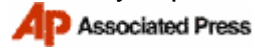


CA governor declares swine flu emergency

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SACRAMENTO, CA -- Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has declared a state of emergency that will help California agencies coordinate efforts in response to the outbreak of swine flu.

Schwarzenegger's proclamation on Tuesday sets in motion a series of administrative actions, including ordering all agencies to coordinate with public health officials as needed.

The action also suspends noncompetitive bidding for contracts needed to respond to the outbreak and waives certification requirements for laboratories involved in the testing.

In proclaiming the emergency, Schwarzenegger also cautioned that "there is no need for alarm."

The Republican governor said his priority was to limit the swine flu's spread as quickly as possible.

State health officials so far have confirmed 13 cases of swine flu in California.