



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 2008

Health District to offer free, rapid HIV testing in October
Recognizes *Nat'l Coming Out Day*, Oct. 11/ *Nat'l Latino AIDS Awareness Day*, Oct. 15

LAS VEGAS – Throughout October, the Southern Nevada Health District will offer free and confidential, rapid HIV testing in recognition of National Coming Out Day, Saturday, Oct. 11 and National Latino AIDS Awareness Day, Wednesday, Oct. 15. Testing will be available Mondays through Wednesdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. and Thursdays between 8 a.m. and noon inside Annex A at the health district's 625 Shadow Lane location. For additional information about National Coming Out Day visit www.hrc.com and for National Latino AIDS Awareness Day, visit www.hhs.gov. For information about the Southern Nevada Health District's HIV/AIDS program, visit www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org or call (702) 759-0702.

In Southern Nevada, Hispanics account for 17 percent and men who have sexual relations with men account for 74 percent of the 2,558 people with AIDS. Currently, there are 3,429 residents who are living with HIV; of these, 17 percent are Hispanic and 66 percent are men who have sexual relations with men.

In 2006, 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 do not know they are HIV positive account for between 50 percent and 70 percent of new sexually transmitted HIV infections.

The health district regularly offers confidential testing services at its main public health center; a separate entrance on the building's south side ensures clients' privacy. In addition to testing, the Southern Nevada Health District's HIV/AIDS program includes counseling, case management, outreach efforts and community referrals.