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# N E W S

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Office of Public Affairs • (614) 644-8562  
Jay Carey, Director

For Immediate Release  
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## **ODH LAUNCHES INFORMATION LINE CONCERNING SOUTH BASS ISLAND**

*Teams from CDC, ODH arrive to investigate illness involving 378 people*

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) today launched a toll-free information line to answer questions regarding the outbreak of gastrointestinal illness involving residents and visitors to South Bass Island.

The information line – 1-866-905-INFO (4636) – will be staffed until 7 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday; and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday. People who are sick after visiting South Bass Island should call the Ottawa County Health Department at 1-419-734-6800.

“We want to help Ohioans make the most informed decisions possible regarding their health,” said ODH Director J. Nick Baird, M.D.

On Friday, a team from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and ODH arrived in Ottawa County to investigate the outbreak, which has sickened 378 people; interviews are pending with another 150. The majority of patients report nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and cramps; a smaller number report fever, chills and muscle aches.

“This investigation seeks to identify the cause or causes of illness and establish recommendations for prevention and control,” Baird said. “It is truly a local, state and federal collaboration.”

Laboratory results confirm 10 cases of *Campylobacter*, one case of *Salmonella* and three cases of *Norovirus*. Because gastrointestinal illnesses are common in Ohio in the summer, ODH and the Ottawa County Health Department offer these tips to help Ohioans protect their health: Wash hands thoroughly and frequently; when eating buffet-style, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold; make sure all meats are cooked thoroughly; consider drinking bottled water.

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Contact: Ohio Department of Health, Office of Public Affairs, 614-644-8562 (Friday only). Media calls during the weekend: 419-734-6800 between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.