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Results of May 5th TB testing at Olathe Northwest High School

JOHNSON COUNTY, KAN. (MAY 8, 2015) – Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) report that out of the 218 individuals tested for tuberculosis (TB) at Olathe Northwest High School on May 5th, nine (9) people have tested positive for the infection. Health officials have called those with positive TB infection test results and letters were mailed to the homes of those with negative test results (no infection). Anyone with questions about their results can call the JCDHE TB phone line 913-826-1224.

These 218 individuals were previously tested for TB, but due to their potential exposure during the second semester of school, were retested this week to ensure they did not have TB infection. At this time there is no additional testing scheduled.

People with TB infection are not contagious, do not feel sick, and do not have TB symptoms. People with TB disease can spread the bacteria to others, feel sick and can have symptoms including fever, night sweats, cough and weight loss.

Individuals with positive test results will take a chest x-ray and begin treatment to kill the TB bacteria with antibiotics to prevent the development of TB disease. The treatment time frame can take anywhere from 3-9 months to complete. Chest x-rays and medication will be provided free of charge by KDHE and JCDHE.

“Early identification and treatment of TB infection is the best way to prevent any progression to TB disease,” said Lougene Marsh, director of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment. “Throughout this investigation, JCDHE has worked closely with the school and KDHE to ensure that all precautions are being taken for the safety of everyone in the school and the community.”

For more information about TB, visit www.cdc.gov/tb, JCDHE’s website, www.jocogov.org/jcdhe or KDHE’s website, www.kdheks.gov/tuberculosis.

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About Johnson County, Kansas

Located in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 560,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. For more information visit the county’s website at www.jocogov.org.