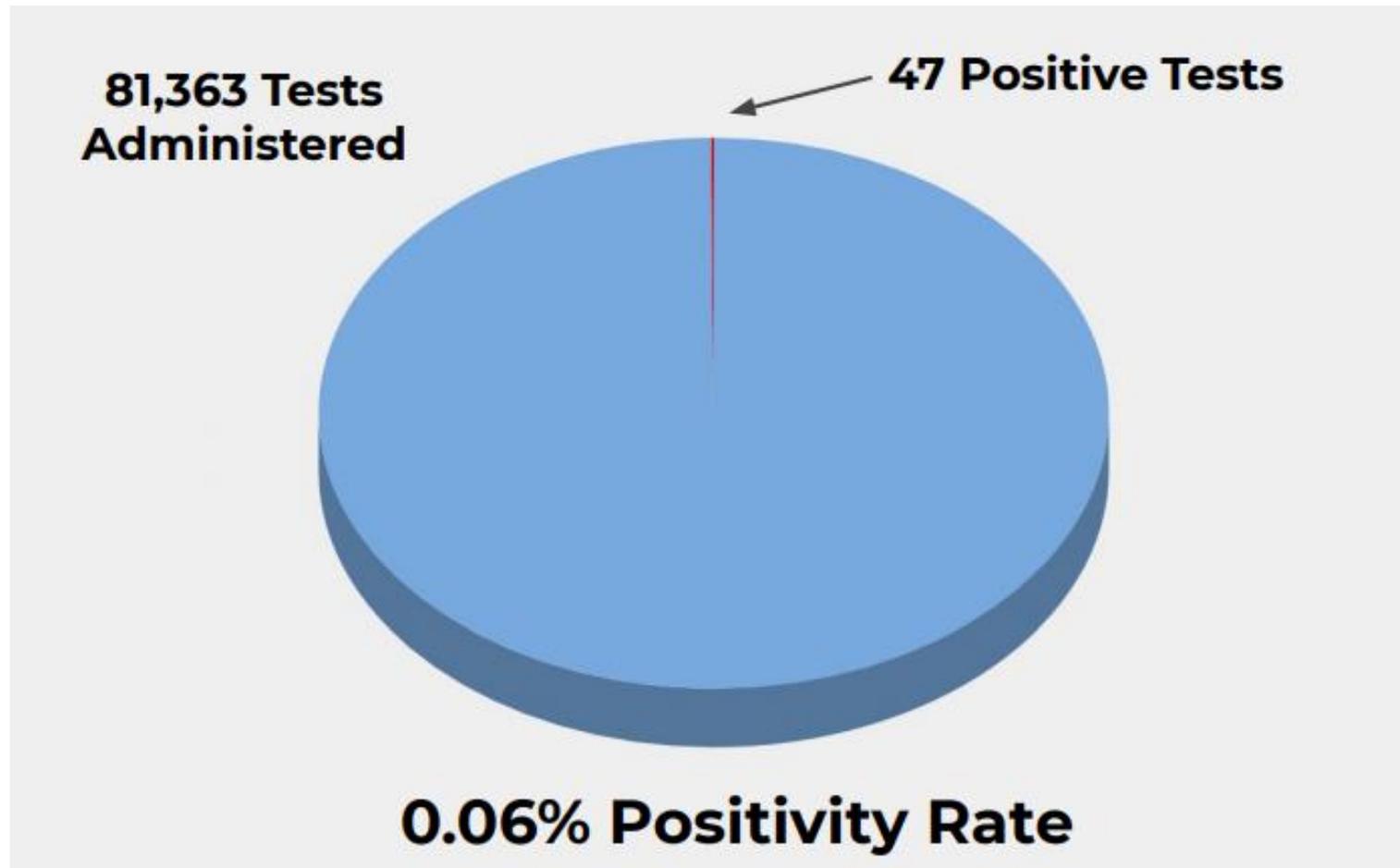


College Testing Results

Weekly Test Results for Vermont Colleges & Universities (August 21-September 28, 2020)



Cumulative Test Results for Vermont Colleges & Universities (as of September 28, 2020)

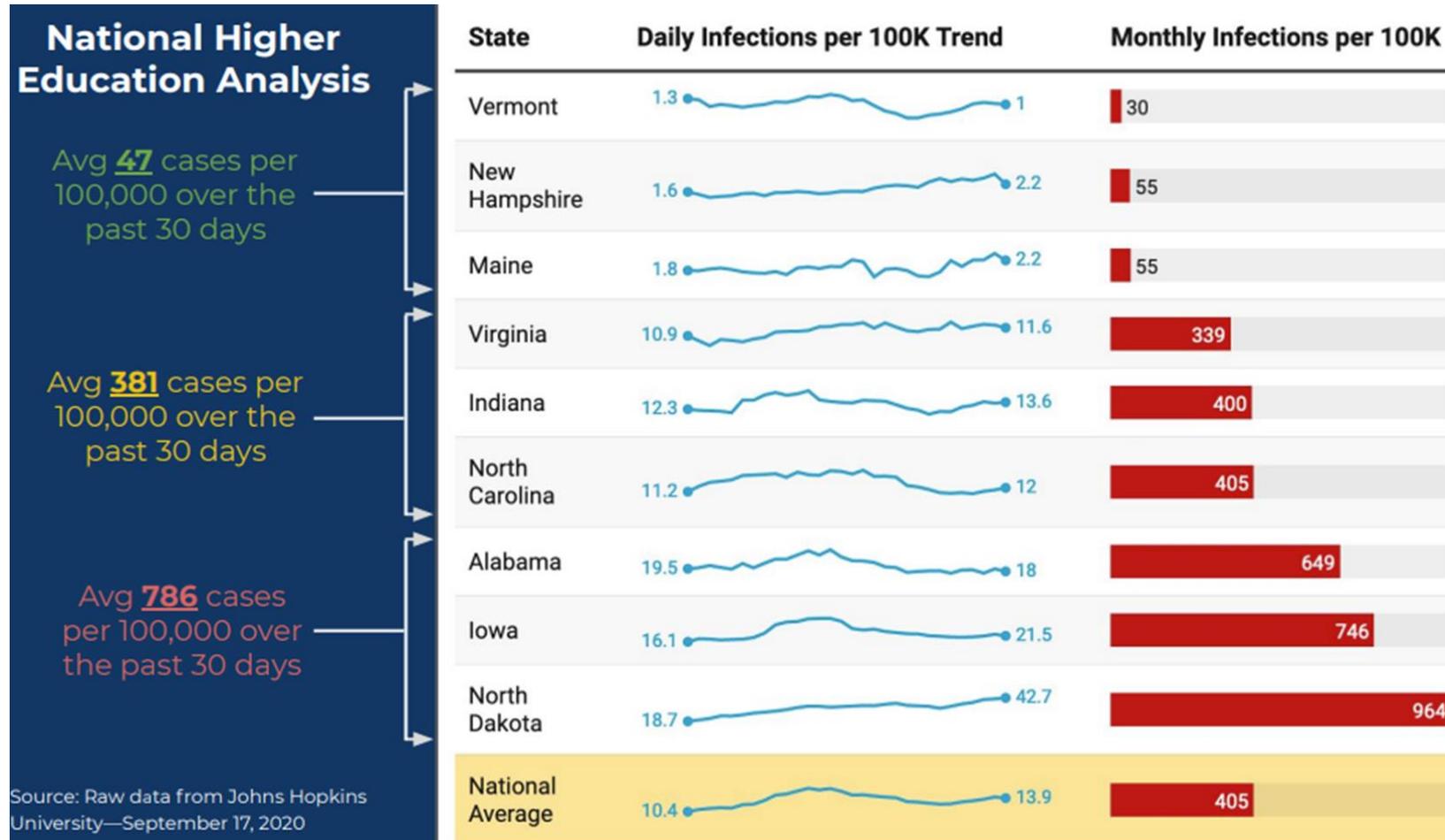


Northern New England Higher Education Testing Results

		Total	Positives	Positivity Rate
New Hampshire*		165,309	222	0.13%
Maine*		60,738	43	0.07%
Vermont		81,363	47	0.06%

* Includes colleges & universities that publicly provide COVID-19 testing data

Vermont colleges and universities have the lowest infection rates in the United States.



Individual Test Results for Vermont Colleges (as of Sept. 28, 2020)

Note: Goddard College & Community College of Vermont are remote for Fall 2020.

* Reconciling data that could possibly move up to 6 cases from the UVM count.

** Remove learning for Fall 2020. Some students using campus facilities.

College/University (click to access public dashboard/information if available)	Total Tests	Total Positives
Middlebury College	6,735	2
University of Vermont	50,065	28*
Norwich University	7,013	5
Northern Vermont University	2,896	0
Castleton University	1,203	2
Vermont Technical College	408	3
Saint Michael's College	2,529	1
Sterling College	86	0
Champlain College	6,898	2
Bennington College	2,386	3
Vermont College of Fine Arts	7	0
Vermont Law School**	161	0
Landmark College	877	1
Albany College of Pharmacy	99	0
TOTALS	81,363	47



How We Got Here

Highlights from the “Safe and Healthy Return to Campus” Guide

Safe and Healthy Return to Campus

Mandatory Guidance for College and University Campus
Learning

Published:
July 6, 2020

UPDATED: September 1, 2020

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Student Behavior, Health Pledges, and a Strong Desire to Be Here



By Ike Bendavid

Published: Sep. 17, 2020 at 5:21 PM EDT



BURLINGTON, Vt. (WCAX) - Vermont's COVID-19 infection rate remains the lowest in the country and so far the state has not experienced any of the outbreaks connected to college students that have happened in other states.

According to the latest figures from the University of Vermont, more than 32,000 students, faculty, and staff have been tested over the past month and there have been just 19 cases -- four in the last week.

On-campus at UVM, students we spoke to said their fellow classmates are following the school's [Green and Gold Promise](#), a social conduct policy to keep everyone safe from the coronavirus.

"At first it was kind of alarming to see the students coming in, but all the students are wearing masks on and off-campus," said

BENNINGTON COLLEGE



COMMITMENT OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

A culture of safety, responsibility, and accountability is imperative as we address the ongoing and new challenges presented by COVID-19.

We, the faculty, staff, and students of Bennington College, sign this **Commitment of Shared Responsibility**, a health safety contract required by the State of Vermont, outlining the required health and safety protocols and behavioral expectations, because the individual actions of each of us directly impacts the health and safety of us all. The College will also be responsible for sharing information about additional applicable state regulations related to travel and other activities. These regulations may change over time. All members of the College community must adhere to these regulations.

Updated: 7/30/2020

Vermont Mandatory Guidance

- I agree that I have read and will comply with **Vermont's Safe and Healthy Return to Campus: Mandatory Guidance for College and University Campus Learning**

Physical distancing

- I will keep 6 feet / 2 meters apart from others.
- I will follow the maximum occupancy signs posted in all campus spaces; I understand that many spaces may



Looking Ahead

The New York Times reported a fall surge on Sept. 22, 2020.

The New York Times
The Morning

September 22, 2020

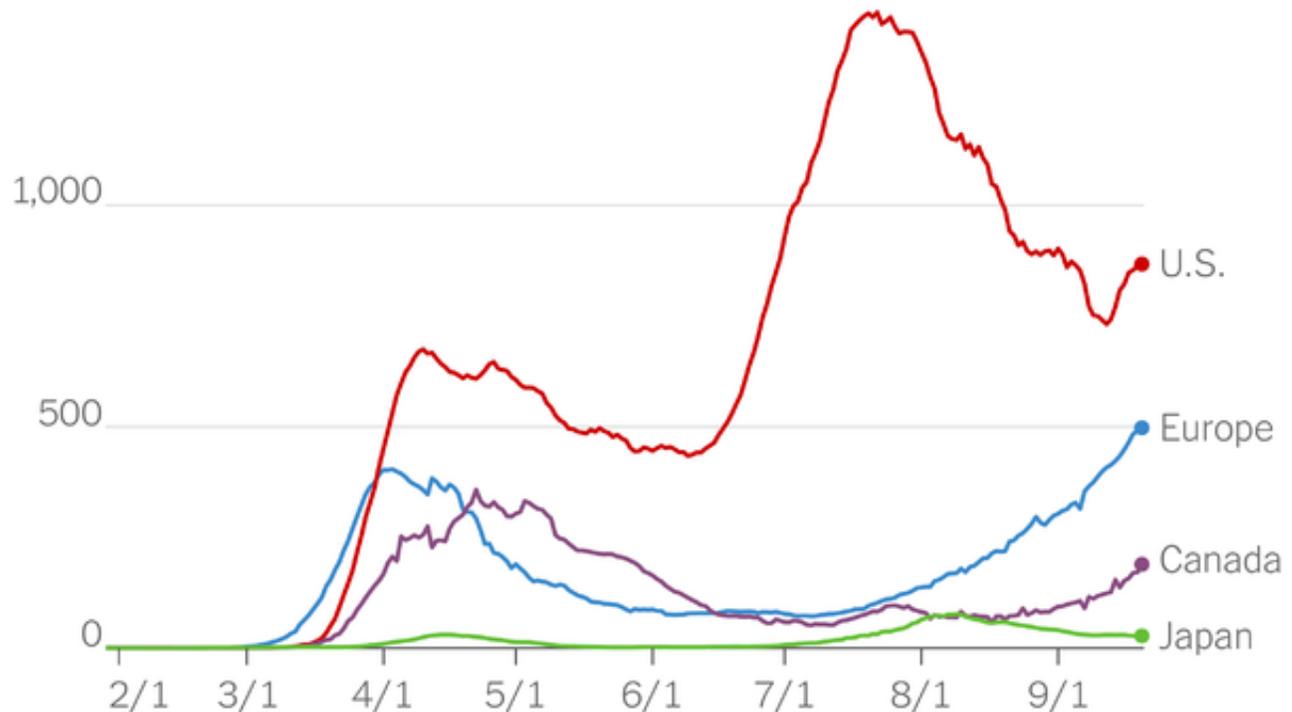


By David Leonhardt

Good morning. Republicans say they will fill Ginsburg's seat soon. A Mueller aide has regrets. And coronavirus cases are rising again in the U.S.

The fall surge is here

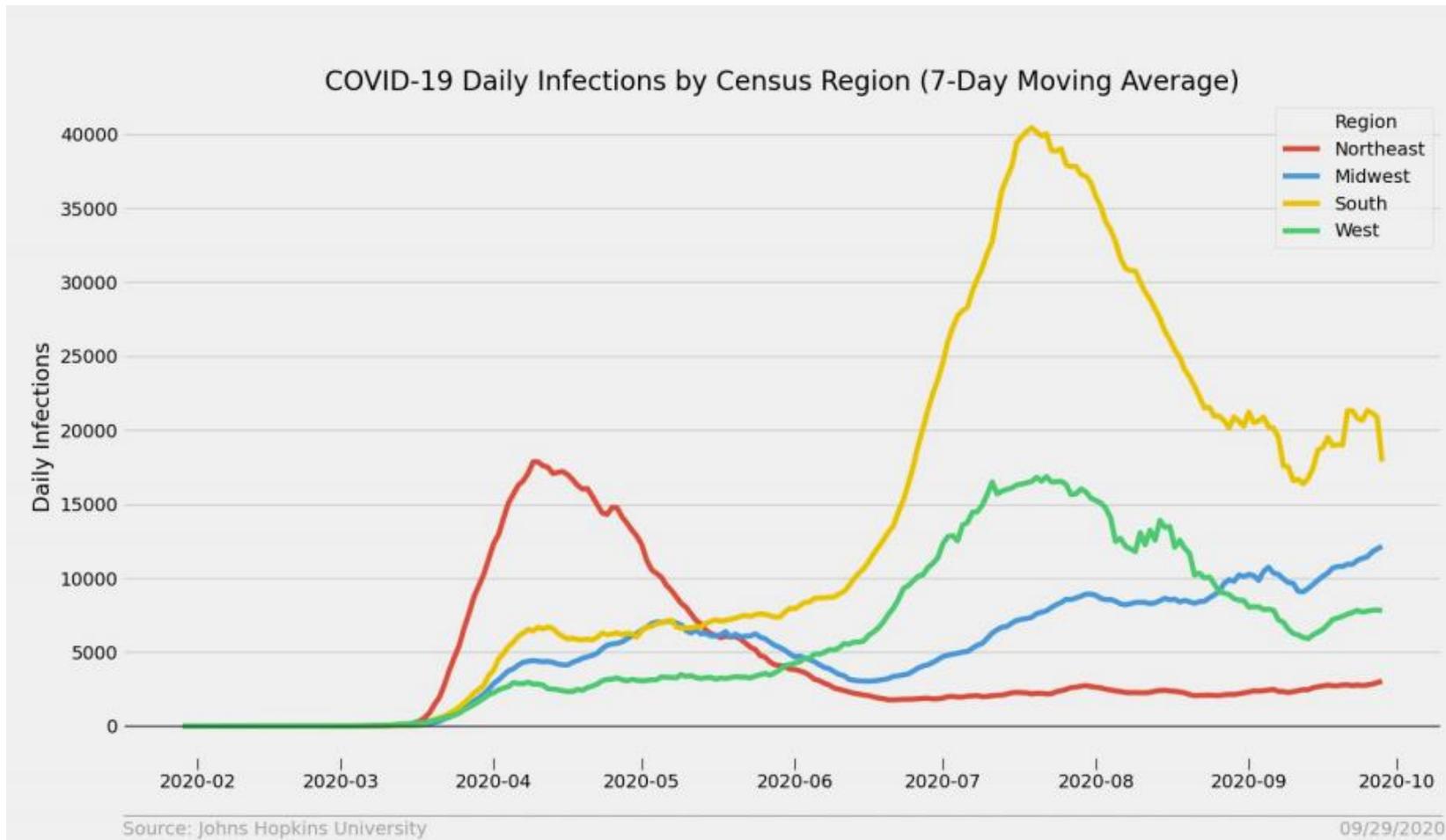
New coronavirus cases per million residents, previous seven days



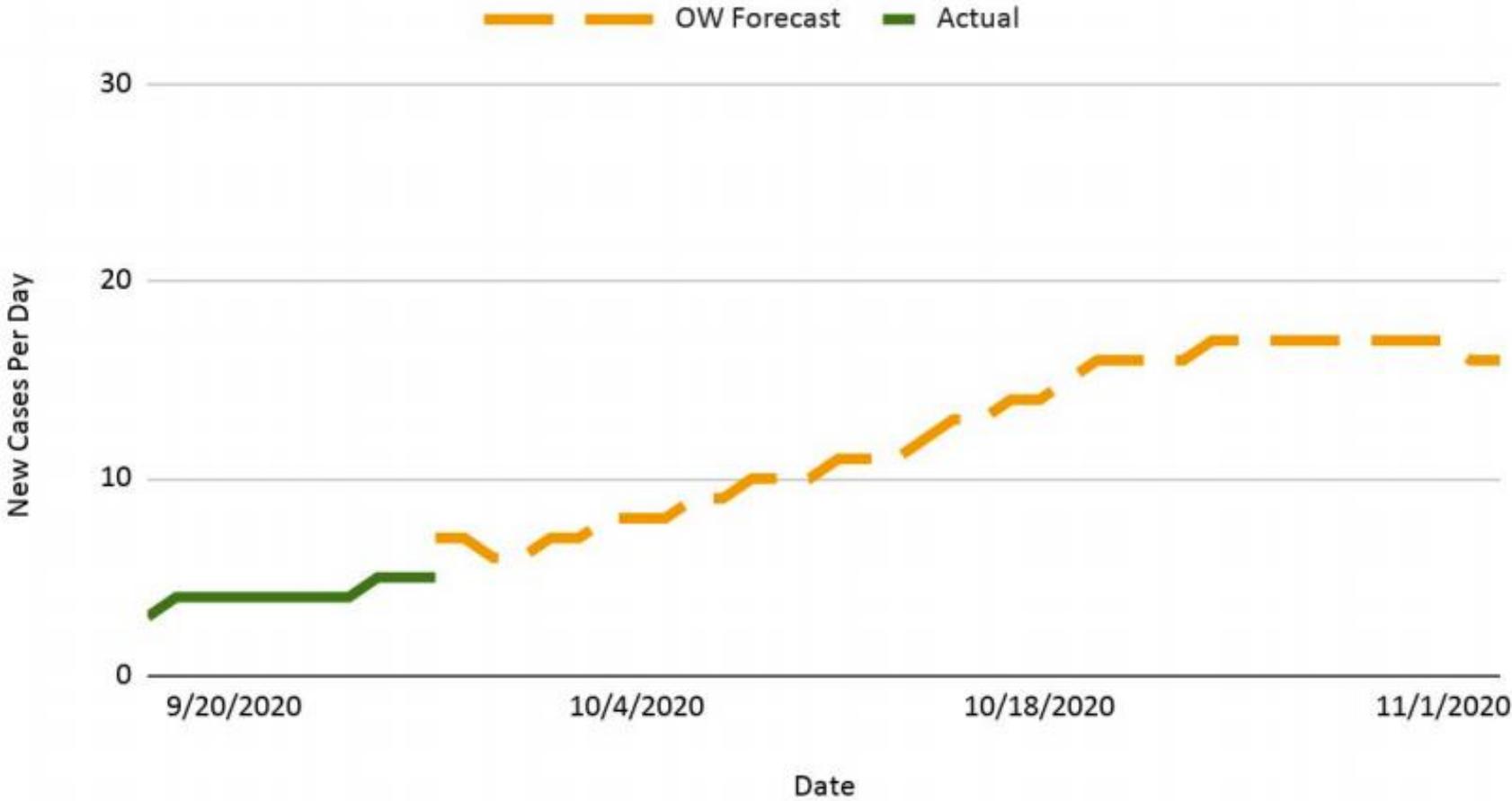
Europe includes all countries that do not stretch into another continent, regardless of E.U. status.

By The New York Times | Sources: Johns Hopkins University, World Bank

The national trend varies by region. The Northeast is stable.



Vermont Forecast: September 29 – November 3



Metrics Monitored Closely and Impacts of Closing on Students

Level of Concern	OK	Warning	Alert	Closure
Key metrics				
7 day case incidence (per 10,000) - VT			Alert increases as numbers increase	
% tests positive VT			Alert increases as numbers increase	
Available Hospital Beds			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
Available ICU Beds			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
Available Ventilators			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
% tests positive Campus			Alert increases as numbers increase	
Active infections Campus			Alert increases as numbers increase	
% new cases from quarantined contacts			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
% quarantine housing available			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
% isolation housing available			Alert increases as numbers decrease	
Operational Constraints of Isolation / Quarantine			Alert increases as constraints increase	
PPE item burn rate			Alert increases as numbers increase	
Stakeholder behavior (e.g. policy violations, protocol compliance)			Alert increases as numbers increase	
7-day incidence of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI)			Alert increases as numbers increase	
Contact tracing capacity			Alert increases as numbers decrease	

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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CAMPUS AS HAVEN



When Coronavirus Closes Colleges, Some Students Lose Hot Meals, Health Care, and a Place to Sleep

By Karin Fischer | MARCH 11, 2020



NICOLAUS CZARNECKI

Harvard students prepare to pack up and go home after the university said it would close campus housing this week. As coronavirus fears lead colleges across the country to send their students home, they risk leaving many low-income students in the lurch.



The Health Department's Role

The Health Department prepares for and responds to public health emergencies by using fundamental epidemiological tools and concepts.

Prevention

**Contact
Tracing**

Isolation

Quarantine

**Outbreak
Response**

Testing

How does the Health Department conduct contact tracing at Vermont colleges?

- A team lead of the Health Department's **Contact Tracing Team** contacts the college.
- Ideally within 24 hours, contact tracers reach out to cases and the people they were in close contact with to determine their level of risk, and to provide information on isolation and quarantine.
- The team follows up with the college with relevant information from the interviews and develops a plan together.
- The contact tracing team works closely with the college until the period of concern is over.

How does outbreak prevention and management work at Vermont colleges?

- Typically, the Health Department's **Outbreak Prevention and Response Team** is activated even when there is a single case in congregate settings like a college dorm or classroom.
- In the event of an outbreak, we provide ongoing support, starting with collecting and developing line lists and recommending broader testing on a case by case basis.
- We work closely with partners, like the Contact Tracing Team and college representatives, to make decisions regarding next steps.
- **Every situation is different and requires a unique response.**

Testing: Who, Where and When

- While anyone can get tested, not everyone *needs* to get tested.
- The Health Department recommends testing for:
 - People with COVID-19 symptoms
 - People who have had close contact (within 6 feet for about 15 minutes or more) with someone who tested positive for COVID-19
 - People who are referred by their health care provider for testing for another reason.
- “Close contact” may not be what you think it is.
- Timing is important!
- New from CDC: [Testing, Screening, and Outbreak Response for Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#)

COVID-19 Vaccine Development Update

- Many vaccine candidates being studied
- Safety and efficacy are the priorities
- Not likely to have widely available vaccine for several months
- There will be prioritized groups to receive the vaccine
- Health Department is preparing now so we will be ready when the vaccine is available

Q & A



Understanding COVID-19 Risk on Campus

- How does a contact tracer consider a classroom exposure with respect to students and teachers being a close contact?
- What is the risk to a faculty member teaching 1-2 in-person courses a semester? How does it compare to a coach, cashier, or custodian?

Restrictions & Prevention Measures at Colleges

- Why are Vermont colleges continuing restrictive measures like travel and visitor restrictions when the number of infections are so low?
- College-aged students don't seem to get too sick from COVID-19, and rates seem really low right now in Vermont, so why are Vermont colleges being so conservative?
- Why not just test everyone multiple times a week and let them live normally?

Student Mental Health

- Are Vermont colleges aware of the mental health impact the restrictions are having on students?

Collaboration Between Colleges, Towns, and the Health Department

- How would Vermont colleges and the Department of Health work together with a local town in the event that there was an outbreak of COVID-19 on a campus?

Break & Spring Semester

- How are Vermont colleges going to send students home safely at the end of the term?
- How will Vermont colleges bring students back safely for the next semester?

COVID-19 Vaccine

- Will Vermont and /or colleges make a COVID-19 vaccine mandatory?
- How long will immunity from a vaccine last?
- How effective would a COVID vaccine have to be to achieve "herd" immunity?



Thank you!

Webinar recording and slides available soon at
healthvermont.gov/COVID19-colleges