



Homeland
Security

Media Advisory

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR URGES H1N1 VACINATIONS FOR FIRE AND EMS

Washington D.C.-With the first deliveries of the H1N1 vaccine already underway, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as part of its mission to support first responders joins the United States Fire Administration (USFA) in recommending that firefighters who provide emergency medical services and EMS workers receive the H1N1 vaccination as soon as it becomes available in their local jurisdiction.

The Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it first becomes available. These target groups include pregnant women, people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel, persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old, and people ages of 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

"Given that firefighters and EMS personnel who provide direct patient care are eligible for early vaccination, their first responder agencies should be contacting their local doctors offices, clinics, local health department or other agencies to make arrangements now for their workforces to be vaccinated as soon as supplies of the H1N1 vaccine are received in their jurisdictions," said U.S. Fire Administrator Kelvin J. Cochran.

"Being vaccinated for both seasonal influenza and the H1N1 influenza represents an important way to assure the well being of our first responder workforces, their families, and most importantly the patients to whom they provide emergency medical care. It also enhances their agencies' ability to continue to provide critical services to their communities during periods when they may encounter an increased demand for emergency medical care resulting from the H1N1 virus," Cochran said.

First responders and agencies seeking additional information on the H1N1 influenza are encouraged to visit:

www.flu.gov
www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu
www.usfa.dhs.gov
www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_ems.htm

The USFA reminds everyone to have a comprehensive fire protection plan that includes smoke alarms, residential sprinklers and practicing a home fire escape plan

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