



DATE: October 22, 2026

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

FROM: Cassius Lockett, PhD, District Health Officer 

SUBJECT: District Health Officer Report

Influenza Update

In September, the Southern Nevada Health District reported the first flu-related death of the season in a Clark County resident. The individual was a man in his 50s with underlying health conditions.

The Health District is reminding the public that flu causes serious illness and deaths every year, and while a death reported this early in the season is concerning, it is too early to predict the severity of the 2026-2027 season. Older adults, young children and people with certain medical conditions are at greater risk. Everyone 6 months and older is urged to get the seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccines to protect themselves and those around them from serious illness.

Flu activity typically peaks between December and February but can circulate at any time of the year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends annual flu vaccination for everyone 6 months and older. Adults 65 and older, children younger than 2, pregnant women, people with underlying medical conditions and those with weakened immune systems are at greater risk for severe illness.

Seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccines are available at Health District clinics. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, go to www.SNHD.info/immunizations. Updated flu and COVID-19 vaccines are also widely available at pharmacies and health care provider offices. Community members can talk with a health care provider or pharmacist about the vaccines recommended for them.

The Health District also encourages community members to take the following steps to help reduce the spread of flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and running water. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable.
- Stay home when you are sick and limit contact with others.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue away after use.
- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Take antiviral medication as prescribed by a health care provider.

The Health District began active surveillance for the 2026-2027 flu season on October 4. The weekly Influenza Snapshot and Influenza Report by Age Group will be available at

www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/news-info/statistics-surveillance-reports/influenza-surveillance/.

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week takes place from October 25-31, 2026. The commemoration is coordinated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

This year's theme is Keep Kids Safe from Lead and everyone is encouraged everyone to:

- **Get the Facts:** Learn about lead hazards in your environment.
- **Get Your Child Tested:** Ensure early detection through a simple blood test.
- **Get your Home Tested.** Identify and address potential lead sources in your living space.

In April, the Health District began offering lead testing for consumer products. Testing is now available every Monday, from 7:30-9:30 a.m., at its Main Public Health Center at 280 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107.

The service is designed to help community members identify items that may contain lead and learn how to reduce the risk of exposure. Testing is conducted using an X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) Analyzer, which can quickly detect lead and other heavy metals in many common materials and provide immediate results.

Items that may be important to test include:

- Traditional painted pottery used for food or beverages
- Toys, cups and other items frequently handled or mouthed by young children
- Household items such as keys or imported goods

Traditional painted ceramic pottery may contain lead in the paint or glaze, which can deteriorate over time and contaminate food or beverages. Lead is a naturally occurring heavy metal that has been found in a variety of consumer products, including cookware, ceramics, spices and imported goods. As these items age or break down, they can release lead dust that may contaminate homes and living spaces.

Children are especially vulnerable to lead exposure because their brains and nervous systems are still developing. Even low levels of lead can cause learning and behavioral problems, while higher levels can result in serious health effects, including anemia, hearing loss, brain damage and, in severe cases, death. Because symptoms are often not immediately visible, a blood test is the only way to confirm exposure. Medicaid and Nevada Check Up cover lead testing for eligible children at 12 months and again at 24 months, or at any time before age 6 if earlier testing was not completed. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to speak with their child's health care provider about lead testing during routine well-child visits.

For questions about lead testing of consumer products, contact SNHD_OutbreakSupport@snhd.org. For more information about childhood lead poisoning prevention, visit: www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/community-health-center/clppp/.

West Nile virus

As of October 5, the Health District is reporting one neuroinvasive case of West Nile virus in a Clark County resident. The Health District has set 2,843 traps throughout the county and submitted 2,651

sample pools—representing 46,479 mosquitoes—to the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory for analysis. Of the sample pools submitted, 54 tested positive for West Nile virus. No sample pools have tested positive for St. Louis encephalitis or Western equine encephalitis.

The Health District continues its mosquito surveillance efforts throughout Clark County and reminds residents that the presence of West Nile virus in mosquitoes increases the risk of human infection.

The Health District recommends the following steps to reduce the risk of mosquito bites:

- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellent.
- Wear long sleeves and pants when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Remove standing water around homes and businesses where mosquitoes can breed.
- Ensure window and door screens fit properly to keep mosquitoes outside.

The Health District works with local partners to implement mosquito control measures when virus activity is detected. Residents can stay informed about local mosquito surveillance activity by visiting the Health District's weekly West Nile virus surveillance reports at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/programs/mosquito-surveillance/arbovirus-update/.

Community Meetings

Week ending 10/04:

Biweekly:

- Facilitated one-on-one meetings with Direct Reports
- Attended the New Hire Orientation
- Facilitated the Health Executive Council meeting
- Participated in the EIS Bi-weekly Check-in meeting

Bi-monthly:

- Participated in the NALHO Local Health Officer meeting

Annually:

- Participated in the annual meeting with representatives from Forvis Mazars regarding the audit

Media/Interviews/Panelist/Presenter/Events:

- Attended the Nurse-Family Partnership Site Event

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended a meeting with representatives from Healthcare in Action
- Attended a meeting regarding marketing for the SNCHC New Access Point (NAP)
- Participated in a meeting with Dr. Saloman Amar (Touro University) and Dina Babsky (City of Las Vegas)
- Participated in a meeting with Dr. Lawrence Weekly and his leadership team regarding vaping education/outreach at DPAC NV
- Attended a tour of a potential site for the SNCHC New Access Point
- Participated in a meeting with Assemblymember Elaine Marzola
- Attended a tour of UMC's Trauma unit, Pediatric floor, Infection Control office, Burn tower, and Maternal floor
- Participated in a meeting with representatives from the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory

Week ending 09/27:Biweekly:

- Participated in the Lab Expansion meeting
- Facilitated one-on-one meetings with Direct Reports

Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meetings with Councilwoman Summers-Armstrong, Commissioner Becker, Mayor Pro Tem Gallo, Councilwoman Larson, Scott Nielson, Bobbette Bond, and Mayor Hardy
- Participated in the Clark County Medical Society (CCMS) Board of Trustees meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada District Board of Health meeting
- Participated in the BCHC 2nd Monthly Member meeting

Bi-monthly:

- Participated in the Informatics Department leadership meeting
- Participated in the CSTE Chronic Disease Subcommittee call

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Participated in a meeting with the Molina Healthcare of Nevada

Week ending 09/20:Note:

- Mykaela Johnson, Senior Program Manager, Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC), shadowed Dr. Lockett on September 14-15, 2026 as part of BCHC's Health Department Visit Program

Biweekly:

- Facilitated one-on-one meetings with Direct Reports
- Attended the New Hire Orientation
- Facilitated the Health Executive Council meeting

Monthly:

- Participated in the Disease Surveillance & Control Division leadership meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Committee Health Center Finance & Audit Committee meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Governing Board meeting
- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meetings with Mayor Pro Tem Scott Black and Commissioner Kirkpatrick

Bi-monthly:

- Participated in the Public Health and Preventive Care Division leadership meeting

Quarterly:

- Participated in the Environmental Health Division leadership meeting

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended a meeting regarding the SNCHC New Access Point (NAP)
- Attended a Legislative Update meeting
- Participated in a meeting with the Local Health Authorities and Senator Titus
- Attended a meeting with representatives from AltaMed

Week ending 09/13:Biweekly:

- Facilitated one-on-one meetings with Direct Reports
- Participated in the Lab Expansion meeting

Monthly:

- Participated in the Public Health Policy Strategy meeting
- Participated in the Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) Update meeting
- Participated in the Directors/Managers meeting
- Participated in the BCHC Monthly Member meeting
- Participated in the CSTE Surveillance Policy Subcommittee call

Bi-monthly:

- Participated in the SNCHC Division leadership meeting

Quarterly:

- Participated in the State Board of Health meeting

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Held a meeting with Dr. Luis Medina on the fellow onboarding process

Week ending 09/06:

Biweekly:

- Facilitated one-on-one meetings with Direct Reports
- Attended the New Hire Orientation
- Facilitated the Health Executive Council meeting

Monthly:

- Participated in the Monthly Leadership Finance meeting

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Facilitated a meeting with the Informatics Team on current projects and systems
- Participated in a meeting regarding Cost Allocation