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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coconino County Health Department Confirms Additional H1N1 Case

Coconino County Health Department (CCHD) officials reported today the second confirmed H1N1 (swine) flu case in Coconino County. The individual, a resident of the Navajo Nation, has recovered from the illness.

“This additional confirmed case supports our belief that H1N1 is present in our communities. Because this flu in most cases has been relatively mild, many individuals that may have had the illness were not sick enough to visit a doctor and weren't tested for the disease. Since we know that this new illness is here and still spreading, and we are still seeing some seasonal flu, it is important to continue to practice good hygiene to help prevent the spread of the illness,” said Barbara Worgess, CCHD Director.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are 7,927 probable and confirmed cases of H1N1 (swine) flu reported in the U.S. in 47 states and the District of Columbia, with at least 11 deaths. Officials believe thousands more -- at least 100,000 in the U.S. -- have had the virus.

The Arizona Department of Health Services is reporting 534 confirmed H1N1 (swine) flu cases in Arizona. On May 27, 2009 Pima County confirmed a second pediatric death of complications from the H1N1 virus. This brings the total H1N1 (swine) flu related deaths in Arizona to four.

Over the past several weeks, seasonal influenza activity in Coconino County has been low compared to peak activity in February and March. For the 2008-9 flu season, 192 confirmed cases of influenza have been diagnosed in Coconino County residents (through 5/23/09). During the previous four flu seasons, the number of cases diagnosed in the County ranged from 67 to 489 (median = 153).

Influenza typically decreases in the warmer months and increases in the fall and winter months but flu viruses are unpredictable. It is not known whether the H1N1 (swine) flu virus will fade away or return next fall, although both occurrences are possible. If it does return, there is no way to know whether it will cause the same mild disease, or mutate

into a more virulent virus; therefore it is important to continue to be informed and prepared.

CCHD officials encourage the following simple actions to help stop the spread of germs and protect individuals from illness:

- **Stay informed.** The Coconino County Health Department website will be updated regularly as information becomes available. www.coconino.az.gov/health
- Influenza is thought to **spread mainly person-to-person** through coughing or sneezing of infected people. Some degree of spread occurs through contaminated hands. **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **Take everyday actions to stay healthy.**
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it, and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve.
 - **Wash your hands often** with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
 - Don't share eating utensils, cups or straws.
 - **Stay home if you get sick.** Stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- **Follow public health advice** regarding social distancing measures.
- **If you get sick, stay home from work or school** and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

These actions that everyone should take will reduce the risk of influenza and many other infectious diseases.

Call the CCHD Flu Information Line 928-679-7300 or visit www.coconino.az.gov/health for updated information.

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