



**COMAL COUNTY, TEXAS
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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Public Health Office needs volunteers for plague-response exercise

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, SEPTEMBER 21, 2015:

NEW BRAUNFELS — Volunteers are needed for an upcoming exercise testing the systems Comal County has in place to dispense antibiotics and vaccines in the event of a major outbreak of contagious disease.

The exercise – from 8 a.m. to noon Friday, Oct. 2 – will simulate the distribution of antibiotics to combat an outbreak of plague. It is part of a joint four-day exercise coordinated by the Texas Department of State Health Services Region 8 in San Antonio.

Volunteers are needed to drive through the dispensing site at Tree of Life Church so that county workers have enough people to whom they can distribute the medicine.

“All we need are people who are willing to volunteer their time and drive through the lanes we’ll set up,” said Chris Washington, emergency preparedness coordinator in the county’s Public Health Office. “You won’t need to leave your car, but you’ll be helping keep your family, friends and neighbors safe by helping us stay trained and ready in case of a major public-health event.”

Plague is a highly contagious and deadly disease responsible for millions of deaths, especially during the Middle Ages, but it is also easily treated with antibiotics; the Region 8 exercise tests the San Antonio-area’s ability to quickly dispense the medication to counties, and from there to residents, in the event of a major outbreak.

In order to prepare and conduct the exercise, the Public Health Office will be closed 10:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 1, and open that Friday from 1-4:30 p.m.

Those interested in volunteering should call or email Washington by Tuesday, Sept. 29.

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