
Public Health Services Update

July 22, 2019

Dear Kern County Health Care Provider:

This quarterly letter is being sent to call your attention to some important health updates in Kern County. This letter contains hyperlinks and can be accessed on our [website \(https://kernpublichealth.com/health-bulletin/\)](https://kernpublichealth.com/health-bulletin/).

- **Earthquake Response and Recovery in Ridgecrest**

Only July 4, 2019 and July 5, 2019, two large earthquakes struck Ridgecrest and surrounding areas. The effects were felt throughout Kern County as well as Southern California. Thousands of earthquakes of varying magnitude have been detected in the area since then, including more than a dozen with a magnitude of 4.5 or greater on July 17, 2019. Recovery efforts are ongoing.

While acute medical needs are being met, some lessons learned from the 2014 South Napa earthquake:

- 23% of households sustained injuries more severe than a small cut/bruise. Of those injured, 48% of injuries occurred during clean up, rather than during the earthquake itself.
- 64% of households reported a household member with a chronic disease (hypertension, asthma, emotional/mental health, and diabetes being the most common). Of those with chronic disease, 26% experienced worsening disease following the earthquake. Of those experiencing worsening disease, 57% sought medical care outside their normal care.
- 78% of households had a household member experience a traumatic experience or mental health stressor (anxiety, fear, and distraction being the most common), and 27% suffered a traumatic experience elevating the risk of PTSD.

- **Measles Exposure in Bakersfield**

On July 9, 2019, the Kern County Public Health Services Department (KCPHSD) was notified of a measles exposure in Kern County that occurred on July 4 through July 5, 2019. More details about this exposure can be found in the [public press release](#). Kern County will be under enhanced surveillance for measles until July 26, 2019. While there continue to be new cases of measles diagnosed in California, to date this year, there have been no confirmed cases of measles among Kern County residents.

Please consider patients with consistent symptoms and epidemiological risk factors for measles. Report all suspect cases *immediately* to KCPHSD at (661) 321-3000. After hours, on weekends, and holidays, call (661) 868-4055 and asked to be connected to the Public Health On-Call Staff. Measles PCR testing continues to be impacted by ongoing outbreaks and cases throughout the state; please be judicious in requests for testing. Past guidance documents regarding measles evaluation can be found in the recent KCPHSD [Urgent Alert health bulletin](#) and the California Department of Public Health's (CDPH) [Measles Clinical Guidance](#).

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- **Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB)/Cyanotoxins Detected in Lake Isabella**

On July 10, 2019, KCPHSD issued a [public press release](#) regarding harmful algal blooms in Lake Isabella. Sometimes called blue-green algae, cyanotoxins can cause a range of symptoms from skin irritation and gastrointestinal symptoms to liver and kidney damage. Long-term health effects are still being evaluated. A map identifying where cyanotoxins have been identified in Kern County can be found [online](#). Additional resources are available on CDPH's [Human Health and HABs](#) website and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Harmful Algal Bloom \(HAB\)-Associated Illness](#) website.

Please report any suspected or confirmed cyanotoxin/harmful algal bloom-associated illness to KCPHSD immediately at (661) 321-3000. After hours, on weekends, and holidays, call (661) 868-4055 and asked to be connected to the Public Health On-Call Staff.

- **Hepatitis A Associated with Frozen Berries**

In June, Kroger Company recalled frozen berry products due to concerns of potential Hepatitis A contamination. Please see the [FDA announcement](#) and [public press release](#) for more details. Kern County Environmental Health was notified that product may have been distributed to stores in Kern County. All suspected and confirmed cases of Hepatitis A should be reported to KCPHSD within one (1) working day by phone, fax, mail, or electronically through CalREDIE. Additional details about communicable disease reporting can be found [online](#).

- **West Nile Virus (WNV) Activity in Kern County**

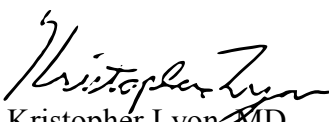
A map identifying zip codes where WNV has been detected in mosquito pools is posted on KCPHSD's [WNV webpage](#). This site is updated approximately every Friday and includes a table of other WNV-positive elements, including human cases. To date, no human cases have been confirmed in Kern County residents. All suspected and confirmed cases of WNV should be reported to KCPHSD within seven (7) calendar days by phone, fax, mail, or electronically through CalREDIE. Additional details about communicable disease reporting can be found [online](#).

- **Back to School Immunizations**

KCPHSD's annual Back to School Immunization clinics will be held August 5, 2019-August 16, 2019 at the Richard Prado Senior Center at 2101 Ridge Rd, Bakersfield, CA, 93305. Walk-in immunizations for children and adults are available. For more information and clinic hours of operation contact KCPHSD at (661) 321-3000.

If you have any questions, please contact KCPHSD by phone at (661) 321-3000, via email at publichealth@kerncounty.com, or visit our [website](#).

Thank you,


Kristopher Lyon, MD
Interim Health Officer