



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: **Dr. Stan Reedy,** Medical Director, Washtenaw County Public Health Department  
E-mail: reedys@ewashtenaw.org  
Phone: (734) 544-3058

**Gray R. Reynolds,** Communications Manager/PIO, Washtenaw County Public Health Department  
E-mail: reynoldsg@ewashtenaw.org  
Phone: (734) 544-3091

**WASHTENAW COUNTY FLU SEASON OFFICIALLY BEGINS**  
**First Culture-Confirmed Case of Influenza Discovered Locally**

YPSILANTI, Mich., December 14, 2007—Washtenaw County Public Health Department officials today announced that a 26-year-old Milan man has contracted the County’s first culture-confirmed case of flu for the 2007-2008 season. Test results indicate the man was infected with the Influenza B strain, the milder form of the flu. The man was not hospitalized as a result of the illness and is recovering.

The Michigan Department of Community Health reported on December 4 that the state’s first culture-confirmed influenza case appeared in a 9-year-old child in Marquette County. Based on MDCH reports, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta recently upgraded Michigan’s flu activity from “No Activity” to “Sporadic,” the lowest of five influenza activity categories the federal government tracks.

The CDC reports the nation’s influenza vaccine manufacturers have distributed 103 million doses of influenza vaccine as of November 2, an amount that represents more doses than have ever previously been distributed at this date. CDC officials believe that most influenza vaccine providers currently have supplies sufficient for meeting demand. As many as 132 million total doses of vaccine could be produced by the end of the 2007-2008 flu season, according to vaccine manufacturers. During the 2006-2007 season, manufacturers distributed 102.5 million doses to providers.

“We’re very pleased that flu vaccine is so readily available this year,” said Dr. Stan Reedy, Medical Director, Washtenaw County Public Health Department. “Now that we have evidence of flu circulating in Washtenaw County, it is imperative that those individuals who have not done so already obtain a flu shot to protect themselves for the season. The flu vaccine builds immunity in 10-14 days, which will ensure protection before the flu season peaks, which in Michigan is usually during late January through February.

Fax: (734) 544-6706  
Communicable Disease

Fax: (734) 544-6704  
Administration

Fax: (734) 544-6705  
Public Health

HEARING IMPAIRED: (734) 994-1733



WEB ADDRESSES: <http://www.ewashtenaw.org>

<http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>

“Those in high-risk groups need to be particularly careful about exposure to flu viruses,” Reedy said. “Flu vaccine is especially recommended for those 50 and older, those with chronic illnesses, pregnant women, children age 6 months-to-5 years, healthcare workers, and household contacts and caregivers of high-risk persons. Approximately 218 million Americans fall into this group.”

Reedy also encouraged individuals to practice good hygiene and take the following steps to stop the spread of influenza:

- **C**over your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use your arm, not your hands.
- **O**ptimize your immune system with adequate exercise, sleep and nutrition.
- **V**accinate when shots are available; train your body to fight the flu.
- **E**very time you use a tissue, throw it in the trash, and then wash your hands.
- **R**emember not to share lip balms, eating utensils, cups, etc.

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- **W**ash your hands often and well. Scrub with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- **A**void close contact with sick people.
- **S**tay at home when you are sick and infectious to others.
- **H**ave on hand an alcohol-based sanitizer for times when you can't wash with soap and warm water.

National statistics provided by MDCH show that each year from 5-to-20 percent of people in the United States get the flu, 36,000 people die from the flu and more than 200,000 are hospitalized with complications from the flu.

The Washtenaw County Public Health Department offers flu shots for reduced prices. Appointments for flu shots may be scheduled by phone at (734) 544-6770. For more information, visit the Health Department's flu clinic website at: [http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public\\_health/ph\\_fluclinics.html](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/ph_fluclinics.html)

For faster service, print off and fill out the Influenza Vaccine Consent form before coming to the office: [http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public\\_health/phcontent/07\\_flu\\_form.pdf](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/phcontent/07_flu_form.pdf)

A fact sheet about the flu shot vaccine is available at:

[http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public\\_health/phcontent/flu\\_vis\\_07-08.pdf](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/phcontent/flu_vis_07-08.pdf)

## **Washtenaw County Public Health Department**

The Washtenaw County Public Health Department works locally to prevent disease, promote health, prolong life, and protect communities. One of 45 Local Health Departments in Michigan, the Washtenaw County Public Health Department shares a two-century-old national public mission to enhance sanitary conditions, protect the environment, prevent and control disease, and promote healthy lifestyles—objectives that have resulted in improved quality of life and increased life expectancy for our nation's citizens. During 2008, the Washtenaw County Public Health Department will be placing a special focus on promoting social justice by reducing inequalities affecting the health of all in Washtenaw County. Learn more about the Health Department at [www.ewashtenaw.org](http://www.ewashtenaw.org).

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