

News Release

Contact: Jennifer Sizemore
(702) 383-1225

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plague warning issued for Mount Charleston area

(Las Vegas, Nev. – June 26, 2001) – Two feral cats have tested positive for plague in the Mount Charleston area. The Clark County Health District is advising people to avoid contact with rodents and wild animals. People living in the area or visiting may be exposed to rodent fleas during outdoor activity and should use insect repellent. Pets should be protected with flea and tick collars and domestic cats kept indoors. Feral cats should be avoided and not fed. Additionally, dead or sick animals should always be avoided and reported to an official at the campground or the Clark County Health District.

Preventive guidelines include watching for plague activity in rodent populations where plague is known to occur; eliminating sources of food and nesting places for rodents around homes, work places, and recreation areas; removing brush, rock piles, junk, cluttered firewood, and potential-food supplies, such as pet and wild animal food.

Human plague is rare and appears in one of three forms: bubonic plague (the most common), septicemic plague and pneumonic plague. It is an acute bacterial illness that is typically, but rarely, transmitted to humans by the bite of infectious fleas, direct contact with an infected animal, or inhalation of respiratory droplets from an infected animal. When diagnosed early, the disease responds well to antibiotic treatment. Plague is found in rodent populations throughout the western United States mountain ranges. Symptoms of bubonic

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plague may include swollen glands, fever, chills, headache, and extreme exhaustion. Anyone exhibiting these symptoms after a possible exposure to infected rodents, rabbits, or fleas should consult their physician.

For more information, contact the Clark County Health District at 383-1251.

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