

News Release



State of Wyoming Department of Health

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Subject: Total Number of People Reporting Illness in Lodge Outbreak Climbs to 64

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming Department of Health has received 64 reports of gastrointestinal illness from individuals who visited the Big Horn Mountain Lodge near Dayton, Wyoming.

Recent media coverage of the outbreak has led to reports of illness going back to January 1, 2001. The most recent report was from a individual who became ill on March 6, 2001.

Most of those who became ill were vacationing snowmobilers from five different states. The states reporting illness include: eight from Minnesota, 12 from North Dakota, six from Montana, two from South Dakota and 36 from Wyoming.

"We have pretty strong evidence the source of the illnesses is the Big Horn Mountain Lodge," said Dr. Karl Musgrave, State Epidemiologist. "Twenty-one of those who became ill visited only this particular lodge. In addition, several tests of the water from the lodge were positive for coliform bacteria which indicates potentially harmful disease organisms may be present in the water. Tests conducted on the water from two nearby lodges did not show any contamination."

The Department of Health now suspects the illnesses were caused by a type of virus known as a calicivirus. "The stool specimen from a North Dakota man who became ill after being at the lodge was positive for calicivirus," said Scott Seys, an infectious disease epidemiologist with the Department of Health. "The type of illness we are seeing in those who visited the lodge is also consistent with this type of virus," Seys said.

Additional information can be obtained by calling (307) 777-7172.

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