



Public Health Press Release

February 17, 2011

Amador Public Health, 10877 Conductor Blvd, Ste 400 Sutter Creek, CA 95685
Phone (209) 223-6407 Fax (209)223-1562
publichealth@co.amador.ca.us

New Rule for School: 2011 Immunization Requirements for Junior & Senior High School

The child's primary health care provider, or "medical home," is the best resource to receive and document the pertussis vaccine.

Sutter Creek, Ca. A new state law requires all California public and private school students in grades 7-12 to be immunized against pertussis or "whooping cough" before they start school this fall. Amador County Unified School District officials expect this to impact at least 2000 students within the district. Amador County Public Health and Sutter Amador Hospital advise parents and guardians to contact their primary care provider now to "avoid the rush" since the law takes effect on July 1.

"Re-immunizing your loved one this year will not only protect your child but also scores of infants in the community who do not have the ability to fight off this very serious infection," emphasized Dr. David Stone, Pediatrician, Sutter Amador Hospital.

State lawmakers passed the new policy after California experienced the highest increase in whooping cough cases since 1947. Last year, 10 infants died from the disease and more than 8,600 people were infected in the state. This new immunization requirement can be met if the child receives one dose of the Tdap (tetanus/pertussis) vaccine on or after their 7th birthday.

"We expect the number of students who will need a pertussis vaccine this year to be much greater than previous years, so don't wait," commented Dr. Bob Hartmann, Amador County Health Officer. "Ask your healthcare provider to vaccinate your child now and take the documentation to your school before the end of the school year." All students entering 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades – current, new, and transfers – in public and private schools will need to show proof of the vaccination before starting school in August. A copy of the immunization verification form can be found on the Amador County Public Health website: www.co.amador.ca.us/depts/public_health.

"Re-immunizing your loved one this year will not only protect your child but also scores of infants in the community who do not have the ability to fight off this very serious infection," emphasized Dr. David Stone, Pediatrician, Sutter Amador Hospital.

New Rule for School (cont.)

“We expect the number of students who will need a pertussis vaccine this year to be much greater than previous years, so don’t wait,” commented Dr. Bob Hartmann, Amador County Health Officer. ”

Amador County Public Health officials confirm four additional whooping cough cases reported in the county in early February. Pertussis is a lung infection that causes severe coughing fits, can have symptoms last for months and can be fatal, especially in young infants. The immunity received in early childhood wears off over time, leaving older students and adults unprotected. Immunization with Tdap can protect students, schools and communities against whooping cough.

The child’s primary health care provider, or “medical home,” is the best resource to receive and document the pertussis vaccine. Other resources in the community include Amador County Public Health and some local pharmacies. For Public Health immunization clinic information call 223-6407 or call your local pharmacy to ask if they are offering the vaccine.

###