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For Immediate Release

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NOVEL H1N1 (SWINE) INFLUENZA UPDATE FOR BUTTE COUNTY

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — Butte County Public Health Department (BCPHD) continues to monitor and test for the Novel H1N1 (Swine) influenza virus. BCPHD has sent 49 specimens to the state lab for testing. Of those, two have been confirmed as Novel H1N1 (Swine) influenza virus and 40 have tested negative for the virus. Six samples are still pending and one sample was insufficient for testing. The two confirmed cases were outpatient cases and both have recovered.

The symptoms of Novel H1N1 influenza are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal influenza and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with the Novel H1N1 influenza.

It is important for the public to know that some people are at higher risk for serious complications of the influenza, and should seek medical care if they become ill with influenza like illness. People at higher risk for complications include:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Adults 65 years of age and older
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- Patients with chronic medical conditions
- Pregnant women
- Persons younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy

Dr. Lundberg stated that in addition to the Novel H1N1 influenza virus that is currently circulating, California is still experiencing regional outbreaks of seasonal influenza. He urged all local residents to take common sense steps to protect themselves from all types of influenza. Influenza is generally spread by direct contact to germs from an infected person, from either uncovered coughs or sneezes or by touching something the infected person has handled. Steps for preventing the spread of the influenza include:

- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap for 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizers when washing is not practical
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the virus from entering the body
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze

NOVEL H1N1 (SWINE) INFLUENZA UPDATE FOR BUTTE COUNTY— 2

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or into your arm, wash hands afterwards
- Stay home when you are sick

Butte County Public Health has an information line at 1-866-444-2405. In addition, helpful links for information about the Novel H1N1 influenza can be found at CDC and California Department of Public Health web sites, which are posted at www.buttecounty.net/publichealth.

For further information contact Dr. Mark Lundberg, Health Officer, phone: (530) 538-7581, fax: (530) 538-2164.

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Butte County Public Health Department

Our Mission: To protect the public through promoting individual, community and environmental health.