

August 26, 2009

Dear Reeve/Mayor:

We would like to provide you with an update on the H1N1 influenza situation, focusing on the role of municipal government moving into this fall's flu season. As you know, every municipality in Manitoba has been required to prepare a municipal emergency plan for all hazards, which includes responding to a flu pandemic.

Although there have been cases of severe illness and death associated with this virus, most individuals with H1N1 in Manitoba have recovered without specific medical care or hospitalization. Manitoba's public health officials continue to monitor the spread and severity of H1N1 and provide regular updates and advice to Manitobans.

It is difficult to predict what impact H1N1 may have on your community later this year. It is important to plan for the possibility that it may not be possible to maintain all of the services provided by government, including municipal government. However, it is important to maintain critical services that protect people, property and the environment, along with those that support the health care system, public order, municipal government and emergency services. **Elected officials should discuss their municipal emergency plan with their emergency coordinator to ensure they are prepared to meet these challenges.**

Manitoba has developed a comprehensive business continuity plan (BCP) through the Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) to maintain and restore critical services across the provincial government. Local authorities are strongly advised to review their existing pandemic and BCP preparedness. The EMO will coordinate provincial and federal assistance, but local authorities will remain responsible for delivering municipal services.

The province has developed many resources about H1N1 that your council and residents may find useful. Some of the commonly asked questions and answers are attached, but more information is available at [www.manitoba.ca/flu](http://www.manitoba.ca/flu). As new information becomes available, we will continue to update you.

Manitoba and Canada have well-developed pandemic plans that will guide our response to H1N1. However, municipal governments also have an important role to play and we encourage you to speak with your councils and communities about H1N1 and your local response. For more information about H1N1 or pandemic planning, please contact your local regional health authority disaster management officer or EMO Regional Emergency Manager.

We also strongly encourage you or a representative of your municipality to attend meetings that will be coordinated by MHHL and EMO between municipal coordinators and regional health authorities on pandemic flu. Details of those meetings will be shared in the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely,

“Original signed by”

Linda McFadyen  
Deputy Minister  
Intergovernmental Affairs

“Original signed by”

Doug Dobrowolski  
President  
AMM

c. Honourable Steve Ashton

Attachment