



**MAIN OFFICE**  
1250 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
Phone: (208) 522-0310  
Fax: (208) 525-7063  
www.phd7.idaho.gov

## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 26, 2013

Contact: Mimi Taylor, PIO  
Office: (208) 533-3155/Cell: (208) 521-6722

### **World AIDS Day is December 1, *Free HIV Testing Available*** *AIDS Memorial Quilt to be Displayed in Idaho Falls*

EASTERN IDAHO – World AIDS Day is observed on December 1 of every year and is dedicated to raising awareness of AIDS caused by the spread of HIV infection. Every year, events take place across the country to raise awareness and show support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

In recognition of World AIDS Day, Eastern Idaho Public Health District (EIPHD) and Breaking Boundaries, a non-profit diversity/HIV & AIDS care organization, will be offering free confidential rapid HIV tests to encourage residents of eastern Idaho to know their HIV status. If you have ever had unprotected sex or shared needles, you could have been exposed to HIV. There's only one way to know – **GET TESTED!** The free tests will be offered during the week of December 9, 2013 and are available by appointment only at all EIPHD offices.

<b><u>EIPHD Office</u></b>	<b><u>For Appointment, Call:</u></b>
Bonneville County	525-7245
Clark County	374-5216 or 745-7297
Custer County	879-2504
Fremont County	624-7585
Jefferson County	745-7297
Lemhi County	756-2123
Madison County	356-3239
Teton County	354-2220

The rapid HIV test is similar to a pregnancy test, using blood from a finger stick instead of urine. It provides results in about 15 minutes. If test results are reactive, blood will be drawn from the patient for a second test for confirmation.

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. It is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. Unlike some other viruses, the human body cannot get rid of HIV. That means that once you have HIV, you have it for life.

HIV is spread through contact with the blood, semen, vaginal fluids or breast milk of an infected person. Unprotected sex with someone whose HIV status is unknown places a person at high risk of HIV exposure. Sharing syringes and needles can expose a person to blood

infected with HIV. Infected women can pass the virus to their babies during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding.

Early detection of HIV infection reduces the potential that a person may unknowingly spread HIV. "It is recommended that everyone gets tested for HIV at least once. Detecting HIV, like other diseases, can lead to better health outcomes if found early," says Nikki Sayer, EIPHD's Reproductive Health Program Manager.

As of September 30, 2013, 112 people within EIPHD's eight-county region were presumed to be living with HIV or AIDS. The eight counties that comprise EIPHD's region are: Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton.

In addition, the AIDS Memorial Quilt, sponsored by Breaking Boundaries, will be on display for the public to view at the Elks Lodge (640 E. Elva – Idaho Falls). This is a free event. The quilt is available for viewing during the dates and times listed below.

- Wednesday, Dec 4, 2013, Noon to 8:00 p.m.
- Thursday, Dec 5, 2013, Noon to 8:00 p.m.
- Friday, Dec. 6, 2013, Noon to 3:00 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec, 7, 2013, Noon to 7:00 p.m.

The AIDS Memorial Quilt is an enormous quilt made as a memorial to and celebration of the lives of people who have died of AIDS-related causes. Each 3' by 6' panel is the size of a human grave. Since the quilt is so large, it is not displayed in its entirety. The AIDS Memorial Quilt display in Idaho Falls is one of the larger quilt displays in the country. The quilt is a solemn reminder of the devastation that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had on our country.

If you have any questions about HIV, AIDS, World AIDS Day or the AIDS Memorial Quilt, please contact Nikki Sayer at 533-3208. Information can also be found on the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/>

<http://aids.gov/news-and-events/awareness-days/world-aids-day/>

<http://www.aidsquilt.org/>

<http://breakingboundariesidaho.org/>

###