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COUNTY OF INYO

EMERGING NEW FLU VIRUS

Public Service Announcement

April 24, 2009

Center for Disease Control has identified human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection in people in California and Texas. CDC is working with local and state health agencies to investigate these cases. CDC has determined that this virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it has not been determined how easily the virus spreads between people. As with any infectious disease, the CDC is recommending precautionary measures for people residing or visiting in these areas. All California residents should remember:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

The Inyo County Public Health Officer, Richard Johnson MD, wants families raising 4H swine or in contact with swine to know that there is no risk to getting this flu by handling your pig. There are no special recommendations from California Department of Public Health or CDC for people raising swine.

There is no vaccine available at this time, so it is important for people to take steps to prevent spreading the virus to others. If people are ill, they should attempt to stay at home and limit contact with others. Healthy residents living in these areas should take everyday precautions.

People who develop an illness with fever and respiratory symptoms, such as cough and runny nose, and possibly other symptoms, such as body aches, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, should contact their health care provider. Their health care provider will determine whether influenza testing is needed and if antiviral medications may be helpful.

Adding to the incoming information is the influenza outbreak currently being seen in Mexico. There are credible reports of a thousand cases in Mexico. These cases are very different that the cases in this country in severity. The cases in Mexico present with much more serious disease and there have been over 20 deaths. At this time some of these cases have tested with similarities to the specifics of the swine influenza in California, but more testing must be done by the CDC.

Inyo County Health & Human Services, Public Health participates regularly with statewide phone calls to obtain updated information and transmits it to the local medical providers and the public as needed.

If you have any questions, please call Inyo County Health & Human Services, Public Health at 873-7868.