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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

AMSAS-CG

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND
1 ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61299-6500

DEC 27 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: ASC Protective Measures to Reduce the Risk of Hantavirus Exposure

1. Safety precautions and cleaning procedures (enclosure 1) must be followed during all U.S. Army Sustainment Command (ASC) operations to protect personnel from Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), often called 'hantavirus'. ASC personnel will follow these procedures when entering areas containing rodent feces, urine, and nesting materials or when working with equipment covered with rodent feces, urine, and nesting materials. Take these precautions when cleaning equipment, shipping containers, bunkers, and buildings with signs of rodent infestation. Train all potentially exposed personnel with the attached hantavirus briefing (enclosure 2). Contractors will ensure their occupational health and safety procedures are adequate to identify and protect their employees from potential hantavirus exposure in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.
2. Hantavirus is a rodent-borne viral disease characterized by severe pulmonary illness. The disease first manifests as flu-like symptoms (headache, fever, and muscle pain) followed by severe shortness of breath and pulmonary edema leading to respiratory compromise. Other than supportive care, no treatment exists for hantavirus infection. The risk of personnel becoming infected with hantavirus is relatively low. However, once infected 35% of reported cases result in death. The precautions outlined are essential due to the high fatality rate of the disease. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has confirmed 465 cases of hantavirus in 30 states, where many ASC operations are located as seen in enclosure 3. Two species of the deer mouse are the predominate carriers of the disease and are located throughout the U.S.
3. Similar rodent-borne strains of the hantavirus are located throughout the world (i.e. Korea, Russia, Balkans, Northern Europe, and Central and South America). ASC personnel conducting OCONUS operations must take the same precautions to protect personnel.
4. Individuals working in rodent infested enclosed buildings (i.e. igloos and bunkers, infrequently used warehouses, closed-up buildings, and shipping containers) are at the greatest risk of being exposed. Hantavirus is carried in the airborne particles of rodent urine, feces, and saliva. Breathing in the virus is the most common way of becoming infected.

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5. ASC commands will obtain assistance from local installation preventive medicine (PM) resources, the local or state Health Department, or their United States Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM) regional command (<http://usachppm.apgea.army.mil/subcommands.asp>). The point of contact is MAJ Craig Gehrels, ASC Command Surgeon's Office, COM (309) 782-2702/DSN 793-2702, email craig.d.gehrels@us.army.mil.



ROBERT M. RADIN
Major General, USA
Commanding

3 Encls

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