



Official Statement from Central Utah Public Health

The Central Utah Public Health Department is releasing this statement in response to the community concern surrounding the 2 deaths that occurred in the Wayne County area earlier this week. At this time, the causes of death are under investigation. While some laboratory results are still pending, the *Y. pestis* (plague) laboratory results have come back negative.

Out of respect for the family we are not releasing information regarding the patients, but rather are focusing on how we can keep the population healthy. Winter season brings with it social congregation, which raises the potential for the spread of any infectious disease. The Central Utah Public Health Department is not giving any more information about these patients because "HIPPA and patient privacy laws limit what we share about others health information. Public health ensures that those exposed are taken care of and does not divulge details once that is complete. Curiosity does not merit breaching an individual's privacy. "

All those with potential exposure to the original patients have been evaluated. **The exposures are not ongoing.** People that have been exposed are under medical supervision at this time. If you didn't have contact with the ill individuals you are at minimal risk. If you are feeling ill, we recommend that you see your health care provider. During this season, we encourage everyone to get their flu shot, use good hand hygiene (wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water, use hand sanitizers), and stay home when you are sick. We also encourage frequent cleaning with a sanitizing disinfectant of any surfaces that are frequently touched, such as door handles, desks and counter tops, etc.

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