



## WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

### For Immediate Release

May 21, 2009

News media calls to Vic Reato: Media Services Manager at (815)727-5088.

### HEALTH DEPARTMENT NOTES H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> MILESTONE, URGES CONTINUING VIGILANCE AGAINST THE DISEASE

**Joliet, Illinois** – The Will County Health Department reported three new cases of H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> Influenza (Swine Flu) May 20.

Testing conducted by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), confirmed the presence of the novel H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> virus in an 82 year-old male from Frankfort, a 7 year-old female from Plainfield, and a 17 year-old male from Elwood. These new confirmations bring Will County's H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> case count to 50, including 32 received since May 6.

All but 10 of the confirmed Will County cases involve persons younger than 18 years of age. Females account for 52 percent of the local confirmations and 54 percent of the Will County cases reside in Joliet.

As of 10 A.M. May 21, IDPH had confirmed 877 H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> cases from 17 counties. The updated totals reflected an increase of 83 cases in 24 hours. Will County was credited with the third highest number of statewide cases.

As of noon, May 21, the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were reporting 5,764 H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> cases from 48 states. According to the World Health Organization, more than 11,000 cases from at least 40 countries had been reported through May 20. There have been more than 80 deaths recorded worldwide. A 21 year-old Utah man became the 10<sup>th</sup> fatality reported from the U.S. early Thursday.

The Will County Health Department continues to work with a wide range of community partners and agencies in order to closely monitor the local H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> situation. Health Department executive director John Cicero urges renewed vigilance in light of the growing incidence of disease.

“I think it’s important that people not grow complacent about the H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> virus and the potential risks it poses,” Cicero said. “Media coverage of the H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> flu has subsided to a degree, but these numbers confirm that the virus is still circulating. Most of the cases we’re seeing are mild right now, but it is impossible to predict what might occur during the next few weeks and months.”

People with underlying medical conditions are at greatest risk for the development of complications from H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> infection. The Health Department advises anyone who has flu symptoms and an underlying medical condition to contact a health care professional about treatment.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Pregnant women and people with asthma, diabetes, or lung disease should be particularly mindful of potential influenza complications. Infants, the elderly, and residents of nursing homes, or other chronic care facilities may also be at high risk of H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> infection.

Symptoms of H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> Flu include: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue. Vomiting and diarrhea are less often reported, but may also be present.

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm water can help you stay healthy. Covering your cough and staying home when you don't feel well may also help to minimize the spread of illness.

For more information about H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> Flu, visit [www.willcountyhealth.org](http://www.willcountyhealth.org), [www.idph.state.il.us](http://www.idph.state.il.us), and [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).