



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2009

### **Southern Nevada Health District encourages HIV/STD testing**

**LAS VEGAS** – During the first three months of 2009, Southern Nevada recorded 2,249 cases of Chlamydia, 437 cases of gonorrhea, and more than 40 syphilis cases. Each of these can be easily treated and cured. As part of National STD Awareness Month, the Southern Nevada Health District encourages everyone to get tested and get the facts about sexually transmitted diseases. Free rapid HIV testing will be available throughout the month. The health district's STD clinic provides testing, treatment, exams, referrals, and counseling. All visits are confidential. The clinic is open Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. For information, contact the clinic at (702) 759-0708 or visit the health district website [www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org](http://www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org).

Last year, the health district reported more than 7,800 Chlamydia cases, 1,936 cases of gonorrhea and 300 syphilis cases. Southern Nevada is in the middle of a nationwide syphilis outbreak. The health district's drop-in clinic provides low-cost services. Exams, including treatment (if necessary) are \$30. The clinic is located inside the main location, 625 Shadow Lane. Diagnosis and treatment of several STDs are provided as well as test result reports, high-risk behavior counseling, and referrals.

There are nearly 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases in the United States annually and more than half of these are young people between the ages of 15 and 24. Because symptoms do not develop, people are not aware they are infected and unknowingly infect their partners. The highest rates of infection occur in young women, African Americans, men who have sex with men, and individuals who have limited or no access to health care. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends routine Chlamydia testing for women under age 26, and for women who are pregnant or have new or multiple partners. CDC also recommends routine HIV testing for those ages 13-64. Untreated STDs are the leading cause of infertility among women; STDs increase the risk of HIV transmission for men and women.

Additional STD and HIV testing are available at the following locations:

Each Monday and Thursday, 1 p.m. – 6 p.m., the Gay and Lesbian Center of Southern Nevada, 933 East Sahara, inside Commercial Center. Free STD testing and rapid HIV testing are available. For additional information call (702) 733-9800.

Free testing is also available each Tuesday between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the North Las Vegas Recreation Center, 1638 N Bruce St. For additional information contact (702) 642-3667.