

# The Pump Handle



"I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's parish, on the evening of Thursday, 7th September, and represented the above circumstances to them. In consequence of what I said, the handle of the pump was removed on the following day."

John Snow, 1855

## October 2009 Topics

- Influenza H1N1 Update
- Be Food Safe During the Holiday Season
- *Clostridium perfringens* Outbreak in North Dakota
- Confirmed Case of *Vibrio Parahaemolyticus* in North Dakota
- HIV Prevention, STD and Viral Hepatitis Supplies Order Form



## Influenza H1N1 Update

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) continues to monitor influenza infections in the state. As of Nov. 3, 2009, 2,475 laboratory identified influenza cases had been reported from 49 counties. Of the 2,475 cases, 368 have been confirmed as 2009 H1N1 influenza cases. The median age of all reported influenza cases is 13.12 years (2009 H1N1 median age is 15.25 years), and the ages have ranged from 1 week to 87 years. Of the 2,475 influenza reports, 1,134 reports included hospitalization data, of which 89 cases required hospitalization. One H1N1 influenza-related death has been reported in North Dakota. The individual was a man older than 60 with underlying health conditions.

2009 Influenza H1N1 Confirmed Case Summary					
Total Cases	2,475	Age Information		Influenza Virus Strains	
		Range	Cases	Type	Cases
Gender		<10	914	A, Novel H1N1	368
Female	1241	10-19	856	A, H1	0
Male	1233	20-29	318	A, H3	1
		30-39	138	A, Unspecified	2078
Hospitalized	89	40-49	115	B	19
		50-59	100	Unknown	9
Deaths	1	60 and over	34	Total	2,475

The NDDoH has activated a toll-free influenza hotline for people to call if they have questions about influenza. The hotline cannot provide medical advice to callers. For that information, people should call their physicians. The number to call is 1.866.207.2880. The hotline is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Standard Time. Information about influenza also is available on the Department of Health's influenza website at [www.ndflu.com](http://www.ndflu.com).

### **Influenza Website**

The NDDoH influenza website has information regarding both seasonal and H1N1 influenza. Some topics on the website include:

- North Dakota influenza statistics.
- Fact sheets and other influenza materials.
- Educational material order forms.
- Flu shot clinic locator.
- Vaccine information.
- Testing and reporting information.

The 2009-2010 Influenza Campaign On-Line Reporting Site also is found on the NDDoH influenza website. At this site, [www.ndflu.com/Reporting/OnLineReporting.aspx](http://www.ndflu.com/Reporting/OnLineReporting.aspx), reports are available for school absenteeism and outbreaks and also influenza and influenza-like-illness outbreak reports for long term care and other types of institutions.

Check out the NDDoH website at [www.ndflu.com](http://www.ndflu.com) for the latest information about influenza. If you have additional questions, please contact the NDDoH at 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180.

### **H1N1 Vaccine Update**

The NDDoH continues to receive weekly allocations of H1N1 vaccine. Providers and clinics through out North Dakota will continue to receive H1N1 vaccine as it becomes available in North Dakota.

Currently the NDDoH is recommending vaccinating the following priority groups with current doses of H1N1 vaccine:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months
- Health-care and emergency medical services personnel
- All people ages 6 months through 18 years

Each provider in North Dakota has the responsibility to prioritize these groups based on the availability of the H1N1 vaccine locally. If vaccine supplies are limited, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that children ages 6 months through 4 years and children 5 through 18 years of age with a chronic medical condition be the highest priority for vaccination.

The NDDoH has developed a frequently asked questions and answers document regarding the 2009 H1N1 vaccine and it is available at [www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/H1N1\\_documents.aspx](http://www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/H1N1_documents.aspx). Questions and answers are available for general questions about the H1N1 vaccine, flumist vaccine, vaccine safety, vaccination storage and handling, billing and vaccination and pregnancy.

For more information about H1N1 vaccine, please visit [www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/](http://www.ndflu.com/Vaccine/) or call the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378. Questions regarding laboratory testing may be directed to the Division of Laboratory Services at 701.328.6272.



### **Be Food Safe During the Holiday Season**

The holiday season is quickly approaching. You can help educate the public on food safety this upcoming holiday season with a few simple tips (source: [www.ndhealth.gov/FoodLodging/](http://www.ndhealth.gov/FoodLodging/)):

- Store and prepare food safely.
  - Refrigerate or freeze perishable food within four hours of shopping or preparing.
  - Find separate preparation areas in the work space for raw and cooked food.
  - Wash hands, cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and work surfaces frequently with hot, soapy water.
  - Avoid licking the spoon or the mixing bowl if the batter contains uncooked eggs.
- Cook food to safe internal temperatures.
  - Use a food thermometer to check internal temperatures of all food. All poultry should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
  - Every part of the turkey should reach 165 degrees F.
  - Stuffing should reach 165 degrees F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish.
- Keep food out of the “danger zone.”
  - Keep hot food at or above 135 degrees F. Place cooked food in chafing dishes, preheated steam tables, warming trays and/or slow cookers.
  - Keep cold food such as pumpkin pie, eggnog, cheesecake, cream pies and cakes with whipped-cream or cream-cheese frostings at or below 41 degrees F.
  - Discard food left out at room temperature for more than four hours.
- Leftovers should be refrigerated in shallow containers within four hours.
  - Use leftover turkey and stuffing within three to four days; gravy within one to two days; or freeze these foods.
  - Reheat thoroughly (165 degrees F) until hot and steaming.

If a foodborne outbreak (two or more people ill with similar symptoms after consuming a common food) is suspected, it is important to notify the NDDoH or local public health unit as soon as possible so that exposed individuals, as well as the source and the cause of the illness, can be identified rapidly. Stool samples should be collected if a foodborne illness is suspected.

Call NDDoH at 800.472.2180 to report a suspected foodborne outbreak.



### **Clostridium perfringens Outbreak in North Dakota**

On October 23, 2009, the NDDoH received complaints of illness after attending a customer appreciation supper in Walsh County.

It was estimated that more than 300 individuals were served dinner at this event. The NDDoH sent questionnaires to guests that received invitations, but not all guests of the event received an invitation. Over 250 questionnaires were mailed to guests of the event. As of Nov. 3, 44 questionnaires have been received by the NDDoH, with 24 (58%) of individuals reporting they became ill. Common symptoms reported included diarrhea, nausea and stomach cramps. The incubation period ranged from four to 21 hours (median 10 hours) and the duration of illness ranged from five to 60 hours (median 15.5 hours).

Two individuals attending the event submitted stool specimens to the NDDoH and they tested positive for *Clostridium perfringens* enterotoxin type A. *C. perfringens* produces toxins that cause a diarrheal illness. This type of intoxication is usually associated with inadequately heated or reheated meats, stews, gravies made of beef, turkey or chicken.

This event was catered by an individual who reported using a licensed facility, but the individual was not licensed for private catering. The meal items served at the event included roast beef, roast pork, corn, coleslaw, brownies, mashed potatoes and gravy. An environmental assessment of the food preparation yielded possible areas where temperature abuse may have occurred.

The outbreak is still under investigation. If you would like to report a foodborne illness or have questions about foodborne illness, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.



### **Confirmed Case of Vibrio Parahaemolyticus in North Dakota**

The NDDoH investigated a confirmed case of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in North Dakota in September 2009.

*V. parahaemolyticus* infections are usually characterized by watery diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever and headache. Incubation period usually occurs between 12 to 24 hours and illness may last one to seven days. These organisms are commonly associated with fish and shellfish. The confirmed case in North Dakota had exposure to an oyster bar or restaurant where they consumed raw fish or seafood.

For more information about *V. parahaemolyticus*, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.



### **HIV Prevention, STD and Viral Hepatitis Supplies Order Form**

The HIV prevention, STD and viral hepatitis programs supplies and information order form is now located on the NDDoH Viral Hepatitis and STD websites, [www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Hepatitis/](http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Hepatitis/) or [www.ndhealth.gov/STD/default](http://www.ndhealth.gov/STD/default). Please print

off the order form from either website and mail it to the Division of Disease Control or fax it to RJ Jansen at 701.328.2499.

Materials available on the order form include HIV/AIDS, STD prevention and viral hepatitis brochures, fact sheets, forms, various posters, STD prevention supplies and HIV rapid test supplies. These materials are available to all North Dakota health-care providers.

If you have questions about the order form, please contact the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.

*Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Abbi Pierce, Michelle Feist, Julie Wagendorf, Kirby Kruger, Tracy Miller and Sarah Weninger. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Sarah Weninger of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2366 or by email at [sweninger@nd.gov](mailto:sweninger@nd.gov).*

*The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website [www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html](http://www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html).*



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