State health department to offer H1N1 vaccinations

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stay home [if they develop flu-like symptoms]," Ms. Davis said. "If they do those things they should be all right even before the vaccines get here."

Most people who become infected with the H1N1 virus get the usual flu symptoms -- coughing, a sore throat, fatigue and high fever -- and suffer only mild to moderate sickness, Ms. Davis said.

"People can stay home, stay hydrated and get better," she said.

Flu patients should not leave home, the epidemiologist said, until they remain fever-free for 24 hours in a row without the aid of medicine.

Jamie Jones, director of health services for the Lampasas Independent School District, noted the district has seen only a small number of flu cases. Those illnesses have been mild, she said.

As a precaution, however, Ms. Davis encouraged all residents to get a seasonal flu shot as soon as possible. H1N1 vaccines are being prioritized for the following "high-risk" groups, as classified by state health officials:

• people with cancer, asthma or other respiratory problems, heart or kidney disease, or other chronic medical conditions.

• young children, as well as those who live or work with children six months of age or younger.

• pregnant women.

People ages 65 and older do not seem particularly susceptible to H1N1 flu, Ms. Davis said. Some health officials have speculated that strains similar to H1N1 may have circulated several years ago, she said.

Although state officials ordered H1N1 vaccines on the assumption that people would need two doses, early data from clinical trials in the summer indicate people older than 10 years may need only one dose.

"That's good news, because since our plans were based on two doses, we should have extra vaccine," she said.

The H1N1 vaccine was developed by the same manufacturers, following the same safety procedures, that created seasonal flu shots, Ms. Davis said.

"It is the same process and everything, and should have the same safety record," the epidemiologist said.

Those who have received FluMist nasal sprays need to wait 28 days before getting an H1N1 vaccine, Ms. Davis said. There is no waiting period after receiving a shot to innoculate against seasonal flu.

Sales tax rebates seesaw

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down 1 percent for the year.

And in Coryell County, Copperas Cove and Gatesville each recorded declines for the month as well as for the year. An 8 percent drop for Gatesville in September leaves it 3 percent behind the 2008 cumulative total of $1.19 million. Copperas Cove's sales tax payment this period for $279,973 is 2 percent lower than it garnered in September 2008 and leaves the city 1 percent short of the $2.66 million it collected through three quarters of last year.

So far this year, according to the comptroller's office, sales tax allocations across Texas are down 3.3 percent compared to the same period in 2008. That means all entities in Lampasas and the neighboring counties have performed better than the average for 2009, with the exception of Burnet.

Advisory panel members sought

Pedernales Electric's Energy Conservation and Renewable Generation Programs Committee approved at its recent meeting in Johnson City the formation of a membership advisory panel on conservation and renewable energy.

The six-member panel will be asked to bring members' ideas forward and advise the committee on issues related to energy efficiency and green energy.

Members interested in serving on the panel should submit their names and qualifications to PEC at: PEC Membership Panel, P.O. Box 1, Johnson City, TX 78636, or to membership_panel@peci.com. The committee will review all submissions and select panel members.

Next meeting for this committee will be Oct. 12 at 1:30 p.m. at PEC's Johnson City headquarters.

Program gives students avenue to report crime anonymously

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mark for a successful organization," said Dee Spinks, chairman of Hill Country Area Crime Stoppers.

She noted that Texas has 150 units and 500 Safe School Programs.

Hill Country Area Crime Stoppers expanded from Burnet County when officials felt that rural areas would benefit from having a larger, cooperative program and a pool of communities with which to work.

Court funding provides for payment for tips, and grants and fundraisers cover operating expenses. Some cities and counties also earmark funds specifically for Crime Stoppers, Ms. Spinks said. The area board may seek a commitment of funds later from Lampasas, she indicated.

The Safe School Program is designed to provide students a more secure learning environment by making campuses and activities safer.

The program's main goal is to solve or prevent serious crimes by providing students with cash rewards for information about crimes on and around the campus. "We believe students are the best instruments for keeping schools safe," said Ms. Spinks.

To reach Crime Stoppers, students are encouraged to make contact from home when there is no immediate danger to themselves.

When calling from school, students may use a secure office.

To call in a tip by cell phone, call the 24-hour hotline at (866) 756-8477 or 756-TIPS.

To provide tips online, go to www.hcacrimestoppers.com.

Reports of crimes can be texted by calling CRIMES (274637) then tip218 with the message and hit "send."

"There is no caller ID, and callers never give their names," said Ms. Spinks. Callers are given a code number. "Preserving the anonymity of students is the No. 1 priority of the Safe School Program," the chairman said. "Not even Crime Stoppers volunteers know your name."

The program provides a reward of up to $1,000 for tips that lead to the arrest of a person in possession of a weapon on a school campus. Rewards up to $2,000 are offered for information that leads to the arrest of a person in possession of a bomb, or leads to the arrest and charging of a person who has made a bomb threat.

The Safe School Program also offers rewards from $50 to $2,000 for tips that lead to the arrest and charging of persons for other crimes.

Crime Stoppers is founded on the principle that someone other than the criminal has knowledge or information about a crime.

Anonymity is the cornerstone of the program, which encourages callers to give information.

"Our goal is to generate anonymous tips from the community, which will help solve crimes, apprehend wanted fugitives and make the community a safer place to live," Ms. Spinks said.

For more information on the Safe School Program, contact Janie Prew, manager/coordinator, at (830) 613-0467 or Ms. Spinks at 613-0336.

Funds offered to eligible landowners

Producers who practice significant natural resource conservation are eligible for financial rewards as part of the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Conservation Stewardship Program.

CSP is a five-year program that offers continuous sign-up. All eligible applicants who sign up by Wednesday will be ranked as a group in October and November, and will be eligible for funding at that time. Subsequent applications likely will be ranked in January or February.

CSP is a voluntary, nationwide program that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones in their operations. Authorized as part of the 2008 Farm Bill, the program provides financial and technical assistance to conserve and enhance soil, water, air and related natural resources on producers' land.

Eligible land includes cropland, grassland, prairie, improved pastures, rangeland, non-industrial private forests and agricultural land under an Indian tribe's jurisdiction.

"Farmers and ranchers actively engaged in conservation land stewardship have the opportunity to earn conservation rewards through CSP," said Don Gohmert, NRCS state conservationist in Texas. "This program gives conservation-minded producers the ability to apply and build on their current stewardship efforts."

Only the most outstanding stewards will be awarded contracts for CSP and receive funding, Gohmert said.

"CSP is for the best of the best stewards," Gohmert said. "We have many land stewards in Texas that are worthy of this recognition, and I encourage them to apply."

Applicants are encouraged to use a self-screening checklist to determine whether the new program is suitable for them or their operation. The list is available at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov and at NRCS field offices.

After self-screening, the producer's current and proposed conservation practices are entered in the conservation measurement tool, which estimates the level of environmental performance to be achieved by a producer implementing and maintaining conservation activity.

CSP payments will compensate producers for:

• installing and adopting additional conservation activities.

• improving, maintaining and managing conservation activities in place at the time the contract offer is accepted.

• adopting resource-conserving crop rotations.

• conducting activities related to on-farm conservation research and demonstration activities, and pilot testing of new technologies or innovative conservation practices.

The program provides equitable access to all producers, regardless of operation size, crops produced or geographic location.

To learn more about CSP or about whether land qualifies for the program, visit the NRCS office in Lampasas at 407 Plum St., Suite E, or phone 556-5572, ext. 3.

Cattle Auction

The report from the Sept. 23 sale at Lampasas Cattle Auction is as follows.

Cattle and calves: Estimated receipts 432 compared to 565 last week and 1,320 last year.

Compared to last week, feeder steers and heifers steady to weak, instances $2-$3 lower. Slaughter cows steady to firm. Slaughter bulls steady to weak. Receipts lighter due to generous rains in trade area.

Slaughter cows made up 23 percent of the offering, slaughter bulls 1 percent and feeders 76 percent.

Feeder steers: medium and large 1: 200-300 lb., $125-$127; 300-400 lb., $107-$115, few $121-$122; 400-500 lb., $100-$110; 500-600 lb., $91-$98, few $99-$101; 600-700 lb., $88-$97; 700-800 lb., $84-$89.

Medium and large 2: 300-400 lb., $99-$101; 400-500 lb., $97-$100; 500-600 lb., $88.50-$96; 600-700 lb., $85-$88; 700-800 lb., $82.50-$86.

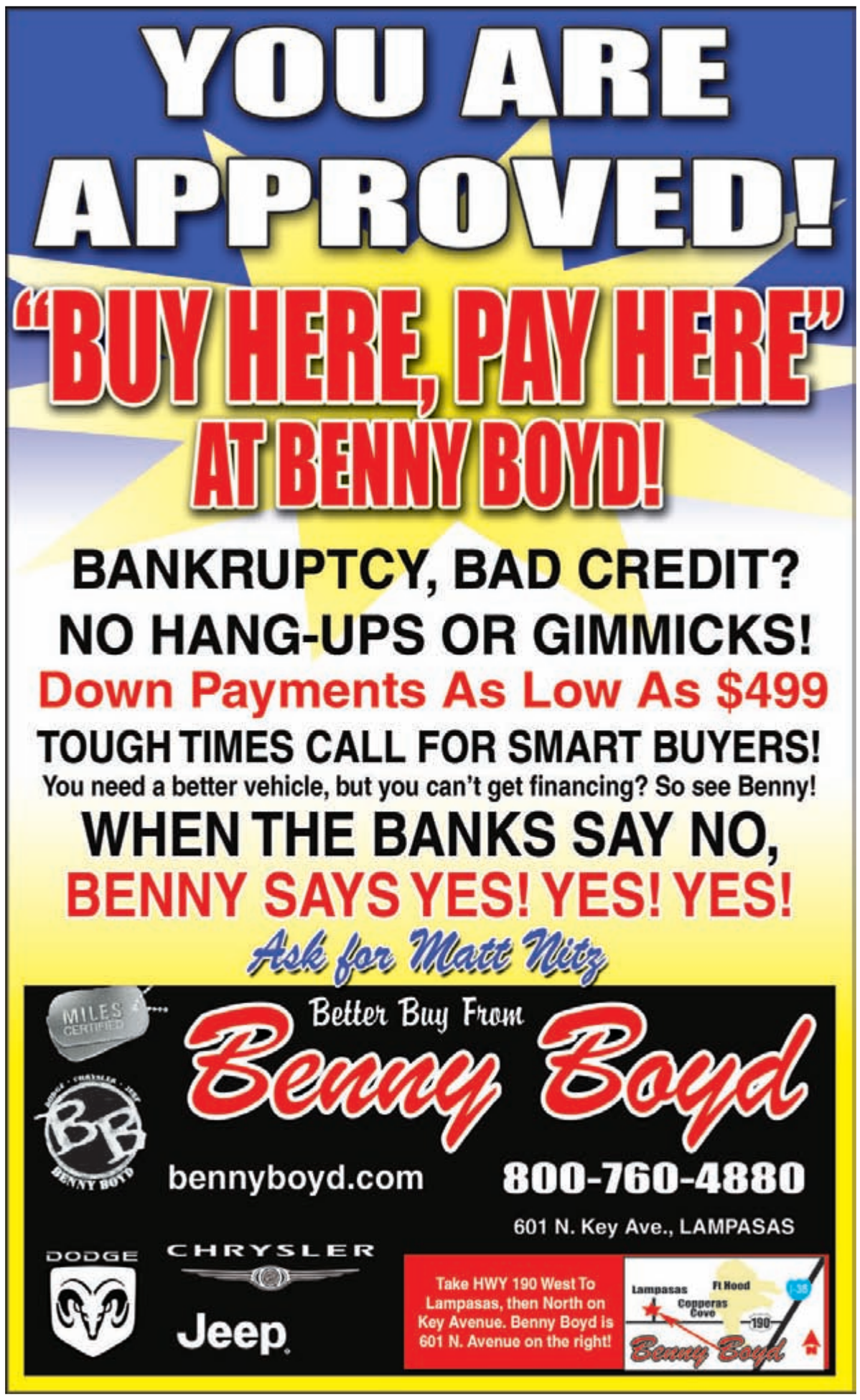
Medium and large 3: 700-800 lb., $72.50-$77.

Feeder heifers: medium and large 1: 300-400 lb., $98-$106; 400-500 lb., $88-$98; 500-600 lb., $84-$87; 600-700 lb., $81-$86.

Medium and large 2: 300-400 lb., $86-$92; 400-500 lb., $82-$86.50; 500-600 lb., $80-$83.

Slaughter cows: breakers, boners, 75-80 percent lean, 1,000-1,200 lb. average dressing, $41.75; boners, 80-85 percent lean, 1,200-1,600 lb., average dressing, $43-$46; boners, 80-85 percent lean, 1,000-1,200 lb. average dressing, $41-$43.25; lean, 85-90 percent lean, 1,000-1,200 lb., average dressing, $37.25-$41; lean, 85-90 percent lean, 800-1,000 lb., average dressing, $31-$36, high dressing, $40-$42.25; lean, 85-90 percent lean, under 800 lb., average dressing $35, low dressing, $27.

Slaughter bulls: yield grade 1-2, 1,335-1,625 lb., $51-$55; low dressing, 1,180 lb., $45.

Replacement cows: medium and large 1-2, young to middle aged 840-905 lb. cows 2-4 months bred, $425-$562 per hd.

Cow/calf pairs: medium & large 1-2: young to middle aged 1,000-1,160 lb. cows w/300 lb. calves, $950-$995 per pair; aged 860-1,265 lb. cows w/100-250 lb. calves $525-$800 per pair.