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UPDATE ON H1N1

The U.S. Department of Energy has been informed by the CDC and the Maryland Department of Health (DHMH) that 3 "probable" 2009 H1N1 influenza (swine flu) cases identified within the State of Maryland and announced on April 29, 2009 were associated with and secondarily infected by a DOE employee. The DOE employee is presumed to have been exposed while on travel to an area affected by the outbreak. None of the affected individuals have required hospitalization and are expected to make a full and uneventful recovery. The DOE employee has fully recovered and has returned-to-work without restriction. This is consistent with the recommendations of the CDC. One additional DOE employee who was exposed to the first employee had experienced flu like illness and has tested negative for the 2009 H1N1 influenza. This employee has not returned to work for precautionary purposes and will remain out of the workplace for the full seven days recommended by the CDC for suspected cases. The DOE's Chief Medical Officer, in conjunction with experts from the CDC and the DHMH, has assessed potential exposures in the workplace by tracing the employees' contacts at DOE.

Nevertheless, DOE is taking the appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of additional cases within the DOE Complex associated with the global spread of the viral infection. Upon recognition of the global outbreak, DOE activated its Biological Event Monitoring Team (BEMT), a specialized group established of medical, epidemiological, and administrative personnel responsible for facilitating the DOE response to pandemic and other infectious biological events. The BEMT has been meeting on a daily basis to ascertain the potential risks to DOE employees throughout the DOE Complex and has recommended a variety of precautionary measures consistent with the recommendations of the CDC. In addition, the BEMT is maintaining daily communications with the DHMH and other public health entities who are available to support the needs of both DOE employees and the general public. As with any influenza, DOE employees and their families are being advised to exercise precautionary measures to avoid becoming ill or spreading an illness to others. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- 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 are spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.

For Additional Information:

- CDC 2009 H1N1 influenza (swine flu) home page:
<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/whatsnew.htm>
- World Health Organization 2009 H1N1 influenza (swine flu) home page:
<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

- OSHA's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for Influenza Pandemic:
http://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html
- DHS' National Strategy for Pandemic Flu and associated documents:
http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial_0760.shtm