



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Laurie Weidner, APR
Executive Director,
Public Affairs/Governmental Relations

Phone: (714) 480-7509

E-mail: Weidner_laurie@rsccd.edu

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Free Seasonal Flu Shots Available at Santa Ana College, Oct. 30

**** College and other partners participate in Cities Readiness Initiative ****

(Santa Ana) – Coughing, sneezing, sore throat, headache? These familiar symptoms signal the beginning of the county’s annual influenza (flu) season. Each October through May, thousands of Orange County residents of all ages are stricken with the flu causing them to lose valuable time on the job or to miss school. Getting a seasonal flu vaccine, maintaining good hand-washing and hygiene habits, and limiting your exposure to people with flu symptoms are some of the ways to improve your chances of escaping the flu this season. Free seasonal flu vaccines will be available on **Friday, October 30**, from **11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** at drive up and walk up areas at **Santa Ana College (SAC), located at 1530 W. 17th Street**, in Santa Ana. No H1N1 (swine flu) vaccines will be available that day.

“Many people erroneously think that they will contract the flu by getting a seasonal flu vaccine,” explained Becky Miller, R.N., associate dean of health sciences and director of the nursing program at SAC. However, this is a myth. The influenza viruses contained in the season flu shot are inactive and cannot cause infections.

“Getting a seasonal flu vaccine is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from the flu. Adults and children ages 4 and above should take advantage of the availability of free season flu vaccines,” Miller explained. To ensure they can safely receive a seasonal flu vaccine on October 30, participants should be feeling well that day and will need to complete a brief health screening document. The entire process takes just a few minutes. A drive up area will be available at the Washington/Bristol Street

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entrance to the campus. A walk up area is located near the center of campus. No parking will be made available for walk-up participants.

The free seasonal flu vaccine dissemination is part of the Cities Readiness Initiative, a federal effort which funds emergency exercises (Point of Distribution sites—PODs) to test city and county readiness to hold several mass vaccination clinics at the same time. A POD is a traditional method for dispensing medications on a large-scale to the public in the event of a health emergency. Two additional PODS will take place elsewhere in the county that day at Cox Communications in Rancho Santa Margarita at 29947 Avenida de Las Banderas and at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove at 13280 Chapman Avenue. The Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) anticipates dispensing about 3,000 free flu shots on October 30 at three POD locations.

In Santa Ana, the coordinating agencies include the college, the Rancho Santiago Community College District, the OCHCA, the city of Santa Ana, Santa Ana Police Department and the Santa Ana Fire Department. This is the first year the Santa Ana agencies are implementing a POD. However, the OCHCA has coordinated PODs across the county for several years in an effort to improve communication and coordination in the event of an emergency.

To learn more about how to avoid the seasonal flu or for more information about seasonal flu vaccines, visit www.flu.gov or www.ochca.org.

About Rancho Santiago Community College District

Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College are public community colleges of the Rancho Santiago Community College District, which serves the residents of Anaheim Hills, Garden Grove, Irvine, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin and Villa Park. Both colleges provide education for academic transfer and careers, courses for personal and professional development, and customized training for business and industry.

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