

Detection of Measles in Wastewater, Delaware County

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DATE:	06/17/2026
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Debra L. Bogen, M.D., FAAP, Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Detection of Measles in Wastewater, Delaware County
DISTRIBUTION:	Philadelphia, Delaware, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, Berks, Schuylkill, Lancaster, and Lebanon Counties
LOCATION:	N/A
STREET ADDRESS:	N/A
COUNTY:	N/A
MUNICIPALITY:	N/A
ZIP CODE:	N/A

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” which provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

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Situation Summary

- Measles RNA was detected in untreated wastewater collected from a wastewater treatment plant located in Delaware County on June 9 and June 11, 2026.
- **Currently, there are no known clinical cases of measles of people residing in Delaware County.** However, PA is experiencing an increase in measles cases in the southeast and southcentral regions of the state.
- Health care providers should maintain a high index of suspicion for measles in patients presenting with fever and rash, especially in those who are unvaccinated.
- If providers suspect measles, they should ask about recent exposures or contact with anyone known to have measles, and any recent travel history.
- Providers should gather and test NP swabs and urine for measles using rRT-PCR and blood (serum) for measles IgG testing.
- To minimize exposure, providers should implement appropriate infection-prevention measures when measles is suspected and notify the infection control personnel.
- The DOH urges all Pennsylvanians to stay up to date on their MMR vaccinations.
- Providers must immediately report suspected measles cases to local public health authorities or to DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258). Providers should not wait for lab confirmation to notify public health if measles is suspected.

Background:

A wastewater treatment serving portions of Delaware County participates in the WastewaterSCAN wastewater surveillance program based at Stanford University, in partnership with Emory University. This program routinely tests untreated wastewater for the genetic markers of various pathogens such as COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2), RSV, influenza A and H1, H3, and H5 subtypes, influenza B, hepatitis A, and measles (not vaccine related) in wastewater treatment plants across the United States.

RNA from the non-vaccine related measles virus was detected in wastewater samples collected on June 9 and June 11, 2026 from the DELCORA Western Regional Treatment Plant located in Delaware County. The service area can be found [here](#).

- A detection of measles RNA in wastewater indicates that one or more individuals that are currently or recently infected with measles shed measles RNA from a bodily fluid such as urine, feces or saliva into the wastewater system. The RNA was detected from wastewater collected within the catchment area served by the wastewater treatment facility for that geographic area.
- The detection of measles RNA in wastewater does not indicate the number of individuals that could be infected with measles.
- The detection of measles RNA in wastewater cannot determine the identity of the person or the specific location of the person that is infected with measles.
- This detection does not represent the presence of the vaccine strain of measles or the shedding of vaccine strain from a recently vaccinated individual.

There is no evidence that measles can be transmitted through contact with untreated wastewater. Measles is transmitted through the air and close contact with infected individuals.

Recommendations for Health Care Providers

Consider measles as a diagnosis in anyone:

- with a febrile rash illness lasting three days or more,
- with a temperature of 101°F (38.3°C) or higher, and clinically compatible symptoms (cough, coryza and/or conjunctivitis),
- potentially exposed to a person with measles-like illness or recently traveled to a domestic area or an international area with an ongoing measles risk and have not been vaccinated for measles.

Please note, people with compromised immune systems may not have a rash or may have an atypical rash. The incubation period for measles from exposure to rash onset is usually 14 days but can be as long as 21 days.

DOH reminds providers to immediately report suspected cases of measles to local public health authorities or to DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258). Do not wait for measles test results to report the case to public health.

Additional information on how to manage and report an individual suspected of having measles can be found in [PAHAN –822-05-01 -ALT](#).

For questions, please call your local health department or DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258).

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This information is current as of June 17, 2026 but may be modified in the future.
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