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## **Governor Visits RSS Warehouse Site as State Prepares for Vaccine Distribution**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— Today, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine toured the Ohio Department of Health's Receipt, Store, and Stage (RSS) warehouse facility located in Central Ohio, to see the facility and review the process that will be used to redistribute the COVID-19 vaccine in Ohio.

The Ohio Department of Health's Vaccine Preparedness Office has been diligently preparing for the arrival of the vaccine for months, distributing adult influenza vaccine with the same process that will be used to distribute the COVID-19 as a test exercise, and running daily drills with prototype packaging to break down and repackage the vaccine in smaller units.

On Monday, November 30, the Ohio Department of Health took part in a nationwide end-to-end training exercise with the packaging that will be used to distribute the Pfizer vaccine. The Pfizer vaccine is expected to be the first manufacturer to receive the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The vaccine will be shipped to Ohio using the following process:

- The Pfizer vaccine will be shipped directly to Ohio's [10 prepositioned hospital sites](#). As vaccine supply increases, additional providers will receive direct shipments if ordering 975 doses or more of the vaccine.
- Providers requiring fewer than 975 doses, such as smaller local health departments and physician's offices, will not receive a direct shipment from Pfizer. In these cases, Pfizer will ship the vaccine to the ODH RSS warehouse, where the vaccine will be redistributed in increments of 100. The warehouse is equipped with ultracold freezers that can each hold up to 720,000 doses to be stored in the RSS at any one time.
  - When vaccinations are ready to be shipped from the RSS warehouse, the must be removed from ultracold storage and repackaged with dry ice in under two minutes. To ensure the vaccine can be repackaged safely, quickly, and effectively, ODH staff and members of the Ohio National Guard are running daily practice drills that include the following steps:
    - Each box is transported to a table where the vials are counted.
    - The box is closed and handed off to another team member who will place the vaccine box in a larger cold shipping container lined with bubble wrap.
    - Once the correct number of doses are placed in the larger cold shipping container, dry ice is added to the package, along with a sheet of cardboard. The lid is replaced and the package proceeds to the next step.
    - The package is sealed, a shipping label is applied, and the package is moved out for delivery.
    - All packages will be delivered to the providers within six hours. The vaccine will remain stable if sealed in the original shipping container from the RSS warehouse with dry ice for up to 5 days.
- Vaccine National Drug Control (NDC) and lot number information will all be tracked electronically, and parcels will be tracked as they are delivered. Each delivery vehicle will contain a GPS enabled device.

Upon granting of an emergency use authorization, it is anticipated that the Moderna vaccine will be shipped directly to providers administering the vaccine and will not be processed by ODH at the RSS warehouse.

[B-roll](#) and [sound bites](#) from Governor DeWine's tour of the RSS facility today and the November 30<sup>th</sup> [training exercise](#) can be accessed [here](#).