



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR OTTER: IDAHO IS TAKING THE NECESSARY STEPS TO PREPARE FOR EBOLA

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter assured Idaho citizens today that while there currently are no Ebola cases in Idaho, the State is taking the necessary actions to ensure that healthcare and emergency resources and personnel are "prepared should it ever come here."

Governor Otter met early today at the Idaho National Guard's Gowen Field south of Boise with leaders from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, Department of Environmental Quality, Idaho Hospital Association, Idaho Medical Association, St. Luke's Health System, Saint Alphonsus Health System, Idaho Association of Counties and the Association of Idaho Cities about Idaho's preparedness for Ebola.

"We are taking the necessary proactive steps to ensure that the resources of State government stand ready to help our healthcare providers, public and private medical facilities, local and county governments and the public to effectively deal with the threat Ebola poses to our citizens and state," Governor Otter said after the briefing. "There is no higher proper role of government than public safety, and I take that responsibility very seriously."

Up-to-date information on Ebola can be found at www.ebola.idaho.gov.

"Although the risk of Ebola coming to Idaho is low, Idaho public health staff at both the state and local levels are working very closely with hospitals, emergency responders and others to prepare, just in case," said Dr. Christine Hahn, State Epidemiologist for the Department of Health and Welfare. "We continue to stay abreast of the situation both nationally and internationally and are implementing lessons learned from the unfortunate events in Texas and Ohio to protect Idaho citizens. We stand ready to quickly respond should someone with Ebola present for medical care in our state."

"Of utmost importance is the preparedness of Idaho's communities and citizens, and we have an impressive team working together to make that happen," said Brigadier General Brad Richey, director of the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. "As the State of Idaho's emergency management agency, IBHS is tasked with being prepared for all hazards, and we stand ready to provide assistance. An important defense against any type of disaster is a well-informed public."

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Reporters and Editors: Video B-roll and stills of the meeting the Governor chaired with Idaho healthcare officials and the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security can be accessed at the Web address below. Audio bytes, video clips, and still photos from the news media availability that followed can be found at the same address:

http://gov.idaho.gov/pr/1509/gowen_broll.zip