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State Surgeon General

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 22, 2009

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*NEWS RELEASE*

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – H1N1 SWINE FLU STATUS REPORT**

**ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA** – St. Johns County Health Department continues to monitor the current flu situation in our community and, as always, continues to follow the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**-NEW INFORMATION-**

St. Johns County Health Department opened its “H1N1 Information Call Center” (904-825-5055) to complement the Department of Health’s “Florida Flu Information Line”. Residents can now call this center for up-to-date local information on the 2009 H1N1 Swine Flu as well as vaccine availability.

St. Johns County Health Department began receiving allotments of H1N1 Swine Influenza vaccine at the beginning of October. To date, approximately 1,000 doses of 2009 H1N1 Swine Flu vaccine have been received and have been distributed to local health care providers and first responders. Additional allotments of vaccine are anticipated to arrive throughout the coming weeks. Eventually, everyone who wants to be vaccinated will be able to get the vaccine.

As more vaccine becomes available, we will continue following the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to vaccinate certain priority groups which include:

- Pregnant women
- Individuals who live with or provide care for infants aged 6 months or younger (e.g., parents, siblings, and daycare providers)
- Health-care and emergency medical services personnel
- Individuals aged 6 months to 24 years of age
- Persons aged 25 to 64 years who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications

On Monday, August 24th, Florida Department of Health launched a toll-free number to provide public health information and updates on H1N1 Swine Flu. The Florida Flu Information Line can now be reached at **1-877-352-3581**. Live operators are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EDT, while pre-recorded information is available anytime outside those hours. Information is available in English, Spanish and Creole.

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***Our Mission:** Promote, protect and improve the health of all people in Florida.*

***Our Vision:** A healthier future for the people of Florida.*

***Our Values:** - Integrity; Commitment to Service; Respect; Excellence; Accountability; Teamwork; Empowerment –*



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## **-CURRENT SITUATION-**

The Florida Department of Health/St. Johns County Health Department continues its enhanced surveillance and outreach to physicians, hospitals, and other health care professionals. The surveillance system, consisting of sentinel physicians reporting influenza activity, Florida Department of Health laboratories receiving specimens from physicians and hospitals, and its ability to monitor emergency room cases, is fully operational. The Florida Department of Health/St. Johns County Health Department has activated its response plan and is ready to respond, if needed.

Currently, the Health Department is working with St. Johns County Administration, the Sheriff's Office, County Emergency Management, Fire Rescue, the School District, and Flagler Hospital to ensure that our community is well prepared.

## **-PRECAUTIONS-**

**Dr. Dawn Allicock, the Director of the St. Johns County Health Department, offers the following tips to avoid spreading the flu:**

- Cough/sneeze into your elbow, sleeve, or a disposable tissue.
- Wash your hands well and often.
- Stay home if you are sick (at least 24 hours after fever is gone).
- Take time to get vaccinated!
- Individuals experiencing cough, fever, and fatigue, possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting should contact their health care provider.

For more information, please visit the St. Johns County Health Department website ([www.StJohnsCHD.org](http://www.StJohnsCHD.org)). Additional information can be accessed through the Florida Flu Information Line, the Florida Department of Health website ([www.MyFluSafety.com](http://www.MyFluSafety.com)), and the CDC's website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)).

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