

## Mexico: Swine flu death toll reaches 149

by UPI

MEXICO CITY -- The death toll in Mexico blamed on the contagious swine-flu virus has reached at least 149, Mexican officials said Monday.

Nearly 2,000 people reportedly have been hospitalized with flu-like symptoms in and around Mexico City, the epicenter of the growing outbreak.

Officials in Mexico City declared the highest state of alert for efforts to contain the spreading illness.

A spokesman for the city government, Marcel Ebrard, said many business would be closed and public events canceled in hopes of containing the virus that is spread through human contact, El Universal reported online.

Ebrard said city officials were coordinating with the Ministry of Health to distribute breathing masks in public transportation such as buses and subways, which many Mexicans have attempted to avoid using in recent days for fear of contamination.

So far, all the fatalities have been in Mexico, though the virus also has been reported in New York City, where 28 students at a Queens school were diagnosed with the sickness, and several U.S. states.

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