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PUBLIC HEALTH ENCOURAGES PUBLIC TO CONTINUE NORMAL DAILY ACTIVITIES

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — Although the World Health Organization (WHO) raised the pandemic alert level yesterday, there are still no suspected cases of swine flu in Butte County. As of this morning, there are 109 confirmed cases throughout the nation, fourteen of them in California residents, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Butte County Public Health continues to actively look for swine flu cases in our county through screening interviews and specimen collections. "Out of the hundreds of specimens going to the state lab for testing, only 29 probable cases have been identified statewide. This figure demonstrates that there are other respiratory illnesses circulating," states Mark Lundberg, M.D. Butte County Health Officer.

What does this mean for Butte County residents? Lundberg suggests that people continue to take everyday steps to protect their health:

- If you get sick with flu, it is recommended that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- If you are sick you may want to consult with your healthcare provider.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth; germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting adequate rest and exercise.
- Public Health is not currently advising individuals to wear face masks while going about daily activities.

Public Health does recognize the community concern regarding testing for this illness. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed as testing will be

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prioritized based on CDC recommendations, which include exposure risk and hospitalization for influenza like illness. If you have returned from Mexico within 7 days of the start of your symptoms, cared for household members with recent travel history to Mexico, or have had contact with a confirmed case of swine flu please call your health care provider or Butte County Public Health Department at (530) 891-2732.

Public Health would like to emphasize however; that if you have just returned from out-of-country travel and you are healthy with no flu-like symptoms, there is no reason why you should not go to work or school. For information, please feel free to call our Public Health Information line at 1-866-444-2405. Public Health has posted helpful links to swine flu information at CDC and California Department of Public Health web sites on its own web site www.buttecounty.net/publichealth.

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Butte County Public Health Department

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