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## **HURRICANE EVACUEES ARRIVE! CITY OF MILWAUKEE HEALTH DEPARTMENT GOES TO WORK**

The City of Milwaukee Health Department was notified today by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services that a planeload of approximately 100 evacuees is to arrive in Milwaukee today at 1:30 p.m. The hurricane Katrina evacuees will arrive at the 128<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing at Mitchell Field and be greeted by Commissioner of Health Bevan Baker, as well as elected and community leaders. The evacuees will then be transported to the Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center at Wisconsin State Fair Park where the American Red Cross will register them and the City of Milwaukee Health Department Public Health Nurses will be on hand to conduct initial health screenings to identify acute health needs, assess for serious communicable diseases, and assist in establishing a referral system to other county health programs.

"The City of Milwaukee Health Department has redirected resources and staff this week in preparation for the arrival of Hurricane Katrina evacuees," said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker. "We are ready to respond compassionately and effectively to the health needs of our new guests."

The MHD will also be helping to coordinate volunteer efforts of area physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and others in order to best assist these evacuees. This is important, because previous experience in other US cities indicates that as many as half of the evacuees have acute medical needs, ranging from diarrheal illness to loss of crucial prescription medications for serious medical problems such as asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease.