



Williston Police Department

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Press Release

August 5, 2009

The swine flu is not coming – it’s already here. The question now is what will happen when our kids all get together when school opens on August 24. Will there be an explosion of new cases then, or later in the fall when the traditional flu spreads thru society? A vaccine for the swine flu will not be ready until mid-October, and right now that vaccine will take two shots given 21-28 days apart.

Questions abound as to who will give the shots – people as widely dispersed as paramedics on fire trucks could give them, or even pharmacists, if they are trained in giving shots and providing CPR. Those decisions have yet to be made. Unlike traditional flu shots offered in recent years which were focused on the elderly, the targeted populations for the swine flu are those under 55, unhealthy people under 65, pregnant women and kids over 6 months of age.

Swine flu shots will be offered initially to first responders as well, but will not be mandatory. The swine flu shots will in no way effect the need for regular flu shots, which are typically offered in November. Both are important. The traditional flu results in 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths nationwide annually. The swine flu in Florida has resulted in 400 hospitalizations and 31 deaths thus far this year.

Levy health officials will brief various school officials in Williston on August 21. Their general advice will be, if kids are sick, get them out of the schools. A nasal mist vaccine for the regular flu may be offered to our children thru a government sponsored program this fall. In any event, stay tuned in to this important topic as events unfold.

Daniel M. Davis
Chief of Police