USING YOUR MASK CORRECTLY

The best masks to block the virus are the N95 masks, but those are hard to come by. A home-made mask will also help keep you and others safer, *as long as you use it correctly and sanitize it after each use.*

Using it correctly:
Masks are either with or without pleats, with ear straps of a pair of ties.
- If yours is pleated, use with pleats facing down.
- If it has ear straps, loop over ears. Spread the mask so that it covers your nose to just below your eyes. The bottom should cup your chin. It should be snug all around.
- If it has ties, the top tie goes above your ears and the bottom tie should be below your ears. It should be snug all around.

Keep in mind that you are wearing a mask to block the virus, so that means you should assume that **your mask is contaminated!** And therefore, if you touch the mask, **your hands are contaminated!** Be careful not to touch your face—or anything else you need to keep uncontaminated (like your steering wheel, car door handle, etc.)—until you clean your hands.

Cleaning it correctly:
When you come in from outside, remove mask by the ties or ear straps. Try not to touch the mask itself. Put it in the washing machine or in a designated bag, and wash your hands thoroughly. The wirus can be detected on fabric for a week or more, so you need to decontaminate after EVERY use.

You can:
- Wash it in the washing machine in hot water and dry it in the dryer on the hot setting.
- Boil it in hot water for five minutes.
- Iron it on the hottest setting.

Even doing this, a homemade cloth mask won't last forever. Each washing or boiling is weakening the fabric just a little bit. Throw it away after you've used it **ten times** and begin using a new one.

These guidelines are based on those of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, or for mask-making instructions, visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html