



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 25, 2007

National HIV Testing Day, June 27
Health District encourages everyone to get tested

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District and the Gay and Lesbian Center of Southern Nevada will offer free and confidential HIV testing as part of National HIV Testing Day, Wednesday, June 27. Testing is available between 7 p.m. and 11pm at 953 E. Sahara Ave., Ste. B-31. For information, call the Center at (702) 733-9800.

The health district encourages everyone in the community to get tested to learn their HIV status as part of National HIV Testing Day. Currently, there are more than 4,600 Southern Nevadans with AIDS and 3,200 residents are living with HIV; more than 2,100 have died. The Southern Nevada Health District's office of HIV/AIDS offers testing and counseling. For information, visit the health district's website, www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org or call (702) 759-0702.

"AIDS remains an international public health problem with millions of people infected with HIV or who are ill with the disease. Because there is still no vaccine or cure more than 25 years into the epidemic, education and prevention through responsible behavior continue to be the best defense against infection," said Dr. Lawrence Sands, Southern Nevada Health District chief health officer. "We encourage people to get tested, to know their status, to get treatment and to take precautions."

In September, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that voluntary HIV testing become routine for patients aged 13 to 64 to increase early diagnosis for the more than 250,000 Americans who are unaware they are HIV positive. The CDC noted that studies show that people who are unaware they are HIV positive account for between 50 percent and 70 percent of new sexually transmitted HIV infections.

"HIV/AIDS continues to impact the gay community and it is imperative that individuals at risk get tested. This year's national campaign message is 'it's better to know.' It is better to know your status to keep you and your partner safe, to get access to services available to you if you are positive, and to be responsible. We are reaching out to everyone to get tested as there are more than one million people across the country living with HIV and many don't know it," said Candice Nichols, Executive Director, Gay and Lesbian Center of Southern Nevada.

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National HIV Testing Day - add one

The health district offers confidential testing services and counseling at its main public health center, 625 Shadow Lane; a separate entrance on the building's south side ensures clients' privacy. Services are also available at the Spring Valley Public Health Center at 6330 W. Spring Mountain Road, Suite F each Tuesday and Wednesday between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. with no appointment necessary. The health district's program includes counseling, case management, testing, outreach efforts and community referrals.

In addition to the traditional blood test, the health district offers the OraSure HIV-1 oral fluid test that does not utilize needles as well as the OraQuick Advanced Rapid HIV Antibody Test. Same day results are available with the OraQuick test, which is administered Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., and Thursday morning from 8 a.m. until noon. There is a \$25 fee for the same-day test.