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Milwaukee Aims to Prepare for the Next Health Emergency *National Public Health Week Activities to Highlight Barriers to Preparation for Public Health Threats*

(Milwaukee, WI) Like many communities across the country, Milwaukee is working to help residents overcome barriers to preparing for the next public health emergency, whether natural or man-made. The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) will be increasing awareness of public health threats during National Public Health Week, April 2-8, 2007

"We all want residents in Milwaukee to be protected from health dangers that could arise in the event of an emergency, such as a disease outbreak or other public health threat," said Mayor Tom Barrett.

Across the nation, Americans are largely unprepared for public health emergencies, and many do not have any emergency plans in place. Vulnerable populations, such as mothers with children still living in the household, schools, and individuals with chronic health care needs, are particularly at risk in the event of a disaster.

"National Public Health Week 2007 is about empowering residents and leaders to take steps to plan for health emergencies and ensuring that they have proper resources, such as food, medicine and transportation," said Bevan K. Baker, Commissioner of Health.

The theme of this year's National Public Health Week is "Take the First Step! Preparedness and Public Health Threats: Addressing the Unique Needs of the Nation's Vulnerable Populations." During the week, the MHD will hold the following events:

- **Monday, April 2 through Thursday, April 5:** Health Displays in the City Hall Rotunda and Zeidler Municipal Building
- **Wednesday, April 4:** Public Health Week Press Conference with Mayor Tom Barrett and Commissioner Baker
- **Thursday, April 5:** Community Preparedness Community Forum. Representatives from the community and faith-based organizations will be invited to learn more about the importance of pandemic preparedness for the populations they serve.

For ideas on preparing for health emergencies visit the MHD website at www.milwaukee.gov/health or visit the National Public Health Week website at www.nphw.org