



Bellmawr Fire Department
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District 3

Bellmawr's Office of Emergency Management Alert

Public and Health Care Provider Hotline Opened—

The NJ Department of Health opened a toll-free, 24-hour hotline to answer questions from the general public and New Jersey health care providers.

The hotline number is **1-866-321-9571** and is open as of today.

"We understand that New Jersey residents are concerned about the outbreak of swine flu and will have many questions on how they can protect themselves and their family," said Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard. "The situation will continue to evolve and the Department is offering the call center for the general public and health care providers."

"There is good information on our website (nj.gov/health) regarding swine flu and we recommend that people take the time to review that information. But for those people who have questions, we have opened up an information line.

New Jersey continues to take steps to prepare if the outbreak widens. The Department enhanced its surveillance activities to identify potential cases of swine flu, particularly in individuals who have traveled to infected areas in California and Mexico or have had contact with those who have traveled.

The state received 300,000 courses of antiviral medications including Tamiflu from the Strategic National Stockpile to add to its 800,000 courses previously purchased. Tamiflu is a medication available by prescription through physicians and is effective in reducing the symptoms and length of influenza if taken within 48 hours of developing symptoms.

"We cannot emphasize enough that there are effective methods of prevention that everyone should continue to follow," said Commissioner Howard. "Good hygiene habits such as washing your hands frequently and thoroughly will greatly reduce the chance of getting sick. Also, people should be covering coughs and sneezes. Most important, if you are sick, stay home from work or school."

Swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that causes regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the

past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

For more information on swine flu, visit www.cdc.gov/swineflu <<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>> or www.nj.gov/health.