Americans stock up on supplies, leaving stores empty in response to COVID-19

Empty shelves. Desperate parents. Vulnerable elderly. In the midst of news blasts and government announcements, the panicking U.S. population rushed to stores to stock up on essential items: bread, eggs, toilet paper. However, the scramble led to substantial shortages and price gouging. “When I first heard about the store shortages, I was surprised,” junior Mitchell Imrie said. “I've never experienced anything like this.”

As governments around the world began to order mandatory hold-in-place rules over cities in order to combat the spread of COVID-19, Americans began to fear the effects of lockdowns and quarantine strategies. Panic and hysteria grew, causing a rush to stores to gather materials. “I don't see anything wrong with being prepared but I was frustrated with people buying everything up and leaving nothing for anyone else,” Imrie said.

These shortages made it difficult for the most vulnerable citizens to get basic necessities.

Some people hoarded supplies and sold just them back to the public to make a personal profit. For example, a man from Tennessee bought 17,700 bottles of hand sanitizer to sell on Amazon and eBay for $70.

However, grocery stores across the nation reassured the public that there were plenty of supplies for everybody, encouraged them to buy what is reasonable, and limited purchases on items like toilet paper and disinfectant.
COVID-19

Novel Coronavirus creates new normal, extra precautions

The Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19, is a pandemic that has affected people in nearly every nation in the world. COVID-19 is an infectious virus that causes respiratory illness and flu-like symptoms such as coughing and fever. More serious cases include respiratory distress and difficulty breathing that can lead to death. The highly contagious virus spreads easily through physical contact with another person or an object that someone with the virus has touched. As a result of numerous cases since the virus reached the U.S., Fort Bend County issued a “stay at home” order on March 24, and Governor Greg Abbott ordered many restaurants and schools to close to create social distancing and reduce the spread, or “flatten the curve.”

“I found out school was canceled when I was in New Mexico, and I remember I was eating doughnuts, and my friend’s mom said that school was canceled,” junior Daniela Diaz said. “Everyone I knew was so excited that we had a week off, but then one week turned into much longer, and I missed school a lot more than I thought I would.”

The City of Houston had more than 1,054 cases as of March 31, according to the Houston Health Department, and the number continues to rise, as experts believe the peak of the spread hasn’t been reached. Story by K. Meghani

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SOCIAL DISTANCING:
Increasing physical space between people during the outbreak of a contagious disease to avoid spreading illness.

PANDEMIC:
Disease epidemic that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents.

FLATTEN THE CURVE:
Using protective practices to stagger the number of newer cases over a longer period.

DID YOU LEARN THE TERMS? COVID-19 057

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