



Swine Flu Update

The World Health Organization has declared the recent Swine Flu outbreak to have reached a Level 5 severity. A Level 6 declaration would be that a pandemic is occurring. Accordingly employers and employees must take all reasonable steps to prevent the possible spread of Swine Flu until our Canadian medical authorities declare the situation to be resolved.

While we see no immediate reason for alarm, we believe it is only prudent to be prepared if an outbreak occurs. The Chief Medical Health Officer for Vancouver Coastal Health reports that there is no evidence of any sustained transmission in any community in Canada at this time. Influenza-like illness is at low levels in the community as is typical for this time of year. They have not made any recommendations to change public gatherings and are reassuring the public they can continue their usual activities and events.

The BCMEA is working with our employers and union locals to ensure all parties are up to date on the current alert levels and have appropriate plans in place to address employee and customer concerns.

Additionally, the BCMEA is currently taking preventative steps to ensure the health and safety of all workers, including supplies of antibacterial gel and alcohol wipes for common equipment in the Dispatch Halls.

In order to limit spread of any virus, all employees who;

- a. have been in contact with a person diagnosed with the swine flu and/or avian flu;
- b. have visited a facility that is under quarantine;
- c. are affected by any of the quarantine orders issued by the Public Health Department; or
- d. has recently travelled in an affected region;

Should ensure that they identify themselves to their employer and take the necessary precautions to limit potential infection of others. Additionally, those experiencing flu like symptoms are asked to stay home and see a doctor.

In the event that a Pandemic is declared, the BCMEA will implement additional measures to limit unnecessary social exposure and further protect employees.

We will continue to closely monitor information provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Canada Public Health Agency and will update this website as more information becomes available.