



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS CONTINUE INVESTIGATION OF
ANTHRAX IN PALM BEACH COUNTY**

PALM BEACH COUNTY—The Florida Department of Health--working with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), FBI and local health officials--is conducting an ongoing investigation of anthrax in Palm Beach County. A nasal sample from an individual in Palm Beach County indicates exposure to the bacterium that causes anthrax. This person worked in the American Media, Inc. building, the same workplace as 63-year-old Robert Stevens, who died of anthrax last week. Anthrax is very rare in humans and is not contagious from one person to another.

“After the identification of last week’s case, public health officials began the process of collecting samples from other employees who worked in the same building as Mr. Stevens,” said Department of Health Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A. “As a result, in one sample health officials have identified the bacterium, which suggests exposure to anthrax.”

While the current risk of anthrax among employees and visitors to the building is extremely low, as a precautionary measure health officials have secured the building. In addition, the Delray Beach Health Center in Palm Beach County has begun to provide screening and antibiotics to personnel who have worked in the facility and visitors to the building since August 1, 2001. Other members of the community are not at risk.

The public may call the following hotline number for more information: 1-800-342-3557.

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