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PRESS RELEASE

County Residents Encouraged to Get Vaccinated

LaPorte County, IN (January 6, 2009) - The LaPorte County Health Department is encouraging its residents to get vaccinated with the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine.

“We now have a substantial supply of vaccine available for our county residents,” said Paul Trost, Administrator of the county health department. “We are encouraging everyone to get vaccinated, especially since we were all gathered together this holiday season, and now we’re back at school and in our offices... possibly carrying viruses back to those locations.”

County health officials realize that the holidays can be a time of sharing...even sharing viruses and other germs. Trost said, “All health practitioners have been offering this information: Prevent the spread of influenza by washing your hands, covering your cough, and staying home away from others if you are sick. These safety precautions remain valid and will continue to be important over the coming months. However, the best way to prevent the spread of the 2009 H1N1 flu is to get vaccinated.”

The LaPorte County Health Department offers a FREE Walk-In Clinic for the H1N1 vaccine every Wednesday from 9am until 7 pm at both the LaPorte and Michigan City offices.

The Indiana State Department of Health stated that the H1N1 vaccine is also available at local pharmacies including Kroger and Walgreens. Pharmacies can charge a fee of up to \$19.59 to administer the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine. Seasonal flu vaccines are available at some pharmacies as well as from physicians.

“It is very important the residents of our county do not get apathetic about the H1N1 flu,” said Trost. “We have been presented with a great opportunity to get more of our residents vaccinated before a possible third wave of this pandemic influenza. Dr. Judy Monroe, state health commissioner, said in a release yesterday that H1N1 is estimated to have caused about 10,000 deaths throughout the U.S. since last April and continues to be the predominant influenza virus circulating today. There is some concern by the CDC and the Indiana State Department of Health that the H1N1 influenza may “crowd out” seasonal flu this year, so there is a strong encouragement from all health professionals for us all to get both the H1N1 and the seasonal flu vaccines as soon as possible.”

Trost warns that just because you had influenza-like illness or were told you had the flu by a doctor, you should still get the vaccine unless you received confirmation from a laboratory that you had 2009 H1N1 influenza.

“Let’s make this a healthy new year by encouraging all our family and friends to get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine,” said Trost.

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Questions about the content of this press release should be directed to the LaPorte County Health Department using above contact information. Technical questions about the press release (PDF) received via email should be directed to JK Enterprises at jkostielneuy@csinet.net.