

# *U.S. sees first coronavirus deaths as cases increase around the world*

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Seattle, March 3 (RHC)-- The number of confirmed coronavirus infections continues to grow worldwide. Cases have now been confirmed in at least 65 countries, with the death toll surpassing 3,000.

The first two fatalities on U.S. soil were reported in Washington state. Both deaths were at the EvergreenHealth hospital in Kirkland, and both men were residents of the same nursing home.

A genetic analysis shows that the virus was likely circulating undetected over the past six weeks in Washington state, potentially infecting hundreds of people. There are now at least 89 cases in the U.S., with New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Florida reporting new infections.

President Donald Trump meanwhile is claiming that criticism of his handling of the outbreak is part of a Democratic "hoax."

South Korea has confirmed 599 new cases -- higher than the daily total reported in China. Italy now has over 1,600 confirmed cases, and Iran over 1,500, with at least 66 deaths. In Paris, the Louvre Museum is closed as cases also mount across France.

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