



PIMA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PIMA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS
MONITORING SWINE FLU CASES IN CALIFORNIA, TEXAS AND MEXICO**

Tucson, Arizona – April 24, 2009 – The Pima County Health Department is carefully monitoring the cases of Swine Flu in California, Texas and central Mexico should questions or concerns arise locally. At the present time, there are no suspected or confirmed cases in Pima County or Arizona.

“We have sent a communication to our infection control practitioners at area hospitals asking them to be aware of patients that may arrive at their emergency departments presenting with the identified symptoms and recent travel history to the San Diego or Imperial counties of California, southern Texas to San Antonio, or central Mexico,” said Michelle McDonald, M.D., Chief Medical Officer for the Health Department. “This is only a precautionary measure,” she said.

The Health Department has, over the last few years, developed, exercised and refined a variety of plans in preparation for the possibility of an event, involving any type of hazard, incident or disease, affecting Pima County. Last year’s measles outbreak demonstrates how Health Department staff, local first response agencies, hospitals, area physicians, and the state and federal governments work together to prepare for and respond to a disease outbreak.

In response to that outbreak, the Department conducted 30 special mass immunization clinics providing MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccines to those who were unable to verify their immunization history, or in need of booster shots. More than 18,000 area residents received vaccine. Additionally, case investigations were accomplished through disease surveillance activities involving more than 3,000 individuals.

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, there has been a decline of influenza cases statewide; however, in light of the recent cases, Health Department staff will continue routine disease surveillance activities at the local, state, national and international level.

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The same type of disease prevention practices continue to apply. Everyone is urged to wash their hands frequently, sneeze or cough into their sleeve or elbow, stay home if ill, and should symptoms continue for more than a week, see a health care provider. And remember to get your flu shot when available.

For more information, log onto www.pimahealth.org, or sign up to receive immediate public health alerts from the Health Department via Twitter.

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