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State to Open Hotline for H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Questions

English, Spanish lines to be open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily

SPRINGFIELD – A new hotline slated to open Saturday morning will provide Illinois residents with easy access to information about the H1N1 flu (swine flu). The hotline (866-848-2094 for English, 866-241-2138 for Spanish) will operate daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily for as long as needed. Hotline operators will be equipped to answer basic, non-medical questions related to the outbreak and will be able to refer callers to additional information sources.

“With the flu outbreak in the news every day, we know many people have questions,” said Andrew Velasquez III, director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). “Through this hotline, we hope to answer basic questions and connect people with sources for additional information.”

The line will be staffed by state employee volunteers from several agencies, with support from public health professionals from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Spanish-speaking operators also will be available. IEMA and IDPH are conducting a training session for hotline operators today in advance of the hotline opening.

In addition, information about the H1N1 (swine flu) also is continually updated on the state’s Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov. Information on the Ready Illinois site is available in English, Spanish and Polish.