

The goal of **Healthy Davis Together** is to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and get the Davis community back to regular city activities as quickly and safely as possible. Environmental monitoring (regularly testing wastewater, indoor air, and certain surfaces) is another way we are learning about COVID-19 and opportunities to prevent its spread. While wearing masks, staying six feet apart, and free COVID-19 testing at least once a week for everyone who lives or works in Davis are the most important actions for all of us to take, environmental monitoring is an important learning component that helps us see how our community is doing and where we can step up prevention efforts even more.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

Environmental monitoring is a system of regularly testing for the presence of COVID-19 that can happen in an ongoing and non-invasive way.

Why is environmental monitoring important?


Environmental monitoring acts like an early detection system, spotting the virus in wastewater, air filters, and surface swab samples, often before it's detected in other tests. Knowing whether, where, and how much viral load is detected tells us where spikes may occur and allows us to encourage people in those areas to get tested.

How does environmental monitoring work?

In Davis, environmental monitoring is conducted through wastewater testing and supplemented by air and surface sampling, creating a holistic system of early COVID-19 detection. At this time, wastewater testing is happening across the city, while air and surface sampling are focused primarily in schools.

- UC Davis and the City's Department of Public Works have set up wastewater sample collection points at key points ("nodes") in the City's sewage ("wastewater") collection system. This wastewater is a byproduct of normal community water use like showering, using the bathroom, and other activities and is sampled and tested weekly.
- Schools are being equipped with portable HEPA filtration units with a primary function of removing virus particles from the air and improving safety. These units can also be sampled for the presence of the virus. In a similar manner, high-contact surfaces can also be sampled to look for the virus.
- The Healthy Davis Together monitoring program only tests the concentration and distribution of SARS-CoV-2 in our community. It does not detect chemical or drug use and does not identify or provide results at the individual or household level.

Visit HealthyDavisTogether.org to:

 learn more about environmental monitoring and other programs

 schedule your COVID-19 test

The saliva-based tests are quick, painless, and free.

How are results used?

Results are used at the neighborhood (for wastewater) and classroom (for air and surface) level to alert residents, school staff, and student families to get tested and remain vigilant by following health behavior guidance.

Just as higher concentrations are a signal the virus is present, lower (and no) concentrations are a signal we're making progress. Consistently low levels will give Davis the knowledge and data we need to confidently and gradually relax restrictions, re-open, and stay open.

How long will environmental monitoring be in place?

Even once we achieve widespread vaccination in Davis, monitoring of wastewater, air, and surface samples will be an important tool to stay ahead of and prevent possible spread.

Healthy Davis Together is a joint project between the UC Davis and the City of Davis to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and facilitate a coordinated and gradual return to normal city activities and student life.