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library.douglascountynv.gov

January 29, 2021

NOTICE

The Douglas County Public Library Board of Trustees will meet at **10:00 AM on Thursday, February 4, 2021**. Below is an agenda of all items scheduled for consideration.

Douglas County is actively monitoring and managing the COVID-19 level of risk in our community by closing public offices to minimize contact among individuals and to slow the spread of COVID-19. **The Library Board of Trustees will be conducting its meeting electronically to reduce social gatherings and interpersonal contact.** In adherence to Governor Sisolak's Declaration of Emergency and Directive 006 on public meetings, there will be no physical location designated for this meeting.

The public will be able to participate in the meeting by watching the livestream of the meeting. Members of the public may click on the following link to watch the livestream of the Library Board of Trustees meeting: <https://youtu.be/DVKthj4PNpM>

To offer public comment before the Board meeting, members of the public may submit public comments online using the Douglas County Public Library website (https://library.douglascountynv.gov/contact_us) or by sending an email to info@douglas.lib.nv.us. Written public comments may also be mailed to the Douglas County Library at Post Office Box 337, Minden, Nevada 89423.

To make public comment during the Library Board meeting, the public must call 775-783-6024 and leave a voice message which will be played for the Library Board of Trustees and the public when public comment is announced. Although the public comment phone line can accommodate multiple incoming calls at once, if a member of the public should get a busy signal, please call back. Because of the possibility for a high volume of telephone calls, there could be an increased potential for technical difficulties. Citizens are therefore encouraged to submit their public comments in writing prior to the date and time of the Board meeting.

- When leaving a voice message, members of the public should begin their public comment by stating and spelling their full name and whether he or she favors, opposes or has no opinion on the agenda item under consideration. No more than one voice message/public comment per person will be played to the Library Board and public during each public comment period.
- Public comment is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and will only occur at the beginning and end of the Board meeting. Public comment will not be taken on each agenda item during the meeting.

- If members of the public desire to comment on more than one agenda item and believe that their comments will exceed the three minutes offered at both the beginning and end of the Board meeting, they are encouraged to submit written public comments to supplement their verbal public comments.
- The Douglas County Library's Public Comment Phone Line 775-783-6024 will become available to take public comment at **10:00 AM** on the day of the meeting for opening Public Comment. When the Chairperson calls for opening public comment, the line will remain open for at least five minutes to allow members of the public to call or until the last caller has finished leaving a voice message on the County's Public Comment Phone Line. Once the Chairperson closes opening public comment, any voice messages received after that time will be considered closing public comment.
- The Douglas County Library's Public Comment Phone Line will remain open to allow for closing public comment to be recorded as the meeting progresses. When the Chairperson calls for closing public comment, the phone line will remain open for at least five minutes to allow members of the public to call or until the last caller has finished leaving a voice message on the Public Comment Phone Line.
- All written public comments that are received prior to 4:00 PM the day before the Library Board meeting will be compiled and will be added as supplemental material for the Library Trustees and the public to review. Please label the written correspondence as public comment to avoid any uncertainty.
- Any written public comment received after 4:00 PM the day before the meeting, or on the day of the Library Board meeting, will be compiled and added as supplemental material to the County's website and distributed to the Library Board of Trustees within 24 hours after the meeting. Please label the written correspondence as public comment to avoid any uncertainty.

Pursuant to Governor Sisolak's Declaration of Emergency, copies of the agenda will not be posted at any physical location. However, members of the public may request an electronic copy of the agenda or the supporting materials by contacting Veronica Hallam at vhallam@douglas.lib.nv.us. Electronic copies of the agenda and supporting materials are also available at the following websites:

- ❖ State of Nevada Public Notices website: <https://notice.nv.gov/>
- ❖ Douglas County Meeting website: <https://douglascountynv.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx>

AGENDA

Call Meeting to Order

1. Public comments. [No Action]

All written public comments that are received prior to 4:00 PM the day before the Library Board meeting will be compiled and will be added as supplemental material for the Library Trustees and the public to review prior to the meeting. To make public comment during the meeting, the public must call **775-783-6024** and leave a voice message which will be played for the Library Board of Trustees and the public.

Any written public comment received after 4:00 PM the day before the Library Board meeting will be compiled and added as supplemental materials to the County's website and distributed to the Library Board of Trustees within 24 hours after the meeting.

2. For Possible Action. Discussion on approval of proposed agenda. The Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to take items out of order, to combine two or more agenda items for consideration, and to remove items from the agenda at any time. All items designated "for possible action" shall include discussion by the Board of Trustees and they may take action to approve, modify, deny, take "no action," or continue the item.

3. For Possible Action. Discussion and possible action on continuing the phased reopening plan in response to the COVID pandemic, including but not limited to, Governor's emergency directives, in-person library services, hours of operation, safety measures, curbside and virtual services, and building closures/openings.

4. Closing public comments. [No Action]

At this time, public comment will be taken on those items that are within the jurisdiction and control of the Library Board of Trustees. To make public comment during the meeting, the public must call **775-783-6024** and leave a voice message which will be played for the Library Board of Trustees and the public.

Adjournment of Meeting

Supporting material for the meeting is available by request in writing, via US Mail or email. A request for copies of the agenda and supporting materials may be directed to:

Veronica Hallam, Administrative Services Manager
Douglas County Public Library
1625 Library Lane, Minden, NV 89423
vhallam@douglas.lib.nv.us

Notice to Persons with Disabilities: Members of the public who are disabled and require special assistance or accommodations are requested to notify Veronica Hallam at PO Box 337, Minden, Nevada 89423 or via email at vhallam@douglas.lib.nv.us at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

REALM PROJECT

REopening
Archives, Libraries,
and Museums

REALM 101

- About the project
- What we know about COVID-19
- The “known unknowns”
- The testing process



oc.lc/realm-project

About REALM

REopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums (REALM) is a research partnership between OCLC, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and Battelle. Its aim is to conduct research on how long the COVID-19 virus survives on materials that are prevalent in libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs). The REALM project team is using that research to produce authoritative, science-based information on how—or if—materials can be handled to minimize exposure to staff and visitors.

REALM provides science-based information

REALM is not issuing recommendations or guidelines. We're working to create resources that help inform local decision-making. Many LAMs are in conversations with their local and state health departments, as well as other aspects of government, as they seek information on how COVID-19 can be addressed in the workplace. REALM will be taking the results of the REALM project testing, literature reviews, and the suggestions of the project steering committee and working groups to release materials to help support LAM decisions.

What we know about COVID-19

Because SARS-CoV-2 is still emerging, knowledge about it is a work in progress. For COVID-19 prevention and decontamination recommendations, please refer to the **Center for Disease Control's guidelines**.

How the virus spreads

DIRECT TRANSMISSION

Virus-containing droplets are expelled from an infected person and enter the system of an uninfected person.

INDIRECT TRANSMISSION

Objects can harbor the virus for an extended period after being contaminated by an infected person.

Survival of the virus on surfaces

If SARS-CoV-2 is transferred to a physical surface, its survival time appears to vary based on material composition and roughness, before it dies off on its own through natural attenuation. Disinfecting surfaces with the appropriate cleaning agents kills the virus quickly but is not always practical (one would have to wipe down every page of a book, for example). There may also be issues with the cleaning agents possibly damaging delicate materials, so caution will need to be taken.

Quarantining is an option for items that are not practical or possible to disinfect individually. Should you disinfect or quarantine? Check out our decision-making checklist oc.lc/realm-project for tips.

The “known unknowns”

Knowledge about the new coronavirus and COVID-19 is still emerging from the scientific community. Keep the following “known unknowns” in mind when interpreting and applying REALM data.

1

Unknown:

How much virus an infected person will leave on an object



2

Unknown:

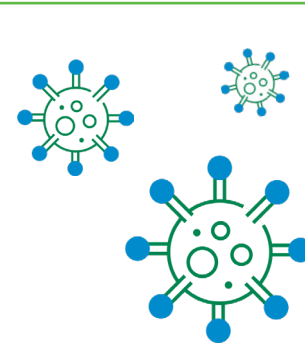
How much virus someone can pick up from an object



3

Unknown:

How much virus is needed to cause infection

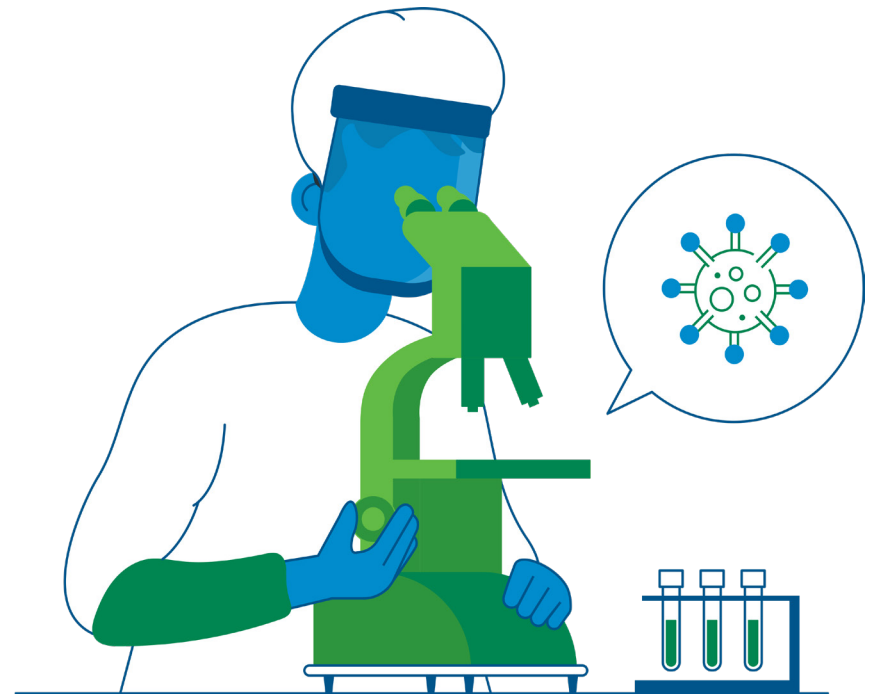


The testing process

The tests have been conducted by applying the virus on materials held at standard room temperature (68°F to 75°F) and relative humidity conditions (30 to 50 percent).

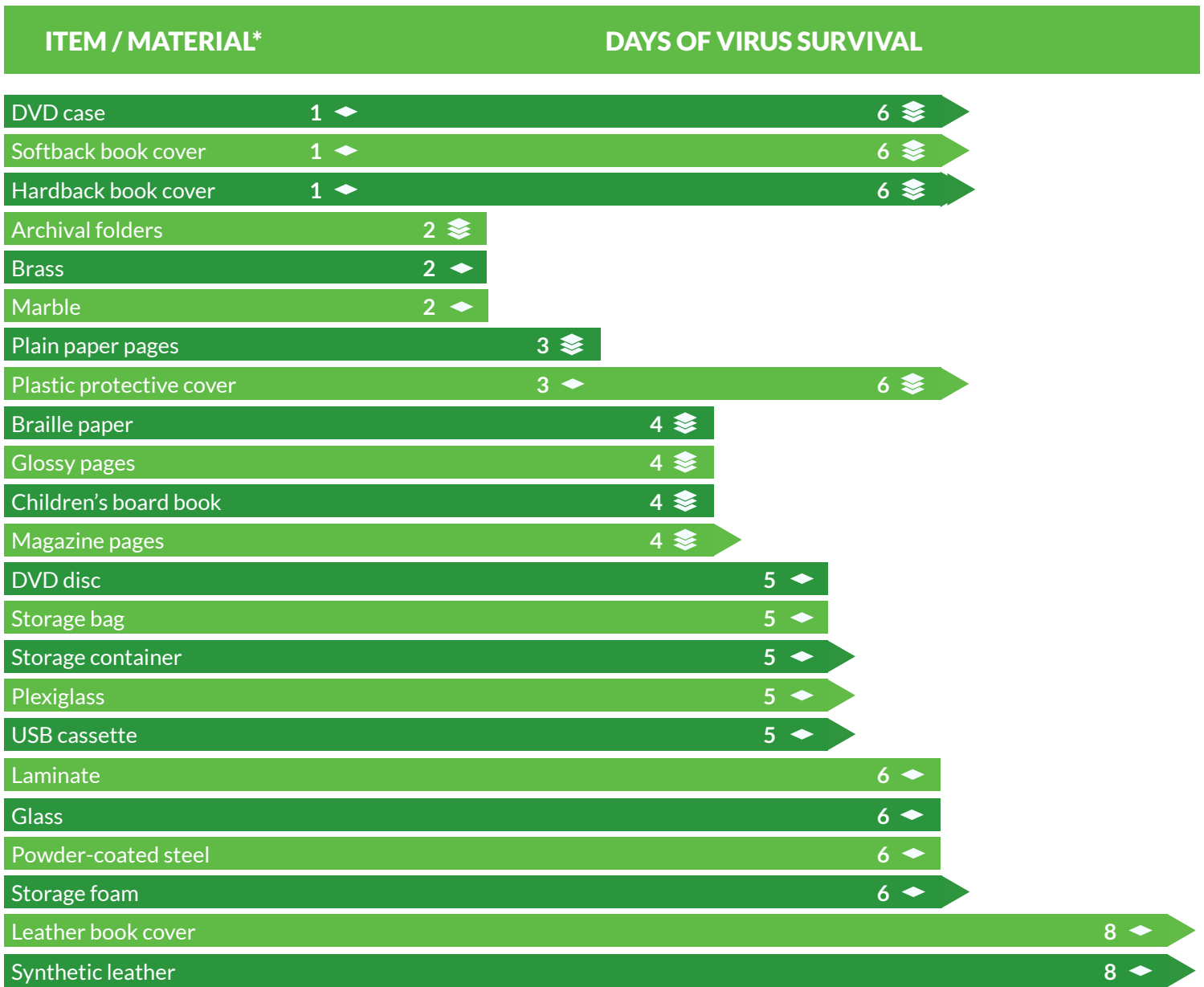
The quantity of viable virus is then measured at selected time points to capture the attenuation, or drop, in total virus. Time points were selected to mimic real-world options, quarantining items for a few days or a week. Time points cannot be adjusted within a test once it is underway, but can be adjusted for future tests based on the results of earlier ones. For most of the materials tested, only a trace amount of virus was detected by the final time point examined.

We're releasing project plans and test results as they become available. Visit oc.lc/realm-project for updates.



This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, project number ODIS-246644-ODIS-20.

How long the virus survives on commonly used library, archive, and museum materials



Item tested in a stacked configuration.
 Item tested in an unstacked configuration.
 Item showed trace amount of virus after testing.
 Item was above LOQ ** after testing.

* For more information about the items and materials tested, please visit oc.lc/realm-project.

** The limit of quantitation. Below this point (26.2 virus cells), researchers can determine only whether the virus is present or absent, not the number of virus particles.

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, project number ODIS-246644-ODIS-20.

October 20, 2020
WIRED Magazine
www.wired.com

WIRED magazine is a computer magazine devoted to readers who want to know more about that world. Every issue covers the newest and hottest electronic devices, giving readers an inside look at those devices before they hit the streets. From the hottest technologies to reviews of the best devices on the market, WIRED magazine is a must-read publication for those interested in technology.

It's Time to Talk About Covid-19 and Surfaces Again

In the early days, we furiously scrubbed, afraid we could get sick from the virus lingering on objects and surfaces. What do we know now? By Gregory Barber

Beth Kalb was worried about the pews. This summer, the century-old Catholic Church she attends in a small town outside Minneapolis had, like many places, reopened its doors with new rituals of disinfection. Kalb had quickly noticed the side effects. The varnish on the pews had begun to wear, and the wood was often sticky with disinfectant, so the volunteer cleaners had started using soap and water to remove the tacky build-up. They were weeks in, and it had already come to cleaning off the cleaner. Plus, all those chemicals couldn't be good for the people who were spritzing and wiping down the worship space after each use. As a nurse, Kalb knew the importance of handwashing, but this all seemed like a bit much. It was certainly too much for the wood.

For Erin Berman, in Fremont, California, it was the books. In the spring, a federal project to help reopen libraries, called Realm, had commissioned tests to see how long the virus lasts on objects they lend. Researchers had borrowed materials from the library system in Columbus, Ohio, and applied an inoculum of the virus to them in a nearby lab to see how long it could remain infectious. They started mainly with books, measuring how much virus was left after a day or two, but in subsequent months, expanded to magazines and DVDs and USB drives. In August, a fourth round of tests addressed the question of placing books in stacks, rather than laying them out individually. Protected from light and drying air, the researchers were able to find virus particles on them after six days. On leather book covers, a fifth round of tests determined this month, the virus lasted at least eight days.

The Realm organizers emphasized that none of what they were reporting was guidance—it was research, meant to inform the staff at individual libraries who were deciding what to do with all those items gathering dust, and possibly germs, in people's homes. However, they also noted it was not possible to disinfect every page of every book. So many library staffers, after seeing the data, were considering "book quarantines" that lasted a week or more.

Berman was aware of the practical issues raised by putting books in purgatory for so long, but she had a broader concern: that all this research was encouraging an undue fixation, or even a fear, of the objects librarians are meant to joyfully share with the public. It was hard to understand what those numbers—the number of days, the number of viral particles that remained—actually meant for spreading Covid-19 via books, but their very existence had generated anxiety among her coworkers. And she suspected that it was drawing focus away from all the other things she and her colleagues had to do to reopen safely—to reimagine a community space in which people could no longer safely linger, in which social connection would now be mediated by Plexiglas. "I started to get very frustrated. I'm thinking, 'We're librarians. We should be doing research,'" Berman says. "Of all the industries, we should not be operating in fear."

For Emanuel Goldman, a virologist at Rutgers University, the worries began with the gentle nagging of his elderly mother-in-law. “She was telling me, ‘Wipe down this, wipe down that,’” he says. He had been obliging at the start of the pandemic. The requests seemed reasonable—a set of small acts to keep his household safer. He knew from other viruses that fomite spread—the technical term for passing on a virus via objects—was possible, and at that time the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had little guidance on SARS-CoV-2. But as he delved into the research himself, he grew concerned. Despite all the fixation on how long and how much virus lasts on surfaces, there wasn’t much evidence at all that it was relevant to how Covid-19 actually spread. In July he laid out those concerns in a tersely worded commentary in *The Lancet* titled “Exaggerated risk of transmission of Covid-19 by fomites.”

“In my opinion, the chance of transmission through inanimate surfaces is very small, and only in instances where an infected person coughs or sneezes on the surface, and someone else touches that surface soon after the cough or sneeze (within 1–2 h),” he wrote. “I do not disagree with erring on the side of caution, but this can go to extremes not justified by the data.”

That was months ago, and since then the scientific evidence has tipped in Goldman’s favor. And yet, here we are all the same, wiping down pews and hiding away books, among countless other disinfection rituals molded by those early perceptions. “What’s done cannot be undone,” Goldman tells me now. “And it’s going to take a lot of time and effort to turn things around.”

In March, I wrote about what we knew at the time about our understanding of surface spread, which was very little. Nearly a year into the Covid-19 pandemic, it’s time to ask: What do we know now?

The first widely covered study on fomites and Covid-19, released as a preprint in March by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, the National Institutes of Health, and Princeton, was a look at how long the novel coronavirus lasted on different kinds of surfaces. At the time, little was known about how the virus was transmitted, so the question was important. Depending on the material, the researchers could still detect the virus after a few hours on cardboard, and after several days on plastic and steel. They were careful to say that their findings only went as far as that. They were reporting how quickly the virus decayed in a laboratory setting, not whether it could still infect a person or was even a likely mode of transmission.

But in the hazy panic of the time, many people had already taken up fastidious habits: quarantining packages at the door, bleaching boxes of cereal brought back from the store, wearing hospital booties outdoors. A single set of research results didn’t start those behaviors, but—along with other early studies finding the virus on surfaces in hospital rooms and on cruise ships—it appeared to provide validation.

Dylan Morris, a mathematical biologist at Princeton who coauthored the paper, recalls watching what he calls “the great fomite freakout” with frustration. The number of days the virus remained detectable on a surface in a lab wasn’t useful for assessing personal risk, he says, because in the real world, that amount would depend on how much there had been to start with and on environmental conditions that they did not test. Plus, the amount of remaining virus doesn’t tell us much about whether it could reasonably get into someone’s airways and cause an infection. “People really picked up on those absolute times to detectability,” he says. “Everyone wants to know the magical time when something becomes safe.” In subsequent research, he says he’s avoided giving hard temporal cutoffs.

Since March, additional studies have painted a picture that is much more subtle and less scary. But like that first study, each can be easily misinterpreted in isolation. One clear takeaway is that, given an adequate initial dose, some amount of the virus can linger for days or even weeks on some surfaces, like glass and plastic, in controlled lab conditions. Emphasis on *controlled*. For example, earlier this month, an Australian study published in *Virology Journal* found traces of the virus on plastic banknotes and glass 28 days after exposure. The reaction to that number felt to some like a replay of March: a single study with a bombshell statistic sparked new fears about touchscreens and cash. “To be honest, I thought that we had moved on from this,” says Anne Wylie, a microbiologist at Yale University.

Of course, this was another laboratory study done with specific intentions. The study was done in the dark, because sunlight is known to quickly deactivate the virus, and it involved maintaining cool, favorable temperatures. Debbie Eagles, a researcher at Australia's national science agency who coauthored the research, tells me that taking away those environmental variables allows researchers to better isolate the effect of individual factors, like temperature, on stability. "In most 'real-world' situations, we would expect survival time to be less than in controlled laboratory settings," Eagles writes in an email. She advises handwashing and cleaning "high-touch" surfaces.

The second consistent finding is that there's plenty of evidence of the virus on surfaces in places where infected people have recently been. Wherever there has recently been an outbreak, and in places where people are asked to quarantine or are treated for Covid-19, "there's viral RNA everywhere," says Chris Mason, a professor at Weill Cornell Medicine. That makes going out and swabbing a useful tool for keeping track of where the virus is spreading.

It's tempting to piece those two elements together: If the virus is on the surfaces around us, and it also lasts for a long time in lab settings, naturally we should vigorously disinfect. But that doesn't necessarily reflect what's happening. In a study published in September in *Clinical Microbiology and Infection*, researchers in Israel tried to piece it all together. They conducted lab studies, leaving samples out for days on various surfaces, and found they could culture the remaining virus in tissue. In other words, it remained infectious. Then they gathered samples from highly contaminated environments: Covid-19 isolation wards at a hospital, and at a hotel used for people in quarantine. The virus was abundant. But when they tried to culture those real-world samples, none were infectious. Later that month, researchers at an Italian hospital reported similar conclusions in *The Lancet*.

In addition to environmental conditions, a confounding factor might be saliva, or the stuff that we often mean when we talk about droplets sticking onto surfaces. In her own research, Wyllie has studied how long certain viral proteins remain intact in saliva to help determine the reliability of Covid-19 spit tests. For her purposes, stability is a good thing. But some proteins have appeared to denature more quickly than others, she notes, suggesting the virus as a whole does not remain intact and infectious. That could be because saliva tends to be less hospitable to pathogens than the synthetic substances or blood serums often used in lab-based stability studies.

Consider, Wyllie says, the extraordinary chain of events that would need to happen to successfully spread SARS-CoV-2 on a surface. A sufficiently large amount of the virus would need to be sprayed by an infected person onto a surface. The surface would need to be the right kind of material, exposed to the right levels of light, temperature, and humidity so that the virus does not quickly degrade. Then the virus would need to be picked up—which you would most likely do with your hands. But the virus is vulnerable there. ("Enveloped" viruses like SARS-CoV-2 do not fare well on porous surfaces like skin and clothing.) And then it needs to find a way inside you—usually through your nose or your eye—in a concentration big enough to get past your mucosal defenses and establish itself in your cells. The risk, Wyllie concludes, is low. "I've not once washed my groceries or disinfected my bags or even thought twice about my mail," she says.

Low risk is not, of course, no risk, she adds. There are high-touch objects that merit disinfection, and places like hospitals need clean rooms and furniture. People at high risk from Covid-19 may want to take extra precautions. But the best advice for breaking that object-to-nose chain, according to all the health experts I spoke with: Wash your hands.

Goldman, too, had come to similar conclusions months before all this additional research came out, and US public health guidance followed right along with him. Since his *Lancet* paper in July, the focus on fomites has waned, and has been replaced by a focus on person-to-person transmission through respiration. The shift was based on epidemiological evidence. Experts knew all along that droplets passed by sneezing, coughing, or speaking were likely an important mode of transmission—that's just how respiratory viruses tend to move. Over time, it became clear that aerosols, which remain suspended in the air, can better explain why so many infections seemed to be passing between people who did not directly interact, but could have shared the

same indoor air. That's why public health officials now emphasize mask wearing and ventilation. The CDC's most recently updated guidance, from early October, holds that "spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that Covid-19 spread." For those reasons, or perhaps out of fatigue, the scrubbing became less scrupulous over the summer.

But not for everyone. "I think that one thing that has been tough about this pandemic is there has been such a strong initial message that gave people the wrong intuition," says Morris, the Princeton researcher. For some people, and especially for institutions that were trying to reopen, liable to employees and visitors, priorities had been set based on what we knew back in the spring. It was also a way to show that they were doing something, Morris adds, even if it didn't do much. In July, *The Atlantic's* Derek Thompson coined the term "hygiene theater" to describe the rash of corporate disinfection. It's still around. It's part of the reason why New York City has committed tens of millions of dollars to cleaning each subway car each night, why Airbnb requires "enhanced" cleaning from its landlords, why countless schools, stores, churches, and offices continue to emphasize disinfection. It's why some libraries are quarantining books this fall for a week or more. It's also a factor in what we are now *less* likely to do, a rationale for why many businesses no longer take cash and why playgrounds have often been among the last outdoor venues to reopen.

"There are bizarre policies that haven't changed or adapted," says Julia Marcus, an epidemiologist at Harvard Medical School. "It's one thing for an individual to decide to stop bleaching their groceries. It's much more difficult to steer the ship of an institution as the science evolves, with different levels of decision making and different levels of health literacy and risk tolerance."

What is it about fomites? There's surely something psychological in the belief that we can "see" an invisible virus, manifesting as an object that we can quarantine, avoid, wipe down. That's evident in how we think about the research, even. Recall the salt shaker in Germany? Or the elevator buttons in a Chinese high-rise? In New Zealand, there was that hypothesis that containers of frozen fish were responsible for an outbreak there. Some of those conclusions can be attributed to *aerosol* starting off as a dirty, alarmist word. Public health officials were searching for something, anything, to explain why groups of people who didn't gather closely were becoming infected.

It's impossible to rule out that some transmission could occur that way—and examples still come up, like a case in New Zealand possibly linked to a communal trash can—but most incidents now look like a case of shared air. Wyllie points to a friend who remains convinced they got the virus from a contaminated door handle. She thinks that's unlikely, but for her friend, it's an answer to a question of how they got sick that ambient virus floating in the air simply doesn't offer. It's a good story.

Sharon Streams, director of the Realm project, says she sympathizes with that demand for answers. The group's research on library materials was conceived after the surface research in March. At the time, the talk was all fomites, at the time. Library employees wanted specifics to better understand how the virus interacts with the billions of materials they handle each year, many of which are currently marooned in people's homes, exposed to who knows what. "They're pulling their hair out about what is the appropriate level of quarantine," she says.

Streams acknowledges that the conditions modeled in their experiments are based on a vague foundation. It's hard to know whether the researchers started with a realistic dose of the virus, or whether the amount of it that remains on surfaces after a few days or hours would actually cause an infection. (The group's latest research release, last week, included more language about aerosols and droplets being the likeliest modes of transmission.) But to her, that's the point of gathering more data. And Streams points out that even if a weeklong quarantine looks like overkill to some virologists or health experts, quarantines and disinfection satisfy an emotional need that's often overlooked. Much like the wiping down store shelves, church pews, or subway cars, cleaning policies are also about signaling which spaces are safe to come back to—that libraries are ready for visitors and employees. "'Hygiene theater' has been thrown around as a bad word, but they're embracing it to show that we care about the people coming here," she says. "They feel comforted."

But communicating that point is difficult. Marcus points back to the original paper on surface spread in March: “They couched it appropriately. But even with those caveats, it spun into a lot of obsessive behaviors,” she says. Even seemingly benign procedures, like quarantining items, can wear people out over time. “There’s such a high level of tension in our lives and decision making right now. We all need to feel some ease,” Marcus says. “For me, the question is, where are the low-risk areas where we can ease off the gas now that we know more about how transmission happens—which is overwhelmingly from being together in indoor environments? It’s not from a book that somebody sneezed on and brought to the library a week ago.”

Worrying about the small stuff exhausts people from focusing on things that *do* matter. There are all sorts of ways to imagine what might go wrong. Maybe a person feels so confident in the disinfection methods around them that they eat indoors without a mask, despite the much more substantial known risks. Or perhaps someone feels they don’t need to quarantine themselves after traveling because they wore disposable gloves and booties over their shoes on the plane. “When you ask more of people than what is needed, they grow tired of doing what actually matters,” Marcus says. Her advice: Keep it simple.

That sort of clear, simple guidance is hard to come by. Since *The Lancet* publication, Goldman has become a consultant and therapist of sorts for people who are questioning the utility of overly rigorous disinfection, but who are unsure of what to make of the scientific evidence. He’s been in touch with administrators at a local school that planned to close once a week for “a deep clean,” but who weren’t paying attention to their ventilation systems. He has fielded inquiries from people who still leave their groceries out for days, and who barely leave the house, encouraging them to find a healthier balance. He may be able to change minds one at a time, he reasons, or at least help people put the risks in perspective. It worked, he says, on his mother-in-law. But behaviors are hard to shift, especially when the decision is made by committee. The tendency, in the absence of firm guidance to do otherwise, is to cater to the most cautious.

In Minnesota, Kalb, who is one of his acolytes, says her concerns about the pews, and the lack of evidence driving the deep cleaning, were carefully considered by the church reopening committee. But her fellow parishioners advised caution. The daily disinfection was part of a list of changes for safe reopening, including cordoning off rows for social distancing and a sign-up process to enable contact tracing. It was safest, the committee decided, to continue doing it all, much like every other nearby church and school and store was doing. After all, Kalb couldn’t point to a specific study that said fomite transmission was *never* happening. And there was news going around of an outbreak at a church in Texas. “It was like, OK, we don’t want to be *that* church,” she says. The church now uses a misting machine to spray disinfectant, which requires less active wiping.

It’s tempting, in other words, to play it conservatively, says Berman, the librarian. “Some of it is just making sure the employees or the public feel safe,” she says, and she sees the benefits of disinfecting library surfaces that get a lot of use. But she points out that institutions have the power to alter our perception of safety, cutting through the ambiguity of risk by offering clear guidance. Holding out these scientific conclusions—the number of days the virus lasts on every imaginable type of library material surface—had done just the opposite, she believed, producing more fear than empowerment.

Like so many decisions about risk and public safety in this pandemic, the burden had been displaced onto people like her, a librarian, not a virologist. She marveled at how much effort she was personally expending trying to educate herself and the people around her about the risk of books as fomites, when there was so much else to worry about. And, well, now she had done the research, and she knew the biggest risk in a library is the risk of sharing the same air, not touching the same book. Wouldn’t it be nice if someone with more authority would just come out and say so? “There’s so much fear out there,” she says. “I don’t want to put anyone at undue risk, but I want us to reopen.”

From: SaraJacobsen [<mailto:sarajacobsenslp@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 2:54 PM

To: Amy Dodson <ADodson@douglas.lib.nv.us>

Subject: Re: Continued concerns over closing

Hello again Ms. Dodson,

I am writing to obtain the following information:

-How many Douglas County Public Library employees have been laid-off/fired in the last 6 months due to the aforementioned budget cuts?

This of course should not include Maria's well deserved retirement.

-How many employees on your current payroll are currently working from home?

-How much money has the library already spent on CDC recommended PPE; for, I witnessed an incredible amount of plexiglass, gloves, disposable book bags , etc during the library's most recent opening.

I also want to stress the importance of not reporting or making decisions based on hear-say. People calling and saying they were possibly in the library with Covid does not mean that it is a true case of dangerous exposure. As you have already told me, no actual Covid exposures have been reported to you by the state. Contact tracing facts need to outweigh your speculations.

Covid cannot be used as an excuse any longer. The vaccine is being administered daily, our community's numbers are low and our hospitals are not full.

Even the Governor has approved the opening of the library.

Covid should not be used as an excuse to limit people's quality of life or impede the development and the future of our children.

I am planning on reaching out to additional members of our community who share the same belief that we need and have the right to access the library resources.

I hope if you continue to hear from others my voice won't fall upon deaf ears.

We fund the library- we should be in the library.

I look forward to your response, including the pertinent information I requested.

Sincerely,

Sara Jacobsen

From: SaraJacobsen [<mailto:sarajacobsenslp@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, January 8, 2021 8:52 AM

To: Amy Dodson <ADodson@douglas.lib.nv.us>

Subject: Re: Continued concerns over closing

Hello Ms. Dodson,
Thank you for your reply.

I appreciate your willingness to provide additional curbside services to my family. Unfortunately, as an educator I still have the responsibility of advocating for all of the children of Douglas County, not just my own children. Thus, I am not satisfied with the accommodations you have offered me personally, as it will not help the community as a whole.

I am also not satisfied with your attempt to use the Covid-19 positivity rate as an excuse for keeping the doors of the library closed.

At the January 7th county commissioner meeting, Commissioner Tarkanian voiced his concerns with using positivity rate as a sole metric for decision making. Following this, Mrs. Freeman, the Quad County health preparedness manager stated it is "not wise to use" positivity rate as a sole metric. As you referred this exact meeting to me as the basis of current decision making, I find it dissatisfying that you are trying to use this metric that state officials warn not to use it independently. Currently, 4% of our population has tested positive for Covid- thus 96% of us are healthy enough to utilize library resources.

I understand that the governor stated that counties can decide to have tighter restrictions than the recommended 25% mandate, and this is clearly what you have decided to do. As a community member I am voicing that your decision is not supported by the community you are supposed to serve. I am asking you to work for the community, not against us.

My current request is that the library open by appointment.

The library has staff Monday-Saturday, and can legally have 40 people inside.

I find it more than reasonable to allow at least 20 people to make appointments by the hour. Opening by appointment only is a fair compromise; it will allow you to control the factors you personally find concerning in regards to Covid-19 and would allow our people to utilize the library resources we need, we fund, and we have the right to.

I am looking forward to hearing from you in regards to approval of opening via appointment, or your potential reasoning for not accommodating our community with this request.

Sincerely,
Sara Jacobsen

From: SaraJacobsen <sarajacobsenslp@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 7, 2021 6:25 AM
To: Douglas Co. Public Library
Subject: Continued concerns over closing

Dear board members and director,

I am writing again to express my continued concern regarding your decision to close the library doors to the public.

Today marks exactly one month since you have taken away the public's ability to utilize the resources that we need, and that our tax dollars and donations pay for.

Prior to Christmas break the Douglas County School District reported over 1000 children attending their virtual academy- these children have the right to browse for books.

As an educator myself, I must advocate for the importance of literacy for the children of Douglas County.

On an even more personal note, I am a home schooling mother. My children need to explore and understand library science, and need to have access to the leveled readers that are not available to check-out on your website.

Please consider the adults who use the library services for technology, as well as literature.

Not everyone in our community owns a computer, can afford WiFi internet, has a printer, etc.

Our library is what allows these needed technologies to be used by those who otherwise wouldn't have access.

When I spoke to two of your employees yesterday, they repeatedly said this decision was made due to Governor Sisolak's mandates. I would like to remind you that Governor Sisolak's current mandate is that libraries are to be at no more than 25% occupancy. Why have you made the decision to allow 0% occupancy?

Please recognize that the library is essential to the people of Douglas County. The community deserves the opportunity to utilize the resources that we fund.

The library needs to open.

I am asking you respond to this email with the following information, to help me better understand your decision making:

-the number that is your 25% occupancy mark -the number of Covid-19 cases that the Health Department's contract tracing has linked directly to the Douglas County Public Library -any projected reopening date

Sincerely,
Sara Jacobsen

From: PHILIP WRIGHT [<mailto:filpen@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 4:19 PM

To: Douglas Co. Public Library <info@douglas.lib.nv.us>; Amy Dodson <ADodson@douglas.lib.nv.us>; Kathryn Garrahan <kathryn.garrahan@douglas.lib.nv.us>

Subject: Douglas County Library Closure

To Whom it May Concern:

We have been a patrons of the Douglas County Library for many years and have always found the staff very helpful and pleasant. I do not fault the library staff.

I am disgusted that the board agreed to waste \$30,000 for a report on the sheriff/BLM incident. What an exercise in futility and money that could have been much better spent. The library cannot afford to police fines for overdue library books but spends \$30,000 for virtually nothing!

As to the way the library is handling Covid:

Despite installation of safety measures, i.e., plexiglass and self checkout of books, the library remains closed. Children enrolled in virtual school need access to books, as do isolated seniors and adults. Our tax dollars are paying for these facilities.

Whoever thought any book touched by a patron must be put in a basket for sanitizing? No Covid case has been traced to the library and is not transmitted by touching a book! If Covid were transmitted this way, Walmart, Raley's, Costco, Home Depot, etc., would all have spread covid round the world. We all handle food and other items at these large, well-run stores with no ill effects and they are inspected regularly.

If I want a book, I am now supposed to phone in, sit in my car, wait for a person to come to the car, insist that I open the trunk or rear door and then deposit in my car the book enclosed in yet another plastic bag. Absolutely pathetic. I can't go to the library door and receive the books; put it on the floor and I'll retrieve it! Covid has released a massive amount of plastic into a world already drowning in single-use and unrecycleable plastic. May we return these thick plastic bags to the library to be used again? What if I have a bicycle or come on foot to the library?

Why was browsing OK for 3 days a week but a problem for 5 days a week? Now it is zero days. We can all freely walk into stores, casinos and restaurants but not the library? The state has rules on rate of occupancy which even at the most rigorous is 25% not zero. Governor Sisolak allows for libraries to be open at 25% capacity (equivalent of 40 people) which means you probably wouldn't even need to limit access as there are rarely more than 10 people in the library other than for special events.

Anyone afraid to enter the library is free to phone in and follow your present rules.

If these rules are put in place by Director Amy Dodson, she needs to be replaced. Get a director who will be practical yet still safe.

Your mission is "to provide a comprehensive collection of library materials, services and programs with the support of qualified staff to meet the informational, educational, recreational and cultural needs of all residents and visitors of Douglas County." You cannot do this with the library virtually closed.

Sincerely, Philip and Penelope Wright
Gardnerville

cc: Douglas County Commissioners

From: Kristen Peck [mailto:kristen_peck@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, January 13, 2021 6:00 PM

To: Amy Dodson <ADodson@douglas.lib.nv.us>; Douglas Co. Public Library <info@douglas.lib.nv.us>

Subject: Library Opening

Dear Ms. Dodson,

I am writing over my concerns around the library being closed to the community. I appreciate the efforts you have made during this global pandemic to assure safety for your staff and patrons. I have seen the safety glass and PPE that you were able to get and use to keep library staff and patrons appropriately distanced and protected, but am wondering why all that effort has been cast aside and you have just shut down. Yes, our numbers have climbed, but we are back on a decline. It is a very small percentage of our overall community and other resources like schools, the community center, swim center and small businesses have found a way to continue to serve our community. Even the governor has libraries on the list as able to open.

The library is a community resource and tax payer funded asset. I am wondering what matrix you are using to decide when to open and close the library to the public? I am an educator, mother and advocate for the community, especially our young children. I believe there is no reason the library can not be opened at some capacity during the statewide "pause" we are under. Could you please educate me to why you have taken this stance and your plan for reopening this vital resource.

Thank you.

Kristen Peck
775-790-3357

From: Kristen [mailto:kristen_peck@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 12:47 PM
To: Amy Dodson <ADodson@douglas.lib.nv.us>
Cc: Kathryn Garrahan <kathryn.garrahan@douglas.lib.nv.us>
Subject: Re: Library Opening

Thank you for your response I believe you are quoting incorrect numbers. Yes, for those getting tested it is 20%, but that doesn't reflect the positive COVID cases in the county. I work in the school district and we have been full time since August, my school alone sees 500 students a day and our rates are much much lower. I don't think the way you are using the data justifies the library being closed.

Just like the schools, the library is tax payer funded. We have a right to understand what your opening plans are, and a right to know why you purchased materials for protective use and self checkout that are not being utilized.

Browsing is a huge part of the library experience and book selection. Again, we pay for this service with our taxes. The community center, swim center and local businesses have found a way to protect their clients. It seems overly cautious and a huge expense to close the library. Those at greatest risk will self isolate, but children, the healthy and now the vaccinated should be allowed in.

I hope you will share this letter at your upcoming meeting. Your response doesn't satisfy my need to know your opening plan and timeline.

Kristen Susan Peck

From: Phil Wright <filpen@aol.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 7:26 PM

To: Davidson, Jenifer <jrdavidson@douglasnv.us> <JRDavidson@douglasnv.us>

Subject: Library

Ms/ Mrs Davidson,

I wanted to address a couple of things after our email to you yesterday.

We have lived in the valley of 25 plus years and contrary to your library director we are not complainers. We love the library and want it to continue for a long time which it will not do under the current director. We know many of the personnel and many do not enjoy working with the director and are possibly quitting. As per your director we also do not go around spitting on books, I doubt if she has seen anyone do that, that is not what we do in this valley. I am familiar with Douglas Co policies since I volunteer at the Food Closet three days a week unloading trucks and we do not have the stupid policies that the library has yet we are totally safe.

Many neighbors have contacted us with complaints about the directors stupid policies and they are voters who will contact their commissioners.

We hope that you can give the subject an honest review. I would be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you, Phil Wright