



## **SHAPE**

SAFETY & HEALTH IN ARTS  
PRODUCTION & ENTERTAINMENT

### **SWINE FLU UPDATE**

*Updated: Monday July 6, 2009*

The World Health Organization has confirmed that the new strain of influenza known as H1N1 (also called “swine flu”) is considered a pandemic influenza, meaning that it spreads easily between humans and affects a wide geographic area. Currently, H1N1 is about as serious as seasonal influenza, which occurs annually throughout the world. The spread of H1N1 is no longer associated with different regions of the world.

As employers and workers in the film and performing arts industries, we have the same responsibilities as other industries. Due to the declaration of a pandemic, **all workplaces are expected to put an Exposure Control Plan into place.**

Putting an Exposure Control Plan into place is not time consuming or difficult. It is really a question of assessing the risk in your workplace, putting practices in place which reduce the risk of exposure, including personal protective equipment if needed, and going through a brief education process with everyone in the workplace.

SHAPE has developed an Exposure Control Plan which addresses the issues likely to be found in the Motion Picture and Performing Arts Industries. The SHAPE Exposure Control Plan ([http://shape.bc.ca/news/Swine\\_Flu\\_Exposure.pdf](http://shape.bc.ca/news/Swine_Flu_Exposure.pdf)) can be used as is or adapted for your place of employment. For more information, see the Employer information section of this update.

**To protect yourself**, practice general preventative measures:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer
- Cough and sneeze in your arm or sleeve
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth – germs spread that way
- Keep doing what you normally do, but stay home if you are sick
- Practice good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping physically active.
- Avoid close contact with people who appear unwell or have a cough or fever
- Talk to a health professional if you experience severe flu-like symptoms.

**If you are sick:**

- Stay at home to reduce the risk of spreading infection.
- If you experience severe flu-like symptoms, talk to a health professional (HealthLinkBC is available to all British Columbians by dialing “811”). Contact your Doctor before visiting them.
- If it is not possible to contact your healthcare provider in advance, communicate your suspicion of having swine influenza immediately upon arrival at the healthcare facility.
- Take care to cover your nose and mouth during travel.

**Important information for Employers:**

British Columbia employers have a responsibility to protect their workers from all work-related hazards, including exposure to infectious diseases like influenza. When a worker is at risk, or may reasonably be expected to be at risk, of harmful contact with a biological agent specified by WorkSafeBC, the employer is required to implement an exposure control plan as specified in Section 5.54 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

SHAPE has developed an Exposure Control Plan which addresses the issues likely to be found in the Motion Picture and Performing Arts Industries. That plan ([http://shape.bc.ca/news/Swine\\_Flu\\_Exposure.pdf](http://shape.bc.ca/news/Swine_Flu_Exposure.pdf)) can be used as is or adapted for your place of employment.

For assistance with implementing or adapting SHAPE’s Exposure Control Plan, give us a call at 604-733-4682 or send us an email at [info@shape.bc.ca](mailto:info@shape.bc.ca)

For WorkSafeBC’s Influenza Prevention information, please see [http://www.worksafebc.com/news\\_room/features/2009/new\\_042909.asp](http://www.worksafebc.com/news_room/features/2009/new_042909.asp)

The information distributed by SHAPE has been compiled from the following sources:  
Public Health Agency of Canada, [www.publichealth.gc.ca](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca)  
WorkSafeBC [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)