



**ASHES Member Advisory:
Swine Influenza
A Message to ASHES Members
all Healthcare Environmental Services Professionals
April 28, 2009**

On April 26, 2009, the CDC issued Key Facts About Swine Influenza as well as Interim Guidance for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in a Healthcare Setting.

ASHES recommends reading the information posted on the CDC website (links included in this advisory) and getting actively engaged in discussions with your Infection Preventionist in preparation for any hospitalizations that may occur in your facility.

It is vital that all environmental services professionals in collaboration with their IP:

- Recommended disinfectant use;
- Discuss the issues and brief front line employees to reinforce transmission modes and self protection;
- Stress strict adherence to posted isolation protocols and frequent hand hygiene;
- Importance of self monitoring and reporting violations of stated protocols;
- Ensure front line workers can demonstrate understanding of the differences between standard and transmission based (contact, airborne and droplet) precautions and their ability to demonstrate the correct order of steps when donning and removing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including fit testing and use of respirators;
- Reinforce the importance of proper cleaning technique including but not limited to:
 - Keeping gloved hands away from the face
 - Cleaning and disinfecting in a path from cleanest to dirtiest
 - Do not re-dip cleaning cloths into buckets of cleaning/disinfecting solutions
 - Frequent use of fresh cleaning cloths and changing gloves
 - Strict attention to high touch areas
 - Use microfiber technology if possible
- Emergency readiness and preparation for potential surge in hospitalizations that may result in increased waste accumulation, storage, and disposal.

U.S. Human Cases of Swine Flu Infection (As of April 28, 2009 11:00 AM ET) <i>Source: CDC Website</i>	
State	# of laboratory confirmed cases
California	10 cases
Kansas	2 cases
New York City	45 cases
Ohio	1 case
Texas	6 cases
TOTAL COUNT	64 cases

The CDC has also published information the public can practice to protect against this flu:

- 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 that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

For questions or comments, contact: Patti Costello at 312-422-3862 or by e-mail at ashes@aha.org

Excerpts from CDC guidelines

CDC Guidelines	Recommendation
<p>Questions & Answers: Key Facts about Swine Influenza (Swine Flu)</p>	<p>What is Swine Influenza? Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses cause high levels of illness and low death rates in pigs. Swine influenza viruses may circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans. The classical swine flu virus (an influenza type A H1N1 virus) was first isolated from a pig in 1930.</p> <p>How many swine flu viruses are there? Like all influenza viruses, swine flu viruses change constantly. Pigs can be infected by avian influenza and human influenza viruses as well as swine influenza viruses. When influenza viruses from different species infect pigs, the viruses can reassort (i.e. swap genes) and new viruses that are a mix of swine, human and/or avian influenza viruses can emerge. Over the years, different variations of swine flu viruses have emerged. At this time, there are four main influenza type A virus subtypes that have been isolated in pigs: H1N1, H1N2, H3N2, and H3N1. However, most of the recently isolated influenza viruses from pigs have been H1N1 viruses.</p>
<p>Interim Guidance for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in a Healthcare Setting</p>	<p><u>Standard, Droplet and Contact precautions should be used</u> for all patient care activities, and maintained for 7 days after illness onset or until symptoms have resolved. Maintain adherence to <u>hand hygiene by washing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer</u> immediately after removing gloves and other equipment and after any contact with respiratory secretions.</p> <p>Routine cleaning and disinfection strategies used during influenza seasons can be applied to the environmental management of swine influenza. More information can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_environmentinfection.html.</p> <p>Masks and respirators: Until additional, specific information is available regarding the behavior of this swine influenza A (H1N1), the guidance in the October 2006 "Interim Guidance on Planning for the Use of Surgical Masks and Respirators in Healthcare Settings during an Influenza Pandemic" http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/healthcare/maskguidancehc.html should be used. These interim recommendations will be updated as additional information becomes available.</p> <p>Interim recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel engaged in aerosol generating activities (e.g., collection of clinical specimens, endotracheal intubation, nebulizer treatment, bronchoscopy, and resuscitation involving emergency intubation or cardiac pulmonary resuscitation) for suspected or confirmed swine influenza A (H1N1) cases should wear a fit-tested disposable N95 respirator.* • Pending clarification of transmission patterns for this virus, personnel providing direct patient care for suspected or confirmed swine influenza A (H1N1) cases should wear a fit-tested disposable N95 respirator when entering the patient room. <p>*Respirator use should be in the context of a complete respiratory protection program in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Information on respiratory protection programs and fit test procedures can be accessed at www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/respiratory. Staff should be medically cleared, fit-tested, and trained for respirator use, including: proper fit-testing and use of respirators, safe removal and disposal, and medical contraindications to respirator use.</p>

Resources from the CDC

- Swine Flu: General Information page
http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general_info.htm
- CDC: Key Facts about Swine Influenza (Swine Flu)
http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key_facts.htm
- CDC: Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use in Certain Community Settings Where Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Transmission Has Been Detected, April 27, 2009 011:00AM ET
<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/masks.htm>
- CDC: Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette in Healthcare Settings
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm>
- CDC: Additional information on N95 respirators and other types of respirators may be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/factsheets/respfact.html>, and at www.fda.gov/cdrh/ppe/masksrespirators.html.
- CDC: Guideline for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities, 2003 (Sections E, G, I)
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_environmentinfection.html
- [Swine Flu Video Podcast](#) April 25, 2009
Dr. Joe Bresee, with the CDC Influenza Division, describes swine flu - its signs and symptoms, how it's transmitted, medicines to treat it, steps people can take to protect themselves from it, and what people should do if they become ill.
- CDC Twitter link: <http://twitter.com/cdcemergency>

Resources from ASHES

- **In Focus** – Members Only Resource
Section on [Disaster Readiness](#), [Infection Control and Prevention](#), [Pandemic Flu](#).
- [Trends in Infection Control](#) - Zeroing in on infection prevention and control
- **Practice Guidance for Healthcare Environmental Cleaning**
This publication, prepared by the ASHES and edited by infection control professionals, contains the requirements for environmental cleaning in healthcare facilities. Targeted for directors and managers of healthcare environmental services, this book is designed to be used as a resource for implementing proper cleaning techniques and procedures based on guidelines by the CDC, OSHA, and other government agencies. Professionals new to the industry and those looking to revamp their policies and procedures manuals should be particularly interested in this publication.
Item Number: 057034, Member Price: \$169, Non-Member Price: \$269
Order via phone at 800-242-2626, fax in an order [form](#) to 866-516-5817.
- **Recommended Practice Series #2: Disaster Readiness & Recovery**
Environmental services departments are essential for maintaining hospital operations during an emergency situation. With that in mind, ASHES has developed a new recommended practice document that provides multi disciplinary guidance, particularly for environmental services departments on issues and concerns that arise during all phases of a disaster. The tool can be used as a facility-wide.

Item Number: 057800, Member Price \$99 each, Non Member Price \$199 Each
Order via phone at 800-242-2626, fax in an order [form](#) to 866-516-5817

US Government

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
www.epa.gov
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
www.fda.gov
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
<http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
www.osha.gov
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
www.cdc.gov/niosh/