

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020

City, County Issue Statement on Mobile COVID-19 Drive Thru Testing

LAREDO, Texas—The City of Laredo and Webb County have released the following joint statement regarding a planned mobile COVID-19 rapid test drive thru:

Amidst a nationwide shortage of COVID-19 tests, the City of Laredo and Webb County have worked with local and regional medical providers and laboratories to respond to the coronavirus pandemic in order to prevent, test and treat the population. The City of Laredo had been approached by a local clinic that was able to secure a large shipment of what they believed to be FDA-approved COVID-19 rapid tests. In an effort to provide care to local residents, the City agreed to purchase 2,500 of those kits, splitting the costs equally with Webb County, and had planned to begin a mobile drive thru testing facility for the public. The City of Laredo Health Department conducted a standard quality control assurance test on a number of kits and consistently found that the results fell below the reliability range guaranteed by the company that issued the kits. The city and county have decided not to administer the tests at the mobile COVID-19 drive thru site due to concerns regarding their reliability.

After questioning the validity of the test kits, the validity of the FDA certification also came into question. An inquiry was initiated by the Laredo Police Department who are currently working with other authorities to investigate this matter. No tests were administered to the public and no payment was made for the tests by either the city or the county. Furthermore, both government entities will continue their efforts to respond to COVID-19 cases locally and are working with all medical providers to administer testing, conduct contact tracing, provide care and quarantine exposed and positive persons. The city and county also continue public education efforts regarding COVID-19 and public health. For more information, please visit www.cityoflaredo.com or www.webbcounty.tx.

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