

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Allison Thrash, Health Information Officer
Santa Clara County Public Health Department
Office: 408-792-5155; Mobile: 669-225-0050
Allison.Thrash@phd.sccgov.org

UPDATED INFORMATION REGARDING SHIGELLA OUTBREAK LINKED TO RESTAURANT EXPOSURE IN SAN JOSE

Santa Clara County, CA: Since Saturday October 17th, over 80 individuals have become acutely ill with fever, abdominal pain, and diarrhea and have been reported to the Santa Clara County Public Health Department (SCCPHD); all of these reported cases are associated with the outbreak at Mariscos San Juan restaurant #3 (205 N. 4th Street in San Jose). Many of the ill persons reported to SCCPHD have required hospital admission, of which 12 required admission to intensive care. Thus far, at least 15 of the reported cases are laboratory confirmed with Shigella (shigellosis). The investigation of this Shigella outbreak is ongoing, and lab results from additional cases are expected to arrive daily.

The restaurant was closed on the morning of Sunday, October 18th by SCCPHD and the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health (DEH), and it will remain closed until the safety of the public can be assured. All possible sources of contamination are currently being investigated.

Shigellosis is an extremely contagious diarrheal disease caused by a group of bacteria called Shigella. To help control the spread of this disease people should practice careful hand washing (using soap) and ill persons should not prepare or handle food for others.

Symptoms of shigellosis typically start within 1–2 days after exposure and include: diarrhea (sometimes bloody), fever, abdominal pain, tenesmus (a painful sensation of needing to pass stools even when bowels are empty), and vomiting. It is spread by eating or drinking something that has come into contact with stool of a person infected with Shigella. For example, food may become contaminated if it has been prepared by an infected food handler; water may be contaminated by infected fecal matter; or hands can be contaminated while changing the diaper of an infected child or caring for an infected person.

In persons with healthy immune systems, symptoms usually last about 5 to 7 days. Persons with diarrhea usually recover completely, although it may be several months before their bowel habits are entirely normal. Shigella can be very serious and in rare cases, fatal. Patients with severe diarrhea or vomiting may become dehydrated and require immediate medical attention to prevent shock.

If you ate at Mariscos San Juan restaurant #3 (205 N. 4th Street in San Jose) on Friday or Saturday, October 16th or 17th, and you had sudden onset of diarrhea and fever within 1–2

days after eating there, please seek medical attention so that you can be tested and, if your symptoms are severe, receive treatment.

Deputy Health Officer Dr. George Han and Director of Consumer Protection Division at the Department of Environmental Health, Michael Balliet will give a brief statement providing updates to the media **tomorrow** (Wednesday, October 21st) **from 10:30 – 10:45 a.m.** at 976 Lenzen Ave, San Jose CA 95126.

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