

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
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**November 5, 2009**

**INFLUENZA SITUATION REPORT** for CDC Week 43 (ending 10/31/09)

**Snapshot (updated 11/5/09):**

Several indicators continue to show rising influenza activity in King County.

- Emergency department visits for influenza-like illness have been increasing since the beginning of September and exceed levels observed during the spring H1N1 outbreak. ED visit counts are highest among those ages 5-17 and 18-44.
- Hospital admissions for 2009 H1N1 flu also currently exceed levels seen at the height of the spring outbreak; the number of reported hospitalizations remained relatively stable from week 42 to 43. One confirmed death due to 2009 H1N1 was reported this week in a woman who had been hospitalized since mid-October.
- The number of specimens submitted and number testing positive for flu through our outpatient surveillance system decreased slightly during week 43 compared to the previous week.
- Local hospital laboratories have reported increased requests for rapid flu testing, and an increased proportion testing positive for flu for the past several weeks.
- The proportion of deaths due to pneumonia and influenza has been below the epidemic threshold since mid-September.
- Several long-term care facilities have reported cases of influenza-like illness in their facilities.
- School absenteeism has been increasing among elementary aged children in recent weeks and remains relatively stable among middle and high school aged children.

For information on current surveillance and testing guidelines for 2009 H1N1 influenza, see:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/pandemicflu/swineflu/providers.aspx>.

**Case counts, 2009-2010 flu season (updated 11/5/09).**

**2009-2010 Influenza Season (starting October 5<sup>th</sup>):**

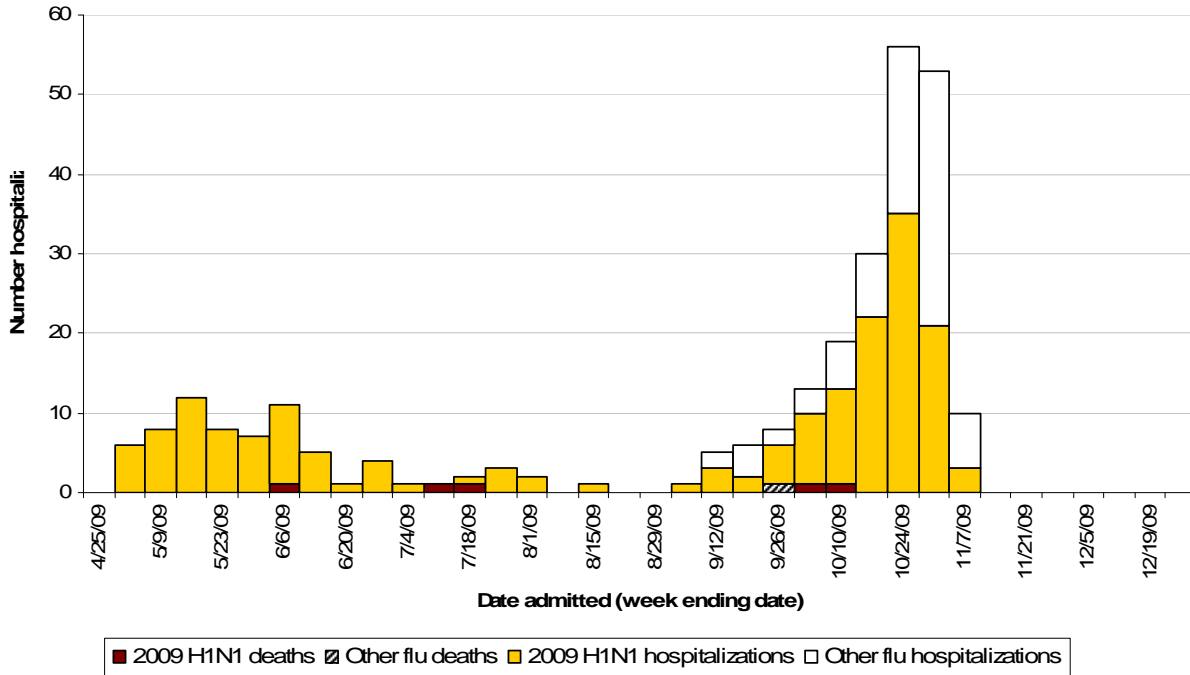
2009 H1N1 Hospitalizations:	105	Hospitalizations, non-H1N1 or not tested:	75
2009 H1N1 Deaths:	2	Deaths, non-H1N1 or not tested:	1

**2008-2009 Influenza Season:**

2009 H1N1 Hospitalizations:	82	Hospitalizations, non-H1N1 or not tested:	12
2009 H1N1 Deaths:	3	Deaths, non-H1N1 or not tested:	1

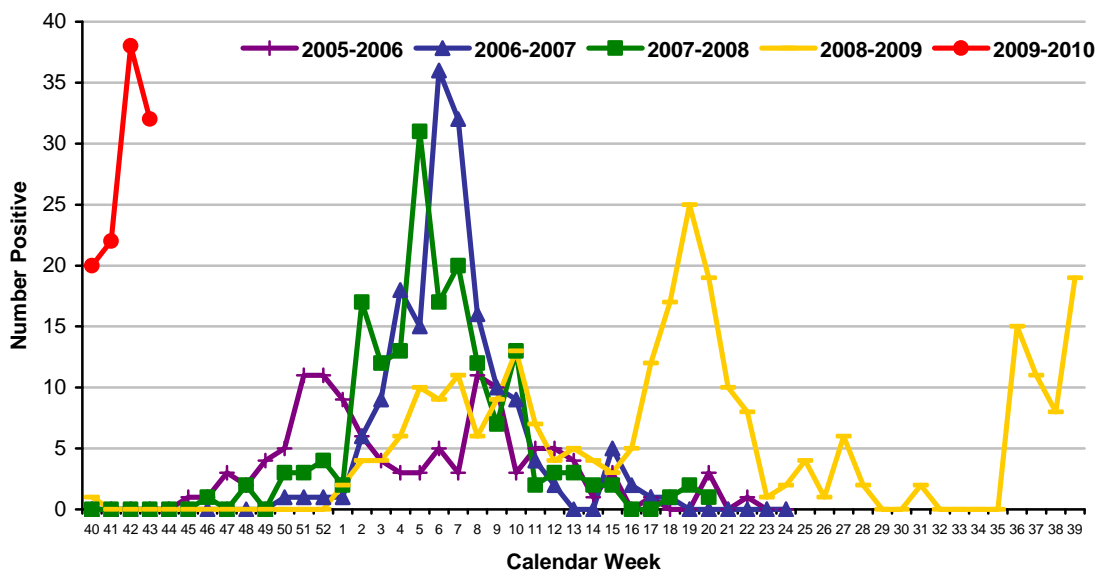
**Influenza Hospitalizations in King County**

Prior to 9/16/09 only confirmed H1N1 hospitalizations were notifiable, after 9/16/09 all lab confirmed hospitalizations became notifiable

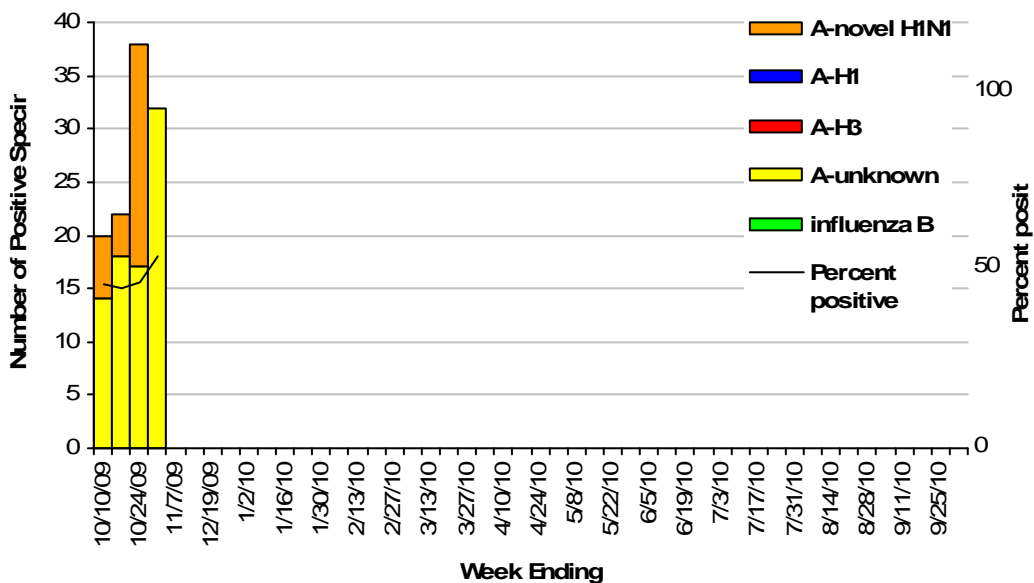


**Sentinel Provider Surveillance through the Public Health Laboratory (updated 11/5/09):** During week 43, 53 specimens were submitted by sentinel providers for flu testing, 32 of which were positive for influenza. All flu isolates that have been subtyped have been the 2009 H1N1 strain. To compare the current flu season with previous years, see graphs below.

Public Health - Seattle and King County  
Sentinel Provider Influenza Surveillance  
Influenza A by Season

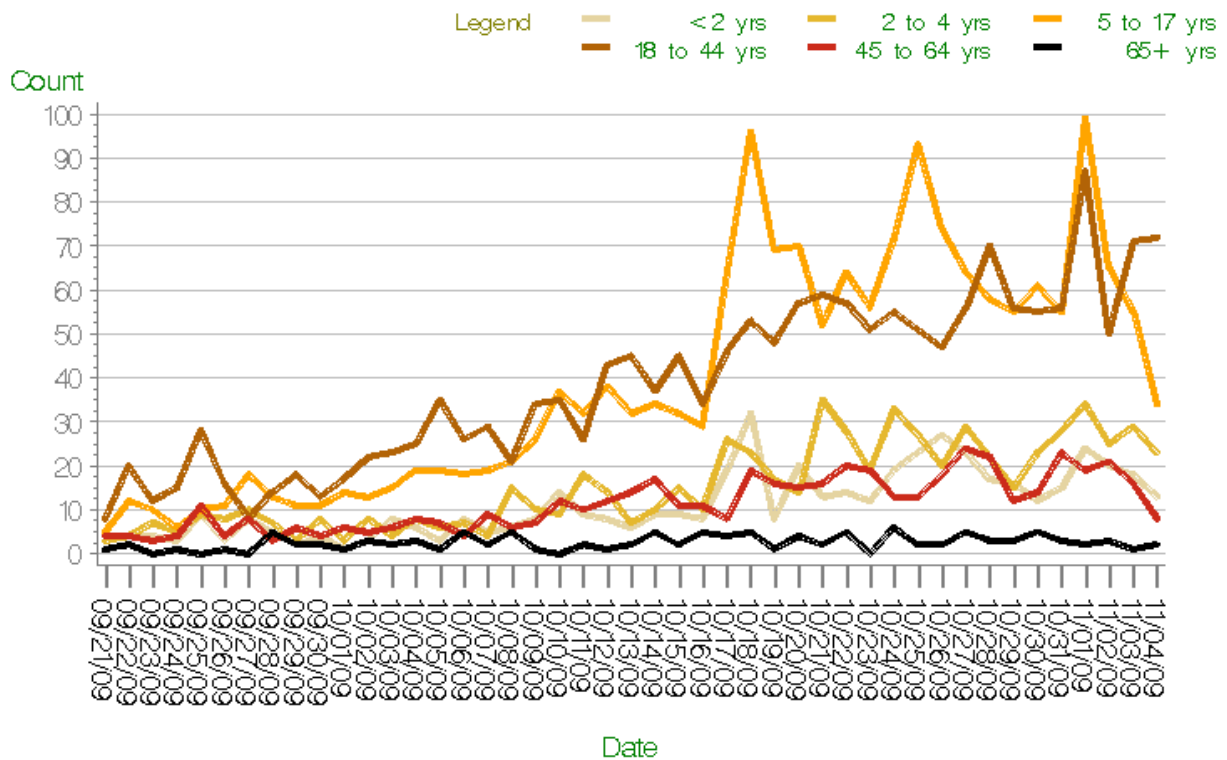


Public Health - Seattle and King County  
Sentinel Provider Influenza Surveillance  
Laboratory Confirmed Isolates



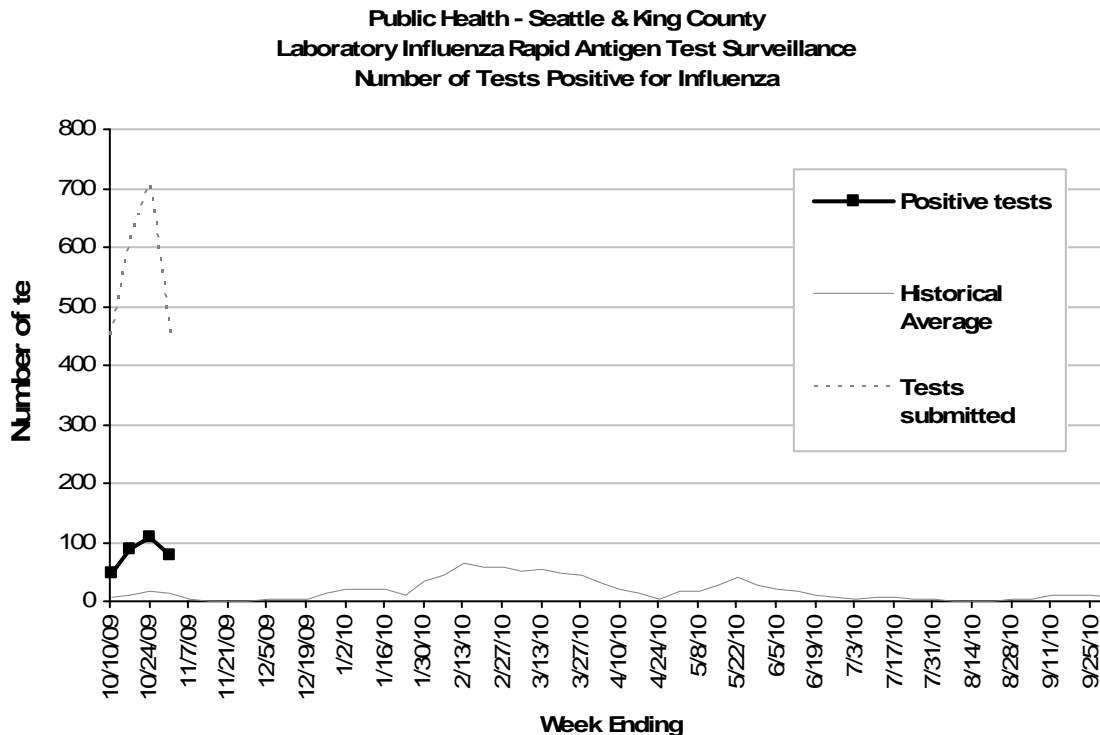
**Syndromic Surveillance (updated 11/5/09):** Compared with the 2009 seasonal influenza period and the peak of the spring 2009 H1N1 outbreak, the count of ED ILI visits was elevated among every age group during the week ending 10/31/09 (week 43). The weekly volume of ED ILI visits is currently highest among children ages 5-17 years and adults ages 18-44 years. The weekly count of ED admissions for ILI has been increasing for 6 consecutive weeks, and is currently higher than the peak count observed during the 2008-09 seasonal influenza period and the peak count recorded during the 2009 H1N1 outbreak. For the week ending 10/31/09, the highest volume of ED ILI admissions was among children ages 5-17 years and adults ages 45-64 years. Overall, the weekly count of ED admissions for pneumonia was on a downward trend from the peak in March 2009 through the end of September 2009, but began to increase in early October 2009. ED pneumonia admissions have been steadily increasing during the past 6 weeks among children 5-17 years of age; for the week ending 10/31/09, the weekly volume was comparable to the peak count observed at the end of March 2009.

Daily Count of ED Visits for Influenza—Like Illness  
By Age Group



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**Rapid Antigen Surveillance (updated 11/5/09):** During week 43, 17.4% of rapid antigen tests reported by hospital laboratories were positive for influenza, which is about twice the average proportion observed this time of year. Rapid test result levels have been increasing since the end of August, when 2-5% of tests were positive for flu. Note that rapid antigen tests are only 10-70% sensitive in detecting 2009 H1N1 influenza. For information on respiratory virus detections conducted at University of Washington's Clinical Virology Lab, see: <http://depts.washington.edu/rspvirus>

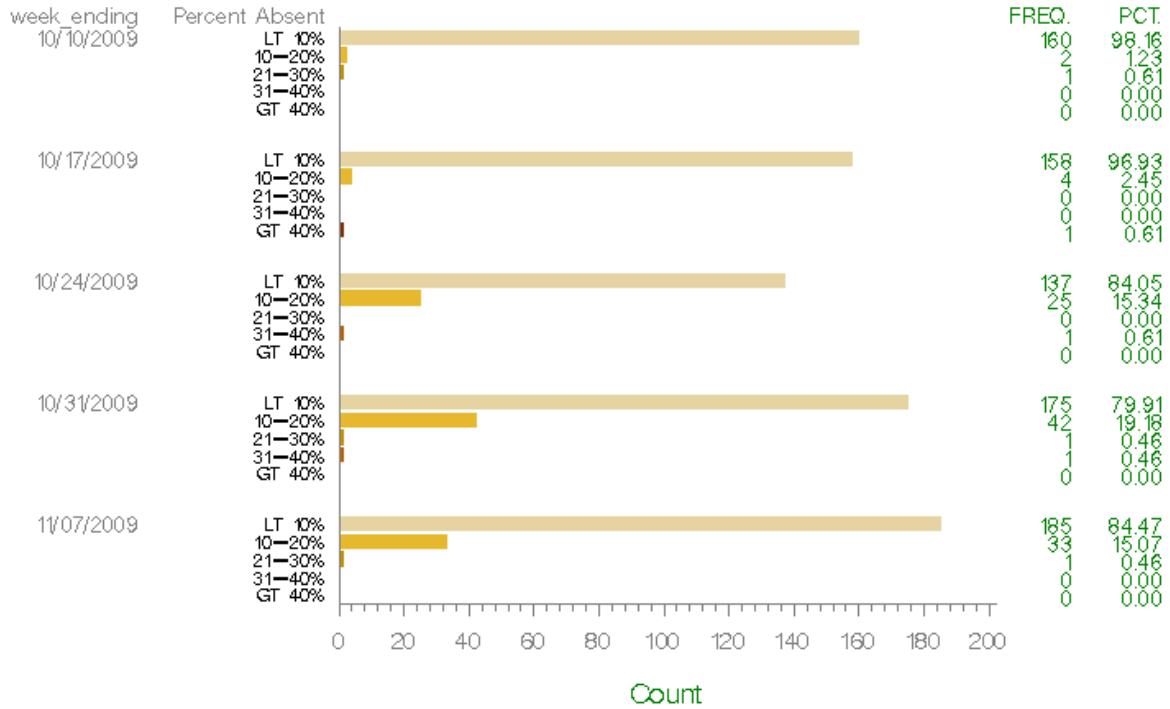


**P & I (Pneumonia and Influenza) Deaths (updated 11/5/09):** 3.7% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia and influenza during week 43 (national threshold not yet available). During the peak of flu season, the national epidemic threshold typically ranges from 7.5 – 8.0%. The last week the national threshold was exceeded was in mid-September (6.4% vs. 6.3%).

**Long-term Care Facilities (updated 11/5/09):** Public Health has received reports of illness from five long-term care facilities since mid-October. In several instances, illness was limited to one resident, or to staff who did not have patient contact. Two facilities were recommended to initiate antiviral prophylaxis to limit further transmission among residents and staff.

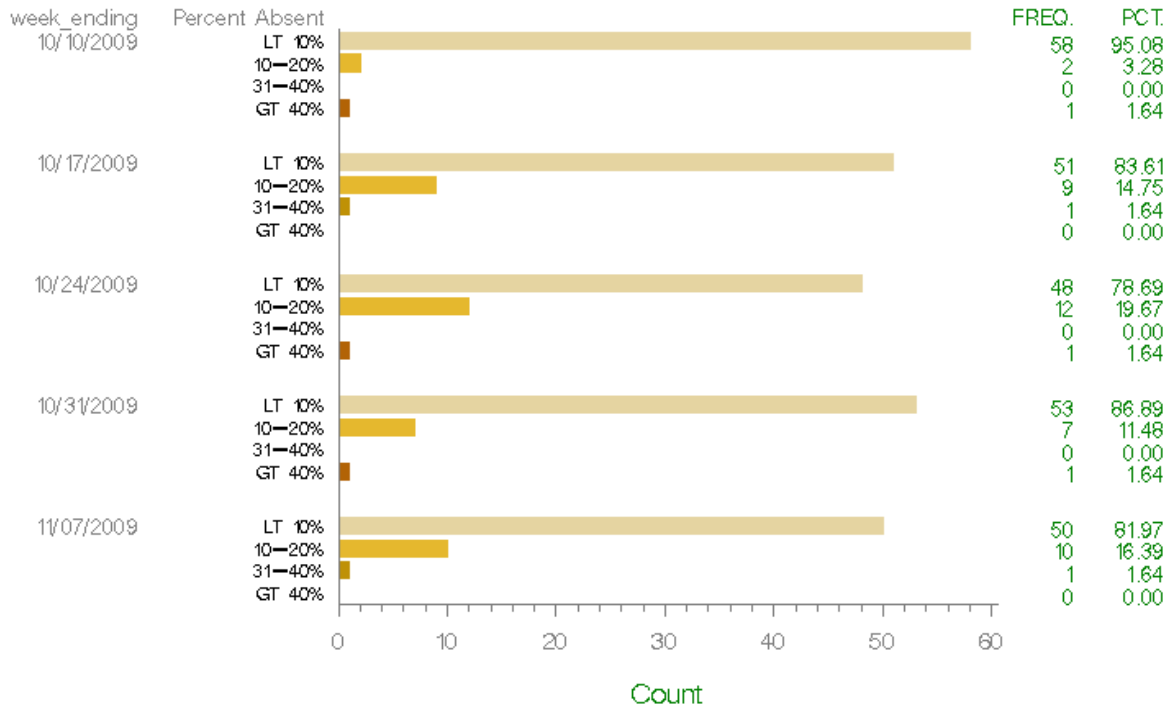
**School Absenteeism (updated 11/5/09):** Seventeen of 19 King County school districts are reporting absenteeism through our automated system. Absenteeism levels for middle and high schools were relatively stable for week 43 (ending 10/31) compared with the previous two weeks. Absenteeism levels have increased in elementary schools since mid-October. In recent days, Public Health received a report of one school with a hospitalized student, and another school with several possible cases of pneumonia. These reports are being investigated further. During the current week, one school with high levels of absenteeism elected to close for administrative reasons and will re-open early next week.

Distribution of Absenteeism by Grade Level  
Elementary Schools



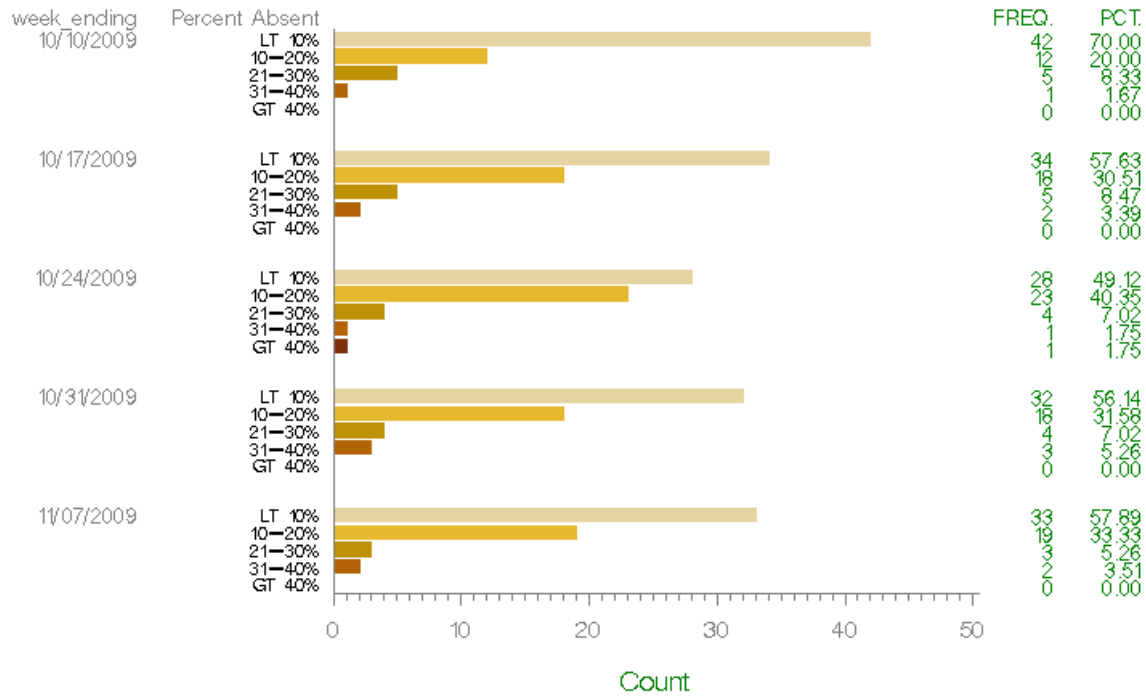
\_ALL\_, Last Updated Nov 5, 2009

Distribution of Absenteeism by Grade Level  
Middle Schools



\_ALL\_, Last Updated Nov 5, 2009

Distribution of Absenteeism by Grade Level  
High Schools



\_ALL\_ Last Updated Nov 5, 2009

## **Beyond King County**

**United States (updated 11/2/09):** During week 42 (October 18-24, 2009), influenza activity increased in the U.S.

- 8,268 (42.1%) specimens tested by U.S. World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) collaborating laboratories and reported to CDC/Influenza Division were positive for influenza.
- All subtyped influenza A viruses being reported to CDC were 2009 influenza A (H1N1) viruses.
- The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was above the epidemic threshold.
- Twenty-two influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported. Nineteen of these deaths were associated with 2009 influenza A (H1N1) virus infection and three were associated with an influenza A virus for which the subtype was undetermined.
- The proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was above the national baseline. All 10 regions reported ILI above region-specific baseline levels.
- Forty-eight states reported geographically widespread influenza activity, Guam and two states reported regional influenza activity, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico reported local influenza activity, and the U.S. Virgin Islands did not report.

For more on nationwide flu activity, visit the following site: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

## **Washington State (updated 11/5/09):**

- During October 25–31 (week 43), the number of hospitalized and fatal influenza cases reported to the Department of Health (DOH) was approximately the same as the previous week (214 cases reported in week 42 vs. 202 cases reported in week 43). Of the 202 hospitalized and fatal cases reported during week 43, 42 reside east and 160 reside west of the Cascade Mountains.
- During September 19–October 31, DOH received reports of 736 hospitalized and 19 fatal cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza.
- Almost all circulating influenza viruses in Washington are 2009 H1N1 viruses. In week 43, DOH received one report of a hospitalized patient with confirmed seasonal H1N1. This patient acquired the infection in another country.
- Influenza activity remains high in both western and eastern Washington. In western Washington, influenza activity continues to increase but may be starting to level off. Influenza activity is decreasing in eastern Washington.

For more information on statewide flu activity, visit the following site: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/Epidemiology/CD/fluupdate.pdf>.