



COUNTY OF POLK  
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## Polk County Health Department News Release

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For Immediate Release

### Polk County Health Department To Hold “Drive Through” Flu Clinic

On Saturday, October 6, 2007, from 10am-12noon, Polk County Health Department will offer a “drive through flu clinic” on the Walnut Street Bridge in downtown Des Moines. This clinic will be for flu shots only (pneumonia shots will not be given). People attending this clinic (9 years of age and older) will receive their shots without leaving their vehicle.

“Our goals are to vaccinate more people (than last year), give people with special needs another choice and increase our ability to respond to a possible pandemic”, said Lori Parsons, Polk County Health Department Clinical Manager.

Last year Polk County held a drive through clinic at Oliver Plaza on Euclid Avenue. Four hundred eighty-one people were vaccinated at last year’s clinic. At this year’s clinic people in 6 vehicles will be vaccinated simultaneously.

Ms. Parsons said, “People won’t have to stand in line. Family members won’t get separated. Staying in their vehicles will limit their exposure to any potentially ill people.”

Polk County Health Department has recruited 368 nurses who would be available to help respond to a public health disaster. Using disaster response grant dollars, Polk County Health Department has purchased two-way radios to facilitate communication in busy, noisy clinic settings.

“We will be using our radios at the drive through clinic. Twenty volunteers from our “medical volunteer pool” will be giving out shots. We will working with our partners (Des Moines Police, Des Moines Fire and Emergency Management) in an Incident Command Structure”, said Patrick Sweeney, Polk County Health Department Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

People should enter the Bridge from the west. To speed up the process people can download the Consent Form from the Health Department Web Page ([www.polkcountyia.gov/health](http://www.polkcountyia.gov/health)) and bring the completed Consent Form to the Clinic.

(MORE)

For a full list of Polk County Health Department Flu Clinics visit [www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health](http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/health). For updates or changes in the clinic schedule call the Polk County FluLine 286-3609.

Flu shots are available, on a walk-in basis, at the Polk County Health Department, 1907 Carpenter, Des Moines, Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm beginning October 1, 2007. FluMist is also available at Polk County Health Department for people ages 2-49. A \$15 donation is suggested. No one will be turned away because of inability to pay. Medicare Part B and Humana will pay for the cost in full. Bring your Medicare card.

## **Avoid Flood Cleanup Poses Health Risks During Flood Clean-UP**

Polk County Health Department officials want people to take the proper precautions in returning to their homes after recent flooding. "People in the community who were affected by the flood have been through enough. We want to avoid further suffering by preventing injury or illness when trying to recover their homes," said Terri Henkels, Polk County Health Department Director.

In the aftermath of the 2008 floods many Polk County residents will be doing their best to salvage their belongings and clean up their homes, which can be a dangerous task. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has provided the Polk County Health Department with copies of two cleanup guides, "Flood Cleanup and the Air in Your Home" and "A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home." The Polk County Health Department urges residents to visit the Health Department at 1907 Carpenter Avenue to pick up a guide before attempting to clean flood damaged homes. The guides are also available on line at [www.polkcountyiowa.gov](http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov)

"We strongly discourage children under the age of five being in any of these homes, even if they have been cleared for occupancy, until all the cleaning and repair work has been completed. Residents need to resist the temptation to start cleaning up before the flood waters recede. Areas that have been flooded can be very dangerous because of debris, mold and contamination. Residents should not start cleaning up without getting guidance and appropriate protective equipment" said Ms. Terri Henkels, Director of the Polk County Health Department.

If items in your home are wet from flood water there is a chance that mold will begin to grow in your home. If mold is growing you will see discolored fuzzy spots on items that have been wet. Mold can aggravate cause health problems such as asthma and allergies. Consult with professional resources before attempting to clean mold yourself.

Ms. Henkels added, "Foot wounds are the top injury sustained in flooding conditions. Areas that have been flooded can contain debris and put you at risk for injury. According to Henkels, foot wounds are the top injury sustained while working in a flooded area. If you will be working in a flooded area always wear hard-soled shoes inside rubber boots, work gloves and an N95 mask." All are inexpensive and available at local hardware stores.

With the increase in standing water, it is anticipated that there will also be an increase in mosquitoes. Residents are encouraged to eliminate pools of standing water if possible, and wear long sleeves and long pants, particularly before dawn and after dusk. Insect repellent with DEET is highly recommended.

Polk County Health Department Center will continue to provide tetanus shots, at no cost, at 1907 Carpenter Avenue, from 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday. The Call Center for people with special health and medical needs (875-5791) will remain open from 8am-6pm daily.

-30-standing water resulting from flooding can attract mosquitoes that may carry West Nile Virus or Encephalitis, which are serious diseases. To minimize your risk remove all standing water, such as that found in yard toys, plugged gutters and old tires. Use a mosquito repellent containing DEET and wear long sleeves and pants. Avoid being outside during the evening hours as this is when mosquitoes are most active.

“People in the community who were affected by the flood have been through enough. We want to avoid further suffering by preventing injury or illness when trying to recover their homes.” When cleanup begins follow safety guidelines and use protective equipment while cleaning. Cleanup booklets are available at no cost at the Polk County Health Department, 1907 Carpenter Ave.