

**EPI Update for Friday, April 6, 2012**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Anhydrous ammonia exposure planning**
- **Fungal endophthalmitis outbreak**
- **Ode to dry hands**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Anhydrous ammonia exposure planning**

Spring arrived early in Iowa this year and farmers are busy applying anhydrous ammonia to their fields. IDPH has already been notified of numerous equipment problems that resulted in the potential for human exposure. Medical providers and first responders can prepare for an ammonia release in their community by reviewing or updating their local response protocols.

The Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center is available for consultation at 800-222-1222. You can also refer to the CDC/ATSDR Medical Management Guidelines for Ammonia at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov/mmg/mmg.asp?id=7&tid=2](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/mmg/mmg.asp?id=7&tid=2) .

References to share with farmers are available through ISU Extension at [www.extension.org/pages/63196/anhydrous-ammonia-safety](http://www.extension.org/pages/63196/anhydrous-ammonia-safety).

**Fungal endophthalmitis outbreak**

CDC, together with state and local health departments and the Food and Drug Administration, is investigating a multistate outbreak of fungal endophthalmitis associated with contaminated products used in invasive eye procedures. If any clinicians or laboratories are aware of a case of fungal endophthalmitis occurring from August 24, 2011 to present, please contact CADE at 800-362-2736.

**Ode to dry hands**

*Thought you would enjoy this poem recently published in JAMA (Adam Possner, MD, Journal of the American Medical Association, 3/7/2012)*

It always happens in the winter  
    with constant washings my hands splinter.  
Even if I use gel and lotion  
    skin becomes sandpaper in motion.  
Fissures open, the knuckles turn red  
    a few times my hands even have bled.  
How it stings me – such irritation!  
    The stigmata of sanitation!  
Yet, I still say as the water pours  
    “Let me clean my hands, then I’ll shake yours.”  
It is a soapy cross that I bear

an important way to show I care.  
For as a doctor I know this much  
first do no harm starts with the first touch.

## **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

### **New Course: Field Experiences in Public Health**

From June 19, 2012 through July 27, 2012, a course will be offered to give students and others interested in public health the opportunity to get ***field experiences in public health practice***. This course is being offered through the University of Iowa, but will be conducted on both the U of Iowa and the Des Moines University campuses, and is open to students from University of Iowa, Des Moines University, Iowa State University, and other Iowa institutions of higher learning.

It is a graduate level course targeted towards students of public health, medicine, nursing, pharmacy and other health professions. Each of the six weeks (M,W,F mornings) will be spent in an area of public health, such as environmental health and infectious diseases, and will focus in depth on one topic (i.e. lead poisoning and foodborne illness). The week will begin with a personal story of a patient, and end with the global aspects of that topic. Each Wednesday will be spent in the field learning about the application of public health interventions. At the end of the course, each student should have a clear understanding of how public health works in the community. For more information on the course and how to register visit

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=8AEE7B69-162D-4D18-9B78-16D22F60649B>

### **36th Annual Iowa Infection Prevention and Control Seminar**

This seminar will be held May 1 and 2 at the Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in Cedar Rapids. This program will be of particular interest and importance to physicians, nurses and allied healthcare professionals involved with issues and concerns relative to infection prevention. To register, visit [www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/uiconferences/](http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/uiconferences/). First time registrants, click on "create an account."

### **Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)**

CSTE will hold its annual conference in Omaha, Nebraska, June 3 through 7. An early-bird discount is offered for registrations received by 11:59 PM EST on April 20, 2012. For conference materials and online registration, visit [www.csteconference.org](http://www.csteconference.org).

### **Have a healthy and happy week!**

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