



GIPSA News

A newsletter for the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

September 2009

14th Annual Administrator's Awards Nominations

J. Dudley Butler, Washington, DC

I'm pleased to announce that the GIPSA Employee Recognition Committee is now accepting nominations for the 14th Annual Administrator's Awards.

The past 13 years of Administrator's Awards have offered unique opportunities for GIPSA employees to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our coworkers – those who went the extra mile, made an extra effort, did something especially noteworthy, or just work at an exemplary level each day. This year, we expect to continue the tradition of acknowledging the contributions of our fellow employees. Remember, anyone may nominate anyone, regardless of grade level. Administrator's Awards are given for the following categories:

1. **Distinguished and Superior Individual Awards** are for employees who make extra effort to fulfill GIPSA's mission.
2. **Distinguished and Superior Group Awards** for those teams or a group of GIPSA employees who have come together to meet an Agency need.

3. **EEO/Civil Rights Awards** recognize an individual(s) who contributes to ensuring that GIPSA is free from prejudice and discrimination.
4. **Safety Awards** are for individual(s) who have helped make our work environment safer and healthier.
5. **GIPSA Support Awards** recognize a non-GIPSA employee who has provided direction or support that has furthered the Agency's effectiveness.

The deadline for submitting your nomination this year is **October 26, 2009** (nominations must be "postmarked" by this date — U.S. post office, fax, or e-mail).

Mail:

Employee Recognition Committee
Office of the Administrator
USDA/GIPSA
STOP 3611
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3611

Fax: 202-720-4628

E-mail: Ruth.Ortiz@usda.gov.

For a sample nomination, please see Attachment 2-B of GIPSA Directive 4451.1, "Employee Recognition Program." Please address the selection criteria for Distinguished and Superior Individual Awards, EEO/Civil Rights Awards, and Safety Awards in Chapter 4 of the directive.

If you have questions about the program, please contact committee chair **Ruth Ortiz**, 202-720-6719.

After more than a dozen years, we may become complacent and take exceptional contributions for granted. **Please don't!** People are what make GIPSA the productive, successful organization it is today. Over the next 2 months, please take the time to look around and use the Administrator's Awards to recognize those who play a vital role in our success.

I look forward to seeing this year's nominations!

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Korey DeBerg, auditor, joined the Midwestern Regional Office (MRO). **Korey** is a recent graduate of Drake University with a double major in accounting and finance. His family owns and operates a hog and grain farm in north central Iowa. He is currently studying for his Certified Public Accountant (CPA) certification, and expects to sit for the exam in late fall 2009.

Jenna Gilmer, auditor, joined the MRO. **Jenna** is a recent graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, with a degree in accounting. She sat for the CPA exam in July and is now anxiously awaiting the results.

Casey Kramer joined the MRO as a resident auditor in Cincinnati, Ohio. **Casey** has a Bachelor's de-

gree in accounting from the University of Kentucky, and a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Kentucky. For the past few years, **Casey** worked at the largest public accounting firm in Central Kentucky as a tax accountant, auditor, and consultant. In 2007, he obtained his CPA certification in the state of Kentucky.

Susan McBryde, Texas market inspector, has been selected as the resident agent for Louisiana and southern Arkansas.

Sherri Murphy is the new program analyst with the Policies and Procedures Branch, Field Management Division. Among her other duties, **Sherri** will be responsible for the FGIS clothing program and FGIS directives reviews.

Marianne Plaus is the new director of Management and Budget Services, which is comprised of the former Management Support Staff and Budget and Planning Staff. **Marianne** is responsible for administering GIPSA's budget processes and programs, and provision of agencywide administrative and support functions. Previously, she served as chief of the FGIS Market and Program Analysis Staff.

Jennifer Porter is the new assistant to the deputy administrator, FGIS. **Jennifer** began her career with the Agricultural Marketing Service in 2003 as a writer/editor for the Livestock & Seed Program. She has held roles in a wide variety of areas—including human capital, strategic planning, rulemaking, and industry outreach—until her most recent position overseeing the work of the

soybean checkoff program. In this role, she ensured compliance with the program's legislation and USDA policies. **Jennifer** was born and raised on her family's farm in Virginia. She was extremely active in 4-H and livestock judging while growing up, and still volunteers with 4-H today. **Jennifer** also remains active in her family's cow-calf operation, where they raise registered Angus and commercial cattle.

Charlene Beth Walter, market inspector, Mercer, MO, was promoted to resident agent. **Beth** joined P&SP in July 2008. Her territory will be parts of southern Iowa and northern Missouri. **Beth** will conduct investigations and reviews of packers and registrants in that region.

RETIREMENT

Mary McCoy is retiring from GIPSA on September 3, 2009, after 28 years of service with the government. She began her Federal career with NASA, moved on to IRS, and then went into private industry. In 1992, **Mary** resumed her government career with FGIS. Most of her FGIS/GIPSA career focused on training-related work. **Mary** has a full list of items planned for her retirement. She is going to "pursue her dreams with Global Life Missions for Women" and work with a church mentoring group for women.

Continued, see Names on page 4.

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FGIS Matters ...!

Randall Jones, Washington, DC



Randall Jones

On August 10, **Administrator Dudley Butler** and I traveled to New Orleans and spent 2 days visiting with our staff in the field office and the export labs on the Mississippi River. **Mr. Butler** and I are certainly indebted to the field office staff, who put together a memorable lunch of red beans and rice with sausage and desserts that were truly delightful. **Mr. Butler** indicated that he would like to visit all of FGIS' field offices in the next few months. During the week of September 14, we will visit the National Grain Center in Kansas City while in town for the supervisor and administrative training. Hopefully, we'll visit League City in October.

We spent the better part of 2 days travelling along the river to our export labs and met with FGIS staff and industry stakeholders. **Mr. Butler** iterated to staff that he is committed to ensuring that FGIS offices and labs foster a safe and productive work environment. **Mr. Butler** and I will be working with **Bob Lijewski**, acting director, Field Management Division, and the field office managers to ensure that our labs meet our expectations and are maintained appropriately.

In our visits with the New Orleans exporters, they indicated that we can expect to be busy at least through December 2009, as they have commitments to keep their facilities operating at full capacity through the end of this year. With very large harvests of corn and soybeans expected this fall, we can expect that our exports for 2010 should exceed 2009. This should be good for our operations and our stakeholders.

On August 27, we enjoyed an afternoon of food and fun at the annual GIPSA in Washington, DC. The event offers the whole GIPSA headquarters team the opportunity to share some quality time and bond. After an excellent lunch, we enjoyed horseshoes, volleyball, and the usual slinging of water balloons. A special "thank you" to **Tammy Chang, Rob Dorman, Andrew Greenfield, Jeana Harbison, Candace Hildreth, Ty Luckey, Pat Ogunyale, Andrew Ping, Idelisse Rodriguez, Regina Ware, and Jennifer Zuckman** whose hard work and contributions were instrumental in the success of this event. A great time was had by all!

One of the most significant benefits of travelling to our field offices is the interaction with FGIS team members and the input and knowledge that flows. I firmly believe, and have said many times, that the core strength of FGIS is the service that we provide on a daily basis to our customers and stakeholders. **Warren Buffet**, one of the most successful investors in history, said "it takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." There is a lot of wisdom in this statement.

As an organization, GIPSA values integrity and professionalism, innovation among individuals and teams, diversity in the workforce, employees and customers, and fiscal responsibility. I encourage and challenge each of you to strive to do your best each and every day and to honor and protect GIPSA's reputation. We can be proud of the work that we do to support American agriculture.

Until next month, be safe—and remember that each and every day, we define FGIS by the service that we provide.

Names, from page 2.

Also on Mary's list is finishing authoring two books, travelling, and moving to North Carolina. With a huge smile, **Mary** stated that this list will surely "tie me up for a while." We wish **Mary** a wonderful life in retirement.

AWARDS

Rose Alexander, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her assistance with the Business Process Re-engineering Contract.

CJ Barrett, Washington, DC, received a spot award for the excellent IT support he provided to P&SP during the development of the Packers and Stockyards Automated System (PSAS) and setting scanners for the new Executive Content Management System.

Keith Bockoven, MRO, received a spot award for his contribution during the scanning phase of PSAS project, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Jody Boydston-Johnson, MRO, received a spot award for extra effort and dedication in organizing and coordinating ECM training for field employees in a manner which contributed to the accomplishment of the P&SP mission.

Carol Carter, Western Regional Office (WRO), received an extra effort award for the diligence and adaptation she has shown since beginning work with the CRU Unit.

Emily Cory, MRO, received a spot award for her contribution during the scanning phase of PSAS

project, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Jackie Crull, MRO, received a spot award for outstanding performance related to working with and mentoring summer intern.

Angela Emrich, Washington, DC, received a spot award for the excellent IT support she provided to P&SP during the development of PSAS.

Mack Hall, James Magee, Ronald Hill, Shelton Buckley, and Beale Williams, New Orleans, received time-off awards for providing superior service to our customers.

Morris Johnson, Washington, DC, received a spot award for the excellent IT support he provided to P&SP during the development of PSAS.

Timothy Johnson, MRO, received a spot award for extra effort and professionalism in managing procurement, staffing, and personnel services in a manner that contributed to the accomplishment of the P&SP mission.

Leslie Jordan, MRO, received a spot award for outstanding performance related to working with and mentoring a summer intern.

Mark Kemp, Washington, DC, received an extra effort award for his outstanding effort in the Eagle Horizon 09 Exercise and his dedication to the Agency's mission in implementing Continuity of Operations Plan during emergency situations.

Tammi Lindsey, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her assistance in working on the P&SP IT budget.

Tanisha Mapes, MRO, received an extra effort award for her signifi-

cant contribution in completing over 525 entries of the PSAS scanning project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Gale Mason, Washington, DC, received an extra effort award for her outstanding effort in the Eagle Horizon 09 Exercise and her dedication to the Agency's mission in implementing Continuity of Operations Plan during emergency situations.

Mary McCoy, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her assistance with planning and scheduling hotel contracts.

Margaret Mills, MRO, received a spot award for extra effort and dedication in organizing and coordinating ECM training for field employees in a manner which contributed to the accomplishment of the P&SP mission.

James Morcaldi, MRO, received a spot award for extra effort and professionalism in obtaining an additional \$80,000 recovery from the surety company in a cattle bond claim.

Irene Omade, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her assistance with administrative issues.

Ruth Ortiz, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her assistance in working on the P&SP IT budget.

Kristen Pirtle, MRO, received a spot award for outstanding performance related to working with a summer intern.

*Continued, see More Names
on page 6.*

Issuances

Terri Henry, Washington, DC

- Issuance Change 1, dated July 17, 2009, to GIPSA Directive 4451-1 “Employee Recognition Program,” dated March 14, 2008. Issuance Change 1 added Attachment 3-C-1, “Packers and Stockyards Program Performance Awards,” which provides direction and explanation on the distribution of performance awards for GIPSA’s Packers and Stockyards Program.
- FGIS Directive 9180-61, “Official Calibrations for the Dickey-john GAC 2100 Moisture Meter,” dated August 1, 2009.
- Issuance Change No. 5 to the Fumigation Handbook dated September 4, 2006, to replace Chapters 1 and 2 dated August 24, 2009

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- Required Scale Tests, published August 24, 2009.

EEOAC Advisory Committee Meeting

Linda Alston, Washington, DC

The GIPSA Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee (EEOAC) is planning to meet September 21-25, 2009. Our meeting agenda is determined by you. The Committee’s goal is to address your EEO-related concerns and ideas. Please take this opportunity to suggest issues for the committee to address at the meeting. Feel free to drop me a note at USDA, GIPSA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 3602 (Room 0623-S), Washington, D.C. 20250, or call me at 202-720-0216, fax number 202-690-0609, or email linda.m.alston@usda.gov. I would appreciate receiving your comments by Friday, September 4, 2009, so that they may be included on the agenda. The agenda will be determined by the issues and concerns you provide. Also, please provide us with possible recommendations/solutions to the issues or concerns raised.

The Advisory Committee was established to address the EEO, civil rights, and related concerns of all Agency employees and to make recommendations to the Administrator and his/her management staff. We will be covering a number of important issues during the week-long meeting and will conclude with a briefing session with the Administrator and his staff.

P&SP Employee Library

Tina Dillard, Washington, DC

Did you know that the P&SP Employee Library has everything you are looking for on current P&SP information and policies? Are you looking for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or Work Instructions? We have them all, with no more big fat binders to carry around. You can also find the listing of all the current Sub-process modules that are located in PSAS. Do you want to do some practice or training on the different modules? Go to the Training modules – they are all there for you also. Do you have questions on some administrative issues? Take a peek at the P&SP Administrative page. Go to the CCWG page for the latest on meeting minutes, Change Request (CR) tracking, charter information, and the Change Request form. New to the employee library is the P&SP Resident Agent Page. It has a listing and clickable maps of all the resident agents by region. Each page includes information on the resident agent, county and state territories, and included entities.

To access the Employee Library, you must first be logged on the GIPSA network and go to inGIPSA/Program Essentials/PSP/PSP Library.

What are your ideas for improving the Library? Some improvements already in the works include photos of resident agents on their territory pages, a site map, and ways to link to PSAS data through user-customized pages. At any rate, please send any comments and suggestions to improve the library to the Change Control Working Group via PSAS ECM.

Give the PSP Employee Library a try today!

More Names, *from page 4.*

Glenda Plautz, MRO, received a spot award for her contribution in the scanning phase of PSAS project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Jessica Power, MRO, received a spot award for outstanding performance related to working with and mentoring summer intern.

Gerald Raymond and **Terrell Bailey**, New Orleans, received spot awards for providing high quality services to the New Orleans Field Office equipment and rice programs.

Diane Reeves, Washington, DC, received a spot award for the excellent IT support she provided to P&SP during the development of PSAS.

Amanda Roussell, **Milton Clayton**, and **Danny Williams**, New Orleans, received time-off awards for providing superior service to our internal and external customers.

Myron Simmons, WRO, received an extra effort award for his leadership, innovation and extra effort in leading the Historical Scanning Project, which enabled the WRO to complete the scanning project well before the deadline.

Emily Staudacher, MRO, received a spot award for her significant contribution during the scanning phase of PSAS project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Katie Stout, MRO, received an extra effort award for her significant contribution in completing over 500 entries of the PSAS Scanning project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Ladondra Taylor, MRO, received an extra effort award for her significant contribution in completing over 785 entries of the PSAS Scanning project in the MRO, which led to the success and on-time completion of this project.

Gerald Thibodeaux, **Shirley Albert**, and **Troy Kramer**, New Orleans, received spot awards for providing superior service to our customers.

Patricia Tolle, WRO, received an extra effort award for the diligence and adaptation she has shown to the task assigned since beginning work with the CRU Unit.

Robyn Tong, MRO, received a spot award for her contribution during the scanning phase of PSAS project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Gretchen Van Walbeek, MRO, received a spot award for her contribution in the scanning phase of PSAS project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

John Ver Linden, WRO, received an extra effort award for his leadership, innovation, and extra effort in leading the WRO through the Historical Scanning Project, which enabled the WRO to complete the scanning project well before the deadline.

Charlene Beth Walter, MRO, received a spot award for her contribution during the scanning phase of PSAS project in the MRO, which led to the on-time completion and success of this project.

Anne Webster, WRO, received an extra effort award for the diligence and adaptation she has shown to the task assigned since beginning work with the CRU Unit.

USDA/DOJ Workshops on Competition in Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) will hold joint public workshops to explore competition issues affecting the agriculture industry in the 21st century and the appropriate role for antitrust and regulatory enforcement in that industry. These are the first joint USDA/DOJ workshops ever to be held to discuss agricultural competition and regulatory issues.

Currently, interested parties are being invited to submit comments on agricultural competition issues and the workshops by December 31, 2009.

The public and press will be invited to attend the hearings. Additional information about the dates, times, and locations of the workshops will be provided at a later date.

Detailed agendas and schedules for the workshops will be made available on GIPSA's web site and the DOJ Antitrust Division's web site at www.usdoj.gov/atr.

GIPSA Leadership Development Program II

Calendar Year 2010!

Watch for details!

2009 National President's Challenge

Regina Willis, Atlanta

It started with an invitation to join the President's Challenge. After weeks of biking and hiking, weight training and leg straining, power walking and trash talking, it ended with a winner!

What is it? The President's Challenge is a series of programs designed to help improve anyone's activity level. The 2009 National President's Challenge was a 6-week physical activity challenge that ran from May 1-July 24. It is designed to get America up and moving 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. The Challenge aims to encourage people of all ages and abilities to find activities they love and to live a healthier lifestyle.

The P&SP Eastern Regional Office (ERO) participated in the Challenge with eight registered challengers, but quickly whittled down to half that amount actively participating. Participants logged their daily fitness activities and received point equivalents. The following people took top honors:

- 1st place **Cary Ainsworth** – **Cary** walked, did some household repairs, like building a retaining wall at his property, and did a whole lot of yardwork, among other activities. Ending points 40405
- 2nd place **Marilynn Gallagher** – **Marilynn** walked, sweated with calisthenics and Pilates, and vigorously rode her stationary bike. Ending points 38214
- 3rd place **Regina Willis** – **Regina** walked, treadmilled three times a week, and hit the bowling alley on the weekend. Ending points 10827

Cary received a \$25 VISA gift card; **Marilynn** received a \$15 Walmart gift card; and **Regina** received a President's Challenge t-shirt. In addition, all participants received a certificate signed by President Obama, a Presidential Champion Medallion, an award ribbon, and lapel pins for their respective winning levels.

More about the President's Challenge can be found at: www.PresidentsChallenge.org.



Challenge winner Cary Ainsworth proudly displays his gold medal and certificate signed by President Obama

Designations

GIPSA has designated Idaho Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (Idaho); Lewiston Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (Lewiston); Ohio Valley Grain Inspection, Inc. (Ohio Valley); and Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (Utah) to inspect or inspect and weigh grain effective October 1, 2009, through September 30, 2012. For official grain inspection services, contact Idaho at 208-233-8303, Lewiston at 208-746-0451, Ohio Valley at 812-423-9010 and/or Utah at 801-392-2292.

Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

1-800-222-0364

Taking Advantage of a Great AgLearn Tool

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

Books 24x7 is a great resource on AgLearn with more than 10,000 books from over 250 publishers and more than 800 videos. GIPSA employees have taken optional courses on AgLearn ranging from Excel, success, stress, listening, communication, and conflict resolution. Below are some tips to help you get exactly what you need in **Books 24x7** and to view videos and take it with you.



- ★ **How to Access:** If you are *new* to AgLearn, access **Books 24x7** from your user account and in the upper right-hand corner enter “Books 24x7” in the “Catalog” search box and click “Go.” **Books 24x7** should come up. Click “launch” at the right of the title. To search for topics, enter the topic in the “Search” field in the middle of the blue bar at the top of the page.
- ★ **Save content to Word:** You can save **Books 24x7** content to Word. Launch **Books 24x7** from your user account. Find the book you want and cut and paste pages directly to Word and print them.
- ★ **IPOD, Blackberry, or MP3 Player:** **Books 24x7** is now available from your IPOD or Blackberry, and a lot of content is downloadable to your MP3 Player. If you would like instructions on downloading, please email me at Caroline.C.Thorpe@usda.gov.
- ★ **Videos:** Use the “Catalog” tab in your AgLearn account to access videos. From the blue bar at the top in the upper-right, click the “Catalog” tab. In the left, column midway down the page, click the little triangle to the left of the “Leadership Development Channel” and select the videos you want to view.
- ★ **Learning History:** **Books 24x7** does not record completions to your learning history. You must launch videos from your Learning Plan in your user account for them to rollover to your Learning History. This has been confusing because **Books 24x7** has the detailed information on content that helps guide your selections. Suggestion: Go to **Books 24x7** and find the video and cut and paste the title into your Aglearn account the upper-right corner to your “Catalog” search box, click “Go” and launch it from your Learning Plan.
- ★ **You don’t have a computer?** Log on to AgLearn from a computer at your local library.



GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

Norma Phelps
Washington, DC

Here are the ideas received on the GIPSA Idea Hotline during August. If you have questions about any ideas or the Hotline, please call me at 202-720-1017.

Suggestor/Suggestion

Dana Landry, New Orleans, LA
Designate One Person to
Provide On-The-Job Training

Julia Nelis, Washington, DC
Set Up AgLearn Computer
Stations for Taking Online
Training

Julia Nelis, Washington, DC
Replace Carpet in Confer-
ence Rooms 2046-S and
2052-S

Keep those ideas coming in!
Send your ideas to the GIPSA
Idea Hotline via e-mail: gipsa-ideas@usda.gov; FAX to 202-720-1015; or telephone 800-455-3447 or 202-720-1013.

We encourage you to send ideas via fax or e-mail to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method you choose to use.

Wearing Two Hats: Business Process and Information Technology

Dennis Thalacker, Washington, DC

I worked for years as a marketing specialist in the then Packers and Stockyards Administration. Now, I work as an information technology specialist in GIPSA. I consider myself privileged to have been able to change career paths while remaining with an Agency important to United States agriculture. I have had the opportunity to view GIPSA's business and the process by which products/services are delivered from both business process and information technology perspectives. My experience has proven to me that the business process must be the primary driving force to deliver the best product/service available.

Information technology (IT) resources are only one of many tools that must be coordinated to achieve desired results. Some will ask, "What's to be coordinated?" After all the IT advertisements and sales hype say, "Buy this (insert the name of their latest product offering here), and all will be nirvana for your business operations." Unfortunately, there are no free rides, and this is especially true for the relationship between business process and IT resources. Just as with a house built on shifting sand, throwing IT resources (monetary or otherwise) at a perceived business product/services problem without first building and implementing a well-thought-out business process foundation will cause the same result: failure to perform as desired.

Wikipedia says: "a business process or business method is a collection of related, structured activities or tasks that produce a specific service or product (serve a particular goal) for a particular customer or customers. It often can be visualized with a flowchart as a sequence of activities." BusinessDictionary.com is more succinct stating a business process is: "Series of logically related activities or tasks (such as planning, production, sales) performed together to produce a defined set of results. Also called a business function."

Whether we acknowledge it consciously or not, we all use a "business process" throughout our lives, in both work and private life. It is just that in our work life, we generally need to specifically quantify the process and in many cases, document it. Throughout our day-to-day lives, we operate via a "collection of related, structured activities," "performed together to produce a defined set of results." We use resources currently at our disposal to produce answers to the standard business and problem solving questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.

IT resources -- computers and related applications, printers, scanners, fax machines, cell phones, networks, internet, etc. -- are **NOT** the process. Even if IT did not exist, those questions could and would still be asked and more importantly answered. IT resources are merely another tool which might be called upon when appropriate to "produce a defined set of results." Collins Essential English Dictionary defines IT as: "the production, storage, and communication of information using computers and electronic technology."

Thus, IT resources must be considered a tool just like the pen/paper (production), filing folder/cabinet (storage), and letter carrier (communication). They are faster, more convenient, and part of our current day and age, but nevertheless related to the business process in the same way: a tool which might be used "to produce a defined set of results." IT resources are not and should not be considered an end in and of themselves. Before the tools, the business process for an activity must be clearly defined, documented, and vetted. I like to say, that if the process cannot be mocked-up via pen/paper, filing cabinet, and letter carrier, then no amount spent on IT resources will produce a desired result.

We all need to take the appropriate time to build a strong business process foundation, blueprint if you will, for the business' operations, and your piece of it. Then, that blueprint can be used effectively to provision and align information technology resources and accomplish the defined set of results to which we all strive.

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says people should take three primary steps to fight influenza (the flu). These actions will protect against the new H1N1 flu too. Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in the United States, on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 die from seasonal flu complications. This flu season could be worse. There is a new and very different flu virus spreading worldwide among people called the H1N1 flu. This virus may cause more illness or more severe illness than usual.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from the flu.

1. Take time to get vaccinated.

- ◆ CDC recommends a yearly seasonal vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.
- ◆ While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- ◆ Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- ◆ Seasonal flu vaccine is also important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to prevent giving the flu to those at high risk.
- ◆ A seasonal vaccine will not protect you against H1N1.
- ◆ A new vaccine against H1N1 is being produced and will be available in the coming months as an option for prevention of this infection.
- ◆ People at greatest risk for novel H1N1 infection include children, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease.

2. Take everyday preventive actions.

- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- ◆ Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.*
- ◆ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- ◆ Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- ◆ If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible. This is to keep from making others sick.
- ◆ While sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- ◆ Visit the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1/>) to find out what to do if you get sick with the flu and how to care for someone at home who is sick with the flu.

*Continued, see **Health** on page 10.*

*Though the scientific evidence is not as extensive as that on hand washing and alcohol-based sanitizers, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful for killing flu germs on hands in settings where alcohol-based products are prohibited.

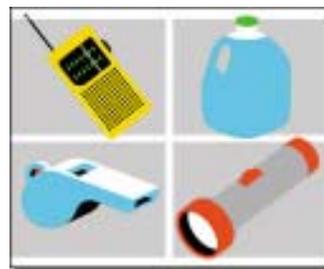
3. Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.

- ◆ If you get seasonal or novel H1N1 flu, antiviral drugs can treat the flu.
- ◆ Antiviral drugs are prescription medicine (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- ◆ Antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- ◆ Antiviral drugs are not sold over the counter and are different from antibiotics.
- ◆ Antiviral drugs may be especially important for people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with the flu and who are at risk of serious complications, such as pregnant women, young children, and those with chronic health conditions.
- ◆ For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- ◆ Flu-like symptoms include fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.

Courtesy: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Emergency Preparedness Web Sites

- ➔ www.ready.gov
- ➔ www.flu.gov
- ➔ www.cdc.gov
- ➔ www.da.usda.gov/beprepared/



**Are EEO/CR issues or concerns affecting your employment with GIPSA?
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Need help?**

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1-800-639-5167

Civil Rights Hotline

GIPSA News is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

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