

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

~~THAT~~ — Bruce / Eric / Chris / Tom

HEALTH —
E. COLI

I need some help. EPA has drafted the following approach to e.coli & encephalitis. The President really wanted to put something out today — but I understand that there is a question being raised by the CDC / perhaps / HHS — / That this EPA ~~proposed~~ approach is not calibrated correctly — I'm not sure I agree w/ CDC — I need ② things from DPC — ① resolve the conflict between CDC / HHS & EPA — and ② judgment (independent) whether this approach works. Thanks —
Karee

Chris thinks this has already been resolved, but is checking to see if a new issue has popped up —
did Shubala talk to you about this?

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION TAKES STRONG STEPS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH FROM RECENT INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS

In response to the recent outbreaks of St. Louis encephalitis in New York City and *E. coli* infection in upstate New York and Illinois, the Clinton Administration has provided invaluable on the ground scientific and technical assistance to control the spread of these public health threats. To build on our successful efforts in this area and to specifically address the problems associated with the spread of water-borne *E. coli*, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA), in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is launching new strategies to ensure a comprehensive response nationwide to outbreaks of this dangerous infection, including a targeted public and provider education campaign and releasing new guidance to states to increase available funding for *E. coli* monitoring.

CASES OF ST. LOUIS ENCEPHALITIS IDENTIFIED IN NEW YORK CITY. Since late August, when the first instances of unusual disease were reported, public health officials in New York City have identified 11 cases of St. Louis encephalitis and three deaths due to the disease. St. Louis encephalitis is a debilitating disease that has a case-fatality rate of up to 30 percent, especially in children and older people.

FEDERAL ACTION TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE. In order to help the city and state design appropriate responses to this public health threat, which is transmitted through mosquitoes, the CDC and EPA have been providing invaluable technical assistance to New York City and state public health officials since the beginning of the outbreak, including:

- **Providing technical assistance to local public health officials.** CDC is providing laboratory support and working with the city and state to independently confirm the presence of the disease and accurately track the extent of the outbreak;
- **Sending a team of scientists to provide on the ground support.** Once the outbreak was confirmed, CDC immediately sent a team of scientists, including epidemiologists, entomologists, wildlife biologists, and virologists, to provide on the ground staff support to local public health officials;
- **Assisting the state and city in implementing a safe and effective mosquito control campaign.** EPA continues to work with local public health officials to provide technical assistance on the implementation of a mosquito control campaign, including ensuring the safe application of insecticides in New York City; and
- **Educating the public about how to prevent infection and about the importance of the mosquito control campaign.** EPA is fielding hundreds of questions from the public about the mosquito control sprays used and assisting local public health officials as they ensure that the intensive education and safety campaign being conducted to notify the public about all aspects of the spraying is effective. CDC continues to work with local public health officials as they educate the public about how to prevent infection.

***E. COLI* INFECTION OUTBREAK IN NEW YORK AND ILLINOIS.** Recent outbreaks of *E. coli* in both New York and Illinois have potentially infected hundreds of people and have been linked to the deaths of two people. This disease causes severe diarrhea and abdominal cramps and can lead to acute kidney failure in both the very young and very old, causing lasting debilitation or death. Currently, public health officials suspect that the outbreak in New York is due to water-borne *E. coli* infection.

FEDERAL ACTION TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE INFECTION. Since the beginning of these outbreaks, the CDC and EPA have worked together to provide technical assistance and ground support to the local and state health departments, including:

- **Providing on the ground support to local public health officials.** Two Federal Epidemic Intelligence Service Officers and one epidemiologist from CDC are providing assistance on the ground in New York and are providing similar technical assistance in Illinois; and
- **Providing technical assistance to local public health officials.** CDC is providing laboratory support and working with the city and state to independently confirm the presence of the disease and accurately track the extent of the outbreak.

In addition, EPA will launch the following activities this fall to prevent the spread of waterborne *E. coli* infection:

- **Educating the public about how to prevent *E. coli* infection.** This week, EPA will ensure that the public is provided with the information it needs to protect against deadly strains of *E. coli*. EPA's drinking water hotline (1800 426 4791) will specifically respond to the public's questions and concerns regarding possible *E. coli* contamination in local communities. Finally, the agency will update its website to include a description of the early warning signs of infection and a list of state-certified laboratories where home owners can have their private wells tested.
- **Launching a new campaign to educate health care providers about *E. coli* infection.** This fall, in consultation with CDC, EPA will develop and distribute information for health care providers on the early diagnosis and treatment of infection with life threatening strains of *E. coli*. In addition, EPA will design pamphlets in multiple languages that outline the special precautions for those patients who are most vulnerable to *E. coli* infection – children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems – to be distributed through health care providers nationwide.
- **Providing new guidance to states on accessing Federal funds for *E. coli* monitoring.** By the end of September, EPA will issue guidance to the states on how to access existing federal funds to improve their current *E. coli* monitoring systems.

Uri McQ and friend were -
not let past them.
(HRS/274)