

# EpiCenter

Palm Beach County Health Department  
Division of Epidemiology & Disease Control  
1050 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Riviera Beach, FL 33404



**Weekends/Evenings:** (561) 840-4500

**Website:** <http://www.pbchd.com>

**April 2005**

## TEMPORARY LOCATION—COMMUNICABLE DISEASES SECTION

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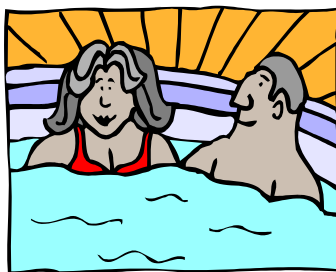
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## THEY'RE NOT CHIP AND DALE

The Division of Epidemiology and Disease Control of the Palm Beach County Health Department investigated an animal bite by a prairie dog. The bite occurred when a teacher attempted to keep children away from a prairie dog on school grounds. The prairie dog had a burrow in the school's yard. The prairie dog ran out of its burrow biting the teacher. The animal's behavior was not unusual or erratic.



Prairie dogs are the most social members of the squirrel family and are closely related to ground squirrels, chipmunks and marmots. *continued*



## SPLISH SPLASH

The Palm Beach County Health Department recently investigated cases of Legionellosis in individuals from various areas in Palm Beach County. An estimated 8,000 to 18,000 people get Legionnaires' disease in the United States each year. Some people can be infected with the *Legionella* bacterium and have mild symptoms or no illness at all.

Legionellosis, commonly known as Legionnaires' Disease, is found in water sources, such as large air conditioning systems, swimming pools, hot tubs, decorative fountains, showers, as well as hot and cold water taps. There is no evidence of persons becoming infected from auto air conditioners or household window air-conditioning units. The disease is normally transmitted by inhaling water aerosol, contaminated with the *Legionella* bacteria. Legionellosis is not transmitted person-to-person.

Patients with Legionnaires' disease usually have symptoms of high fever, chills and a dry or productive cough. Patients also may experience, headache, malaise, myalgia, anorexia and, occasionally, diarrhea. Chest X-rays often show pneumonia. It is difficult to distinguish Legionnaires' disease from other types of pneumonia by symptoms alone; other tests are required for diagnosis. *continued*



**PALM BEACH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
2005 REPORTED COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
WEEK 16 (ENDING DATE 04/23/05)**

*Prairie dogs continued.....*

Small rodents (such as squirrels, rats, mice, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, and chipmunks,) and lagomorphs (such as rabbits and hares) are almost never found to be infected with rabies and have not been known to cause rabies among humans in the United States. Bites by these animals are usually not considered at risk for rabies unless the animal is sick or behaving in any unusual manner and rabies is widespread in the area. Prairie dogs, however, transmit other illnesses such as Monkeypox and Tularemia.

In all cases involving rodents, the state or local health department should be consulted before a decision is made to initiate post exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

*Legionella continued.....*

The most useful tests detect the bacteria in sputum, find *Legionella* antigens in urine specimens, or compare antibody levels to *Legionella* in two blood samples obtained 3 to 6 weeks apart. Erythromycin is the antibiotic currently recommended for treatment.

Legionellosis most often affects middle-aged and older persons, particularly those who smoke cigarettes or have chronic lung disease. Also at risk are immunocompromised individuals. Respiratory failure or death may occur in at-risk individuals. Legionellosis is a reportable disease in the state of Florida.

This Week	This Year	Same Time Last Year
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**CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM AND INVASIVE DISEASES:**

Haemophilus influenzae primary bacteremia	0	5	12
Haemophilus influenzae meningitis	0	0	0
Haemophilus influenzae pneumonia	0	0	0
Meningococcal disease	0	3	2
Group B Streptococcus meningitis	0	1	0
Listeriosis	0	2	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae meningitis	0	2	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae invasive disease, drug-resistant	1	32	15
Streptococcus pneumoniae invasive disease, susceptible	0	17	14
Streptococcal disease, invasive Group A	0	9	5
Bacterial meningitis, other	0	5	3
Encephalitis, West Nile Virus	0	0	0
Encephalitis, Herpes	0	0	1
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	0	1	2

**VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASES:**

Congenital rubella syndrome	0	0	0
Rubella (German measles)	0	0	0
Rubeola (measles)	0	0	0
Mumps	0	0	0
Pertussis	0	1	0
Tetanus	0	0	1

**HEPATITIS:**

Hepatitis A	0	2	4
Hepatitis B, acute	2	20	12
Hepatitis B, chronic	8	89	103
Hepatitis B (HBsAg+) in pregnant women	2	21	26
Hepatitis B, perinatal	0	0	0
Hepatitis C, acute	0	1	0
Hepatitis C, chronic	57	581	318

**ENTERIC DISEASES:**

Giardiasis	0	17	11
Campylobacteriosis	0	18	19
Shigellosis	0	7	17
Salmonellosis	0	65	63
Cryptosporidiosis	0	4	0
Cyclosporiasis	0	1	0
Typhoid fever	0	0	0
Enterohemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC) O157:H7	0	2	0
E. coli shiga toxin + (serogroup non-O157)	0	0	0
E. coli shiga toxin + (not serogrouped)	0	0	0
Vibrio cholera 01	0	0	0
Vibrio cholera non-01	0	0	0
Vibrio fluvialis	0	0	0
Vibrio alginolyticus	0	0	0
Vibrio vulnificus	0	0	1
Vibrio parahaemolyticus	0	1	0
Vibrio, other	0	0	0

**OTHER DISEASES:**

Human exposure to a potentially rabid animal	1	35	35
Animal rabies	0	6	11
Monkey bite	0	1	1
Pesticide-related illness or injury	0	0	0
Brucellosis	0	0	0
Ciguatera	0	1	0
Hemolytic uremic poisoning	0	1	0
Lead poisoning	1	15	32
Legionellosis	0	4	2
Lyme disease	0	3	0
Malaria	1	3	1
Mercury poisoning	0	3	0
Psittacosis	0	0	0
Q fever	0	0	0
Rocky mountain spotted fever	0	0	0
Toxoplasmosis	0	0	1