MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT NETWORK SYSTEM

Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)
(Formerly Bureau of Health)
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*****ADVISORY – Important Information*****

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TO: All Academic, Veterinarians, All Childcare, All Healthcare, Labs, County EMA Directors, MEMA Staff, Maine Medical Association, Northern Maine Poison Control Center, LHO's, PH-Required, PHN, EMS, Fire Departments, RRC's, State and Federal Agencies.

FROM: Dora Anne Mills, M.D., M.P.H., Public Health Director

SUBJECT**:** **Maine CDC Operations during State Closure Days**

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Maine CDC Operations during State Closure Days

Background:

Maine CDC will operate in very limited capacity during state government closure days. The state budget legislation for the current biennium has a provision which requires most executive branch departments, agencies, and offices to be closed for 10 days in fiscal year 2009-2010. The dates identified for these closures are as follows:

Monday, July 6, 2009
Friday, August 7, 2009
Friday, September 4, 2009
Friday, October 9, 2009
Thursday, December 24, 2009

Friday, January 15, 2010
Tuesday, February 16, 2010
Friday, March 12, 2010
Tuesday, April 20, 2010
Friday, May 28, 2010

Please note that several state closure days are situated near state holidays and will result in 4-day weekends. This will affect both handling of telephone inquiries to Maine CDC Division of Infectious Disease and testing availability and turn-around-time at the Maine CDC Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL).

Recommendations:

During state closure days, category 1 disease reports and public health emergency calls to the Maine CDC 24-hour line (1-800-821-5821) will be handled by the epidemiologist on call. Routine business should be held until the next business day as Maine CDC will not have staff available to handle routine business during state closure days.

Specimens will not be routinely tested during state closure days. A small number of HETL staff will be on-call during state closure days to test urgent specimens in extraordinary circumstances. Urgent testing will be arranged by the Maine CDC epidemiologist on call only.

- Routine specimens shipped to the laboratory by courier during the weekend and closure day will be held in the laboratory at appropriate temperatures until they are tested on the next business day.
- Shipping specimens that require refrigeration by mail during weekends extended by closure days should be avoided when possible as delays could result from closure of the state office mail delivery.
- During weekends that are extended by state closure days, laboratories should consider holding specimens until the next business day when they can be couriered to the HETL.

For More Information: Public health fact sheets, HETL clinical testing information sheets, and other resources on Maine CDC activities are available at: www.mainepublichealth.gov. Disease reporting or consultation is available by calling 1-800-821-5821.