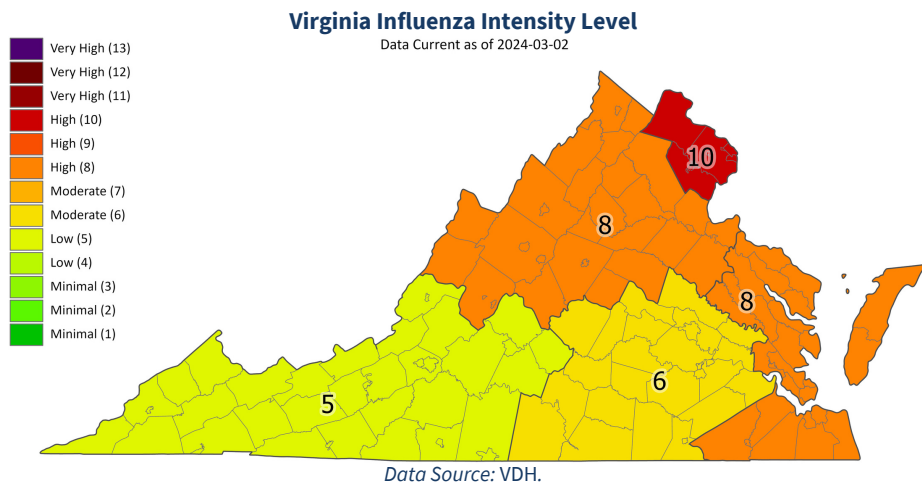
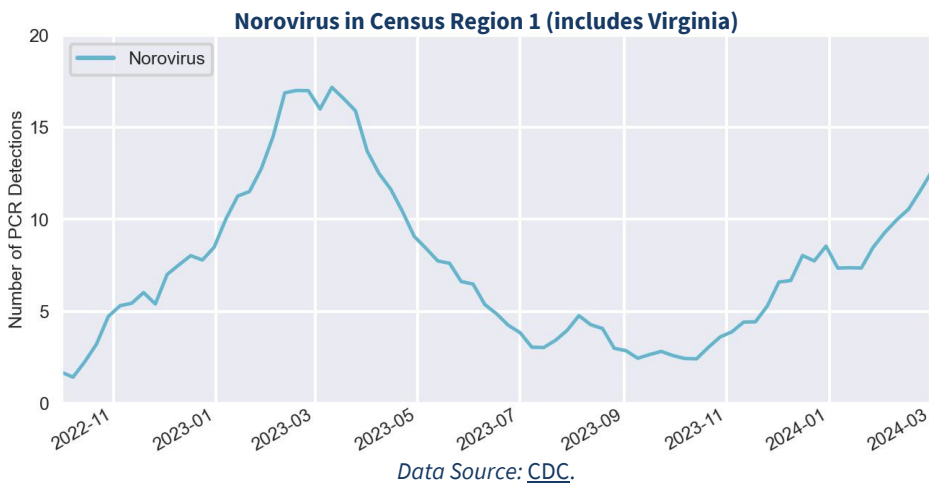


March 8, 2024

Key Takeaways

- Please complete this [short survey](#) to help us assess and improve the value and usefulness of this update. Thank you!
- Statewide influenza activity has stabilized but remains elevated. Flu hospitalizations increased this week, but models expect this to stabilize.
- COVID-19 activity remains elevated but is continuing to decrease slowly. Hospitalizations are also decreasing slowly and expected to stabilize. The current hospital bed occupancy rate for COVID-19 is “low”.
- Seasonal gastrointestinal (GI) illness activity is elevated nationally. Norovirus detections continue to increase in Virginia’s Census Region.
- Severe Weather Awareness Week is March 4 through March 7 in Virginia.
- Tornado activity begins to increase across the Southeast in March. Peak months for Virginia are April and May.

Key Figures



COVID-19

Low / Low

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 related hospital admissions / hospital bed occupancy as of Mar 2.

0% / 3%

Population in localities with “High” / “Medium” COVID-19 hospital admissions levels as of Mar 2.

Influenza

High

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Mar 2.

3

Virginia regions with High influenza intensity levels, as of Mar 2.

Severe Weather

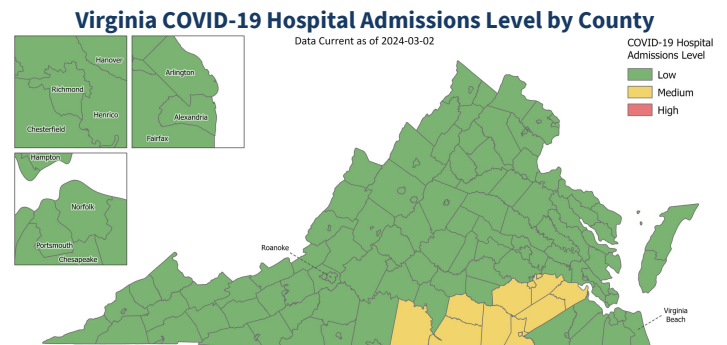
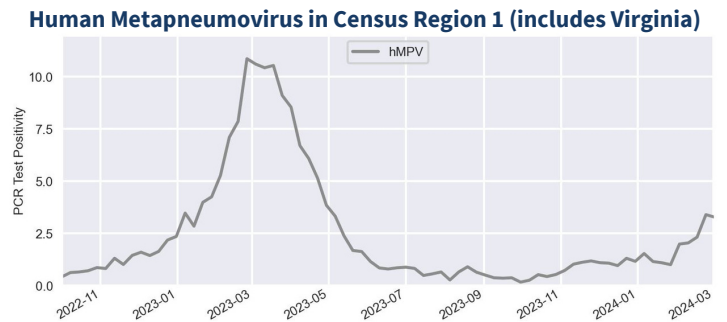
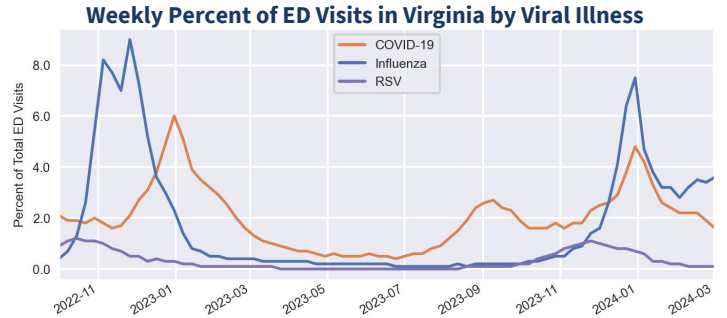
179 / 76

The number of tornadoes / tornado-related fatalities in Virginia over the decade ending in Nov 2023 per NOAA.

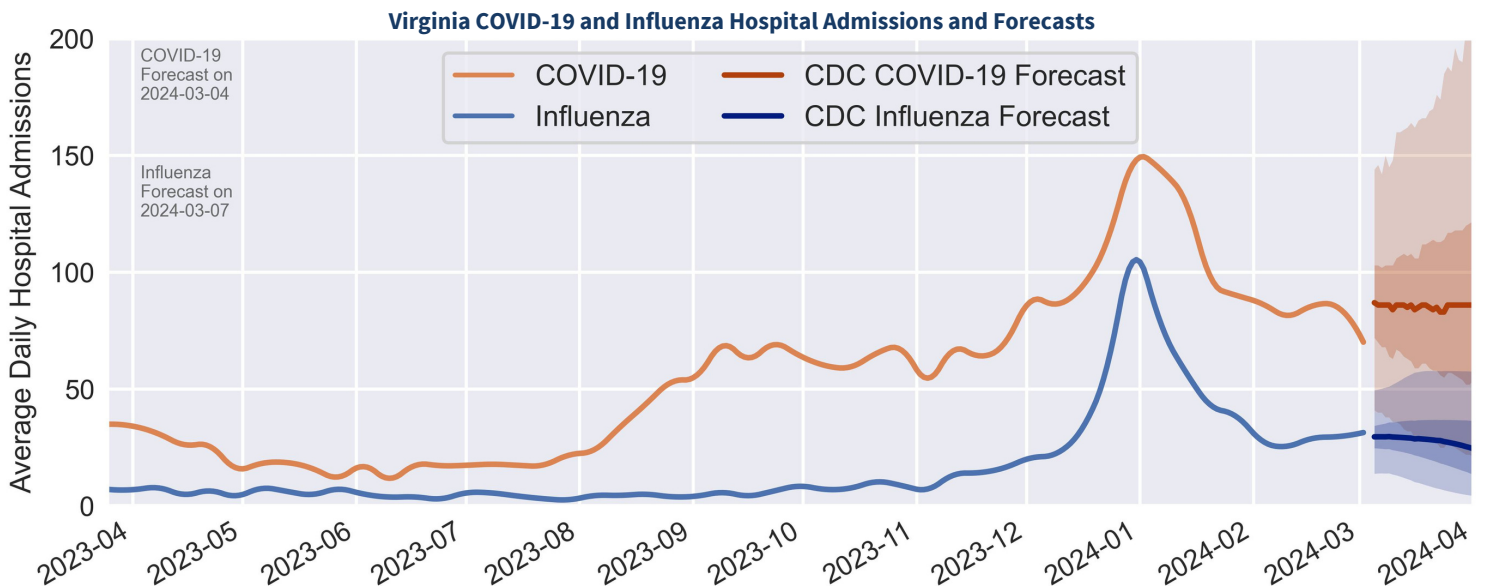
Spotlight: Severe Weather Awareness Week

Seasonal Illness

- **Seasonal GI illnesses are elevated nationally.** Wastewater data suggest that both norovirus and rotavirus rates are elevated across the United States. PCR detections of norovirus (front page) continue to increase in Census Region 1 which includes Virginia.
- **Influenza activity remains elevated but stable.** The overall statewide flu activity level is still “high”. While activity levels decreased in the Southwest, the Eastern and Northern regions saw increases this week (front page). Emergency department (ED) diagnoses of flu are stable at about 3.5% since mid-February.
- **COVID-19 activity is still high but decreasing.** ED diagnoses rates of COVID-19 decreased slightly this week, continuing a six-week trend. Epidemic growth models suggest that COVID-19 rates are stable. Nevertheless, CDC wastewater analyses continue to report “very high” viral activity levels in Virginia.
- **Other respiratory viruses circulating in Virginia.** Test positivity for human metapneumovirus (hMPV) in Census Region 1 has tripled in the last month. Surveillance data from WastewaterSCAN also suggest that human parainfluenza virus (HPIV) activity is “high” and continuing to grow in the region.
- **Hospitalization trends continue.** For the second week in a row, COVID-19 hospitalizations decreased, while influenza hospitalizations increased. Models continue to suggest that hospital admissions for both viruses will stabilize.



Data Sources: Top [CDC NSSP](#), Center [CDC NREVSS](#), Bottom [CDC NHSN](#).

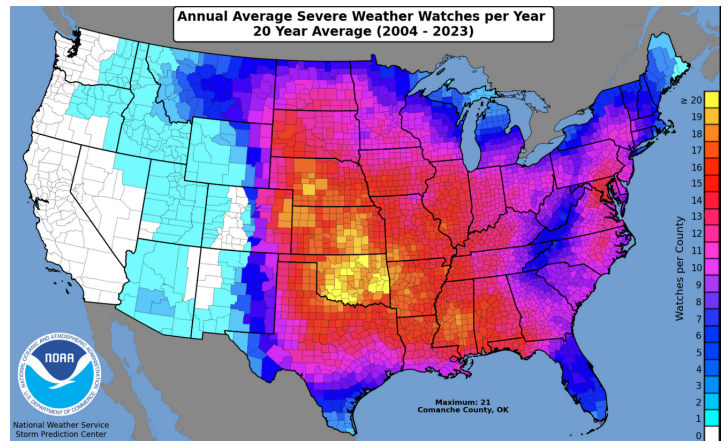


Models forecast a stabilization of hospitalizations for both flu and COVID-19. Note, 50% and 95% forecast confidence intervals are shown as shading. Historical data source: [HealthData.gov](#), COVID-19 forecast data source: [CDC CFA](#), flu forecast data source: [CDC FluSight](#).

Spotlight

- **March 4-7 is Severe Weather Awareness week in Virginia**, focusing attention on severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and flooding.
- **While tropical cyclones tend to cause far more damage, severe storms happen far more frequently.** Of the 106 Billion Dollar Events that have impacted Virginia since 1980, 47 were severe storms. Of those, 35 have occurred in the past 10 years. Smaller events affect Virginia even more frequently.
- **Severe weather is increasing in Virginia.** From 1948 to 2011, the the frequency of extreme downpours increased by 33%, while the size of the largest downpours increased by 11%. On average, a storm that once occurred annually, now occurs every nine months in Virginia.
- **Tornados can occur at any time during the year, but tornado occurrence peaks April through June in Virginia.** From 1997 to 2022, Virginia averaged 3-4 tornadoes per month in April and May. Tornado activity also tends to pick up in August & September.

Severe Weather Awareness Week

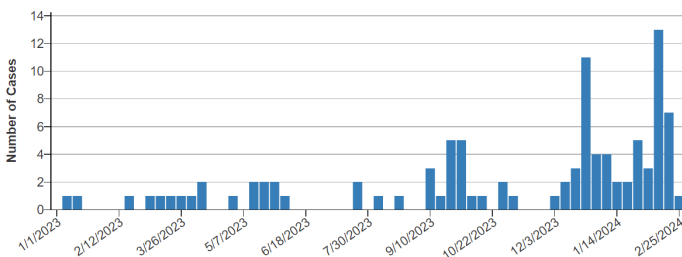


Over the past 20 years, most Virginia counties have seen severe weather warnings numbering in the low- to mid-teens on average. Counties in Southwest Virginia tend to have fewer severe weather watches. Image Source: [NWS SPC](#)

Other News

Number of measles cases reported by week

2023-2024* (as of February 29, 2024)



A recent CDC report indicates that cases of measles in the US have significantly increased since the start of the year. While 58 total cases were reported over the whole year in 2023, 41 cases have been reported in just the first nine weeks of 2024. Image Source: [CDC](#)

- **Potential structural instabilities are discovered in Mattawan Dam at Pine Slash Road in Hanover County** resulting in local road closures. Local residents were informed about the potential for increased water levels and impacts on school bus routes.
- **The town of Craigsville in Augusta County experienced a water outage** and a subsequent boil water advisory, impacting operations at the Augusta Correctional Center. Giles County was also under a boil water advisory earlier this week. That advisory was lifted Thursday.

- **A recent CDC report indicates that 41 cases of measles have been reported across 16 states, including Virginia.** Cases were recently confirmed in New York City and Oakland County, Michigan. Measles cases are particularly high in Florida, where 10 residents and 4 non-residents have been diagnosed.
- **MassBiologics, one of only two U.S. companies that manufactures tetanus-diphtheria vaccine products, has discontinued production.** In anticipation of the shortage of vaccines, the CDC has implemented temporary ordering limits of the Td vaccine and encourages providers to substitute with the Tdap vaccine whenever possible.