

## NEWS RELEASE

December 2, 2015  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: Melissa Propp, RN – 308-345-4223

### **Celebrating National Handwashing Awareness Week**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) is joining forces with numerous health organizations to celebrate National Handwashing Awareness Week from December 6th through 12<sup>th</sup>.

The most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick is to wash your hands according to the Centers for Disease Control. “Following simple steps can help you avoid common and serious diseases,” explains Melissa Propp, RN, SWNPHD Public Health Nurse. “By washing your hands often, you wash away germs that you have picked up from other people, contaminated surfaces, or from animals and animal waste. Practicing the four principles of Hand Awareness behaviors developed by Dr. Will Sawyer will help you stay healthy this winter.”

1. WASH your hands when they are dirty and BEFORE eating.
2. DO NOT cough into your hands.
3. DO NOT sneeze into your hands.
4. Above all, DO NOT put your fingers into your eyes, nose, or mouth. (T-ZONE)

Just a reminder to everyone on the correct way of washing hands:

1. Wet hands with warm water and use soap.
2. Rub your hands together, making sure to scrub all areas.
3. Rub for a minimum of 20 seconds or sing “Happy Birthday” two times.
4. Rinse thoroughly, then dry hands on a clean towel.
5. Turn faucet off with a clean towel, not hands, to prevent recontamination.

This simple action of washing your hands can make a difference in your home and community. Several diseases are transferred through poor handwashing and then touching our eyes, nose or mouth.

To arrange handwashing demonstrations for schools or groups, please contact Melissa Propp, RN at email: [nurse@swhealth.ne.gov](mailto:nurse@swhealth.ne.gov) or call 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, McCook – one block north of Arby's. You can also follow us on Facebook.com/swnphd and Twitter@swpublichealth. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties.



####