

Pandemic Flu Update

Current Developments

On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) raised the worldwide pandemic alert level to [Phase 6](#) in response to the ongoing global spread of the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. A Phase 6 designation indicates that a global pandemic is underway.

More than 70 countries are now reporting cases of human infection with novel H1N1 flu. This number has been increasing over the past few weeks, but many of the cases reportedly had links to travel or were localized outbreaks without community spread. The WHO designation of a pandemic alert Phase 6 reflects the fact that there are now ongoing community level outbreaks in multiple parts of world.

Including cases in Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties.

WHO's decision to raise the pandemic alert level to Phase 6 is a reflection of the spread of the virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus.

Shared Responsibility

Individuals have an important role in protecting themselves and their families.

- Stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available.
- Everyone should take these everyday steps to protect your health and lessen the spread of this new virus:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you are sick with a flu-like illness, stay home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
 - Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

Vaccine

Vaccines are a very important part of a response to pandemic influenza and the U.S. Government is aggressively taking early steps in the process to manufacture a novel H1N1 vaccine, working closely with manufacturers. CDC has isolated the new H1N1 virus, made a candidate vaccine virus that can be used to create vaccine, and has provided this virus to industry so they can begin scaling up for production of a vaccine, if necessary. Making vaccine is a long multi-step process requiring several months to complete.

Community Notes

We will continue to monitor our own community and information coming out of the CDC.

It is important to know that recommended precautions have not changed.

As a department we have prepared our inventory as appropriate and will continue to stay vigilant as we move into the coming months

For questions or concerns please feel free to contact the

The Villages Public Safety Department at 352-205-8280 **or** you may contact the CDC directly with your questions at 1-800-232-6348