



Cleanlink News November 11 2008

School District Reports Fewer Cases of Flu

According to the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 5 and 20 percent of Americans will come down with the flu between October 1 and May 1.

Of these, the CDC reports some 200,000 will be hospitalized and as many as 36,000 will die.

Of particular concern are children. This year, for the first time ever, the CDC is recommending that virtually every child age 6 months to 18 years be vaccinated, unless he or she has a serious egg allergy.

The reason for this is simple: Children under 5 years old are more likely to be hospitalized and school-age children have higher rates of flu than other age groups. Plus, research increasingly shows that youngsters are key spreaders of influenza to the rest of us.

The Cleaning Cure

Some school districts have actually been able to reduce the number of children contracting flu through more thorough, hygienic cleaning systems. For instance, while as many as 15 percent of the students at neighboring school districts were home sick with the flu, the Rockwood School District, Saint Louis County, Missouri, experienced only about 5

percent absenteeism.

"Although we cannot pinpoint one single reason," says Doug Coleman, coordinator of custodial services for the district, "it is no coincidence that this occurred when we transferred from conventional cleaning methods to a No-Touch Cleaning system."

With a touch-free system, instead of wiping surfaces and fixtures with cloths and mopping floors, a machine is used to apply cleaning solution and disinfectants to these same surfaces. The areas are then rinsed clean with the machine, which has a built-in wet/vac to vacuum up remaining solution and contaminants.

In addition to hygienic cleaning, and getting a flu shot of course, the CDC suggests the following steps to help protect our health:

- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are already sick
- Stay home if you feel sick or are sick
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle