

Washington County Investigates Norovirus Outbreak at Woodbury Chuck E. Cheese

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The Washington County Public Health Department is investigating a norovirus outbreak at a Woodbury Chuck E. Cheese restaurant that sickened at least 30 last weekend.

The restaurant was scheduled to be closed until 1 p.m. Wednesday while staff cleaned, said Fred Anderson, an epidemiologist for Washington County Public Health. The restaurant was open until 8 p.m. Tuesday.

Washington County is still trying to determine how the norovirus got started. Several patrons reported getting sick Saturday. Public Health has interviewed about 60 people and half have reported getting sick.

State health officials received information Monday and Washington County put a team on the situation, Anderson said.

Norovirus is an illness that causes diarrhea and vomiting, abdominal pain, headaches, body aches and a general run down feeling. Noroviruses are present in stool and vomit of infected people.

Washington County Public Health reviewed the reservations made for Friday, Saturday and Sunday and determined about 1,000 people were in the restaurant during that time, Anderson said.

It can take between 24 to 48 hours for symptoms of norovirus to show, Anderson said.

Sergio Pons, a manager at the Woodbury store, referred questions to the CEC Entertainment headquarters in Texas. KSTP has contacted the company for further information. This story will be updated as additional information becomes available.

The Minnesota Department of Health reported 43 outbreaks of norovirus since Nov. 1. Norovirus is the most common form of food-related illness in Minnesota. Cases are more common during winter months. Minnesota had 139 outbreaks in 2014. The average outbreak had 18 people sick.