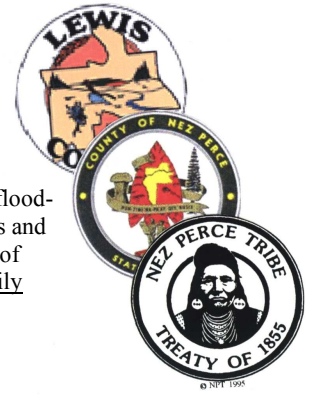
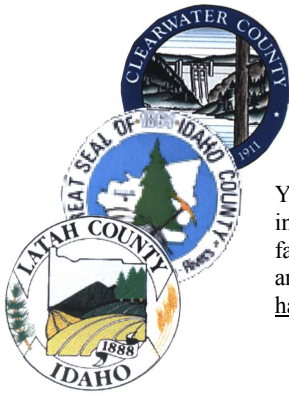


Get Pandemic Ready



Your Office of Emergency Management plans and prepares for disasters, ranging from localized flooding to worldwide events. Preparation includes local government, the private sector and individuals and families. Pandemic flu is a rapidly emerging threat affecting all of us. The purpose of this series of articles is to inform citizens of what they can do to protect themselves. We recommend each family have three months of food, water, medications, and other supplies on-hand.

Issue 2: Pandemic Flu Impact

In issue #1, we looked at potential infection and fatality outcomes of pandemic flu. We need to put this in the context of what's going on around us, in our critical support systems. These are the complex systems we take for granted, until they break. No one thinks of electricity until it goes out.

Regardless of the numbers for infection rate and fatality rate, federal pandemic plans and flu experts tell us to expect the following:

- Healthcare system at all levels overwhelmed. This could happen in a matter of days. Hospitals are already understaffed. In a pandemic, hospital patient load increases at the same time their own healthcare workers are getting sick.
- Electrical supply uncertain. Power plant workers are vulnerable to infection. The support infrastructure, including fuel delivery, is uncertain.
- Water supply uncertain. Municipal water systems that use chemical treatment face shortages of these chemicals for purification. All municipal systems need electricity.
- Wastewater treatment uncertain. [same limitations as water treatment]
- Transportation system uncertain. Refinery workers are vulnerable to infection, as are the truckers who deliver fuels.
- Shortages of food, medications and other supplies due to last-minute panic buying. After decades of using "just-in-time" inventory and manufacturing as a business model, warehousing of finished goods and raw materials has drastically declined. What's in the store is on the shelf. Period. The panic buying before hurricanes indicates empty shelves.
- Stress on the economic system – locally, nationally and internationally. Federal authorities expect up to 40% of the workforce to be sick, for at least two weeks. This is in addition to the supply/delivery problems throughout the system.

Why is this important to us in north central Idaho? Much of what we depend on everyday, comes from outside. If these systems degrade or fail, we will deal with shortages. We will work with what we have on hand.

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| Latah County Disaster Services 883-2265 |
| Lewis County Emergency Management 937-2380 |
| Nez Perce County Emergency Management 799-3084 |
| Nez Perce Tribe ERWM 843-7375 ext. 2377 |

For more information, or to participate in local pandemic flu planning, contact your local Emergency Manager.