



WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

For Immediate Release

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WILL COUNTY CASES LINKED TO GROWING SALMONELLA OUTBREAK

JOLIET –The Will County Health Department’s Environmental Health division and Infectious Disease Control section are on high alert in the wake of a growing salmonella outbreak reported in at least 17 states.

Through noon Tuesday, at least four Will County residents had tested positive for salmonellosis, a bacterial infection capable of producing acute illness in children, the elderly, and people with weakened immunity. The local cases are presumptively linked to the consumption of raw red plum, red Roma, and round red tomatoes.

The FDA initially issued a warning about salmonellosis cases linked to raw red tomatoes in Texas and New Mexico June 3. The warning was expanded to include all 50 states late Saturday, with cases now reported from Washington to Connecticut.

Through midday Tuesday, Illinois had confirmed 27 cases including five hospitalizations. The national case count continues to grow, with nearly 200 confirmations reported so far.

No local hospitalizations have been reported, but Will County cases have been confirmed from Lockport, Plainfield, Bolingbrook, and suburban Aurora. Local cases range between 11 and 46 years old.

Will County Infectious Disease Control has been in contact with area health care providers to insure that enteric testing be considered for individuals complaining of stomach cramps, diarrhea, fever, and related gastrointestinal symptoms. Will County Environmental Health is also actively involved.

Environmental Health personnel have been contacting food service establishments and nursing homes to make sure health risks are clearly understood. The health department has also fielded numerous public inquiries about salmonellosis, and the current outbreak.

“It’s important to note that the FDA alert only covers three types of tomatoes,” according to Will County Health Department executive director John J. Cicero. “Home-grown tomatoes and other types of tomatoes not implicated by the FDA are safe to eat.

“The true number of people affected by this outbreak will likely continue to grow. Illnesses like these aren’t always reported immediately, and many illnesses are never reported. Individuals with cramps, diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms would be well served to consult a health care provider.”

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