**NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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# Coronavirus Variants Identified in Twin Falls County, COVID-19 cases on the rise

**Twin Falls County, Idaho** — South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) received laboratory confirmation of 2 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 CA variant (B.1.429), and 4 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 UK variant (B.1.1.7), discovered in Twin Falls County. This is in addition to the 16 COVID-19 variant cases confirmed in Blaine County and announced on April 2nd.

COVID-19 variants are reported to spread more quickly, especially the UK variant. Currently, the CDC reports this strain makes up more than a quarter of the cases across the United States and is the most common COVID-19 strain circulating in the country.

In a press briefing last Wednesday, April 7th, the CDC warned this variant is more transmissible among younger people, spreading especially quickly among youth sports groups and in daycare centers.

SCPHD has seen COVID-19 cases reported in this region nearly double since the end of March. 78 cases were reported in the last week of March, from the 21st through the 27th, compared to 150 cases reported last week, from April 4th to 10th.

It is crucial residents follow public health recommendations to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. These recommendations include:

- Getting vaccinated if you are 16 or older.
- Wearing a mask when in public.
- Washing your hands often and avoiding touching your face.
- Staying home when sick except to seek medical attention.
- Maintaining space between yourself and others you don't live with.
- Avoid large gatherings.

Schedule a vaccine appointment through the state register on the SCPHD website: https://www.phd5.idaho.gov/Covid-vaccine/.

SCPHD is running two COVID-19 informational hotlines, one in English at (208) 737-1138, and one in Spanish at (208) 737-5965.