

Swine flu alarms go unnoticed

Weeks before the World Health Organization announced an outbreak of swine flu in Mexico, Veratect, a biosurveillance firm, raised the first warnings about the public health emergency.

What Veratect reported

1 March 30, 2009 Canadian attorney hospitalized in coma after trip to Mexico

2 April 6 Health officials in Veracruz state, Mexico, declare health alert due to “strange” outbreak of respiratory disease in La Gloria

5 April 21 Oaxaca Health Dept. confirms two deaths from atypical pneumonia; Mexico National Ministry of Health issues health alert on increased flu cases; Veratect notifies Red Cross, World Health Organization other groups about Mexico situation

3 April 16 Oaxaca state, Mexico, Health Department says a number of atypical pneumonia cases detected at hospital in Reforma

6 April 22 Twenty deaths from flu in Mexico; five confirmed deaths in Mexico City; Canada announces alert for travelers returning from Mexico with respiratory disease; CDC says it is concerned about Mexico situation

4 April 20 Contacts U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to alert officials about situation in Mexico; CDC says it is investigating swine flu cases in Calif. and Texas

7 April 24-26 Swine flu confirmed in United States, Canada, Mexico

