

California monitors 8,400 people for coronavirus as fears of pandemic grow



Sacramento, February 28 (RHC)-- In the U.S., California Governor Gavin Newsom said that 33 people in his state have tested positive for coronavirus and that officials are monitoring 8,400 other people for possible exposure.

Newsom's warning came after health officials in Northern California identified the first U.S. case of coronavirus found in a person who had not had known contact with anyone else with coronavirus — raising fears the pathogen is spreading among the general public for the first time in the United States.

The California governor said: "We knew this was inevitable as it relates to the nature, the epidemiology, the nature of these viruses, that that incident would occur."

California's warning came as a whistleblower complained the Department of Health and Human Services sent more than a dozen workers to receive the first Americans evacuated from Wuhan, China, without proper training for infection control or appropriate protective gear. Those workers were then reportedly not tested for the virus.

Across the U.S., officials are reporting a severe shortage of test kits for the virus. New York officials say they're preparing their own kits, after kits distributed by the Centers for Disease Control failed validation tests.

Meanwhile, new cases of coronavirus continue to spring up worldwide, with Nigeria reporting its first case and one of Iran's vice presidents testing positive. At the Vatican, Pope Francis canceled a planned mass after he became ill from an unknown ailment, raising jitters in Italy, where 17 people have died of coronavirus.

Fears over the virus have hammered stock markets worldwide, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropping nearly 1,200 points on one day this week -- the single largest point drop in its history.

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