

EPI Update for Friday, April 13, 2007
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, 2007**
- **FDA re-emphasizes warnings to consumers on risks of pet turtles**
- **Iowa Disease Surveillance System (IDSS) Update**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, 2007

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarian's (NASPHV) Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control. These recommendations are especially useful for public health entities and animal rabies prevention and control programs. See www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5603a1.htm.

FDA re-emphasizes warnings to consumers on risks of pet turtles

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reminds the public that contact with baby turtles can pose a serious health risk to infants, small children, and even adults (particularly if immunocompromised).

Turtles are natural hosts of *Salmonella*; these bacteria cause diarrhea, and occasionally severe illness and death. *Salmonella* can be found on the outer skin and shell surfaces of the turtles, posing a risk to anyone handling turtles.

FDA is reminding parents and others who care for children of the following:

- The sale of turtles with a shell less than four inches long is illegal;
- *Salmonella* infection can be caused by contact with turtles in petting zoos, parks, child day care facilities and other locations; and
- It is important to wash hands for at least 15 seconds with soap and water after handling or touching turtles or the area they live in.

FDA is emphasizing the risks of turtle-associated illness due to *Salmonella* because of an increase in the sales of turtles in the last four years. The impact of turtle-associated salmonellosis is an estimated 74,000 human cases in the United States per year. See www.fda.gov/cvm/turtlereg.htm.

Iowa Disease Surveillance System (IDSS) Update

IDSS, an electronic disease reporting system, is being developed by IDPH to make reporting of diseases easier. Pilot testing of IDSS has been underway for several weeks. A performance test of the system occurred on Thursday, April 5th

to determine whether a large number of users could use the system simultaneously. As expected, there was no significant negative impact.

A second phase of development is planned and should begin shortly. The focus of this phase is to establish electronic laboratory reporting with the University Hygienic Laboratory before expanding to other facilities in Iowa and to national laboratories.

Preparation for statewide implementation is ongoing. Twenty-four training sessions (four in each of the six Iowa regions) are scheduled for July and early August, 2007. For more information about the IDSS project, see the April 2007 update at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/idss.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy and happy week!
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology
Iowa Department of Public Health
800-362-2736