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**Flu and pneumonia related deaths**

JOHNSON COUNTY, KAN. (Jan 11, 2018) A preliminary review of death certificates and cremation permits by Dr. Robert L. Prosser, Johnson County Coroner, indicate an increase in the number of flu and pneumonia related deaths for this time of year. This finding compares to what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is reporting about increased flu activity nationwide.

“It’s not too late to get your flu shot!” states Lougene Marsh, director of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment. “The best way to protect yourself from the flu and its complications is to get a flu shot and wash your hands frequently.

In Kansas, flu is not reportable to public health authorities except in deaths of children under 18 years of age. Information about seasonal flu is gathered through surveillance sites (schools, doctors offices, urgent care clinics).

“Although children and elderly are more susceptible to significant complications from flu leading to death, it can affect any age and lead to serious health issues and unfortunately, even death,” said Marsh.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that as many as 56,000 people die from the flu every year in the Unites States.

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