

Delaware General Health District

Dedicated to your health

NEWS RELEASE

HEALTH DISTRICT, EMERGENCY RESPONDERS REVIEW SURGE PLANS

P.O. Box 570 1-3 W. Winter St. Delaware OH 43015
740-368-1700 FAX 740-368-1736 Web Site: www.delawarehealth.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact Jesse Carter, public information officer, at 740-203-2085.

DELAWARE, Oh., April 30, 2009 – Delaware County’s emergency responders are working to prepare for a possible surge because of the H₁N₁ Influenza (Swine Flu) situation.

The World Health Organization has elevated its Pandemic Alert level to Phase 5, an indication that a pandemic is imminent. WHO is reporting 148 confirmed cases in nine countries. Ohio still has just one confirmed case, in Lorain County.

Delaware General Health District staff members met with representatives of the Delaware County Emergency Medical Service, the Delaware County Emergency Management Agency, and the Delaware County Fire Chiefs Association Wednesday. They reviewed contingency plans to deal with a major increase in EMS runs and other emergency responses. The plans include adjusting staffing and geographical service zones and sharing resources among emergency responders.

“All of this is being done so that Delaware County residents get the most prompt and appropriate emergency response possible in case we experience an extraordinary increase in medical runs,” said Berlin Township Fire Chief Bill Bechstein, President of the Delaware County Fire Chiefs Association.

The Health District has activated its Incident Command System to coordinate the H₁N₁ flu response throughout Delaware County, with Personal Health Director Joan Bowe R.N. presently in command. The Health District also is monitoring the latest information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ohio Department of Health.

Everyone needs to observe the **universal precautions against the spread of flu:**

- **Stay home if you are sick, and keep sick children home from school, daycare, and activities.**
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes to keep germs from spreading to others.**
- **Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap to eliminate germs.**

Residents can get the latest local advisories from the Health District web site, www.delawarehealth.org, and Information Line, 740-203-2015.