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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **KINGS COUNTY REPORTS INCREASED INFLUENZA A (H1N1) ACTIVITY**

Hanford, CA – Kings County Public Health officials have confirmed that a middle-aged woman in Kings County has died this past weekend after being hospitalized with the Influenza A (H1N1) virus. This case marks the third confirmed H1N1 death in the community. Only flu cases that are in persons less than 65 years old, which are severe enough to require hospitalization in an ICU or which result in death are reportable to the public health department. Of the three deaths thus far, two have been previously healthy individuals.

“It is with regret that I must inform the community of these deaths from influenza,” stated Kings County Health Officer Dr. Michael Mac Lean. “We are reminded how serious this illness can be, and encourage the community to seek vaccination and exercise safety precautions to protect themselves against the flu.”

Annual vaccination is the most important step in protecting against the flu, and it is not too late to benefit from receiving a vaccination this season. The three individuals who have passed away from flu related illness this season did not obtain vaccinations against the flu this year. The 2013-2014 flu vaccination includes the strains that are most common in the season and this year’s vaccine is a good match for the strain of flu that is causing illness this year. Kings County health officials remind residents that vaccination is recommended for all individuals over the age of six months, regardless of health status.

Residents should contact their health providers for information regarding flu vaccination. Vaccination may also be available at physician’s offices, clinics, and pharmacies. The Kings County Department of Public Health located in Building 3, at 330 Campus Drive,

Hanford also offers flu vaccination. The clinic is open Monday through Friday from 8:00-11:00 am and from 1:00-4:00 pm. If you have any questions about the flu vaccine contact your health care provider or the Kings County Department of Public Health at (559) 584-1401.

In addition to obtaining a vaccination, it is also important the individuals exercise the three “C’s” of disease prevention to prevent the spread of germs:

1. **Cover your cough:** cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash immediately after using.
2. **Clean your hands:** wash hands often with soap and water.
3. **Confine sick individuals at home:** limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. CDC recommends that individuals stay home if sick, and remain there for at least 24 hours after fever is gone except to obtain medical care or other necessities.

For more information regarding seasonal influenza please visit the following sites:

- Kings County Department of Public Health, [www.countyofkings.com/Health/index.html](http://www.countyofkings.com/Health/index.html)
- California Department of Public Health, [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)
- Flu.gov, [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)