



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH  
*Director*

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
*Governor*

August 25, 2009

Dear Concerned Californian:

The fall flu season is quickly approaching and this year we know it will be different. While none of us can predict the course of the novel H1N1 influenza outbreak, it has the potential to sicken millions of people in our state in the months ahead; as many as 1 in 4 Californians may be affected.

All of us must prepare for the disruptions the novel H1N1 influenza virus may have on our daily lives. I ask for your support and assistance in educating Californians about the threat posed by H1N1 and the common sense steps we all should be taking to lessen its impact.

In partnership with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health officers in our state, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has developed a wide range of informational material about the novel H1N1 influenza virus.

On CDPH's Web site you will find resources including:

- prevention tips;
- frequently asked questions and answers;
- information about the toll free hotline **(1-888-865-0564)** for Californians who have questions about the novel H1N1 influenza virus;
- informational posters and brochures;
- data about the status of the novel H1N1 influenza outbreak in California; and
- the latest information about the development and distribution of a vaccine.

In addition to general information, the Web site also includes specific guidance for schools, employers, travelers, laboratories, health care professionals, and others.

I encourage you to use and link to the resources on the CDPH Web site and share this information with your constituents as appropriate.

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All Californians must be partners in our effort to prepare for a widespread outbreak – parents must plan to care for their ill children at home and for potential school closures; health care providers must be prepared with necessary supplies and staffing plans; businesses must prepare for the possibility that large numbers of employees could be sick at the same time.

Perhaps most important, everyone should recognize the critical need to take basic preventive steps very seriously this year. Frequent hand washing is a must. Covering coughs and sneezes is essential. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective and may be used at home, school, and work. Individuals must stay home when they are sick and take care not to spread their illness in the workplace, school, or community.

Together, I am confident California will meet the challenge posed by the novel H1N1 influenza virus.

I appreciate your help and support in this effort. Do not hesitate to contact CDPH if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark B. Horton". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Mark B Horton, MD, MSPH  
Director