

Libraries close amid outbreak

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Scenic Regional Library announced this week that all its branches will close through April to help limit the spread of coronavirus.

District Director Steven Campbell announced Monday that the libraries will be closed until April 4. Additionally, all public meeting room usage, library activities and outreach programs will be suspended until May 13.

"The decision to close is a difficult one. We realize that the library provides critical services to its communities," Campbell said. "However, we believe that this is the most responsible course of action in order to protect the health of our residents at this time."

Due dates and holds on reserved material will both be suspended until the library reopens.

Campbell encouraged anyone currently in possession of library material to keep it at home until the library reopens.

The library district had previously announced that branches would remain open and only the programs and outreach services would be suspended until the beginning of April. However, this week statewide authorities stepped up their calls for groups to limit unnecessary public gatherings.

During the closure, Campbell encouraged patrons to view the online material that is accessible through the library district's website, www.sce-nicregional.org.

Wright City Branch Manager Renny McBride said branch staff will offer limited engagement and activities through their Facebook page during the closure.

"We'll do a Facebook Live story time on Wednesdays, because our story times are usually Wednesday at 10 a.m.," McBride said. "We'll show the crafts that the kids were going to make that day, so if parents want to do the crafts at home they can do that."

McBride said her staff will also post activities and video resources on Wright City Library's Facebook page, including authors that are doing their own story readings while many people are stuck at home.

She said any programs for adults that were scheduled during the suspension will be rescheduled at a later date.

Warrenton Branch Manager Stephanie Hasler said her branch will also host story times over Facebook Live at its usual time, Tuesday at 10 a.m. each week.