

Mass. shuts 11 pharmacies following inspections (Update)

February 5 2013, by Steve Leblanc

(AP)—Massachusetts officials have ordered 11 pharmacies to completely or partially shut down after a series of inspections prompted by a deadly fungal meningitis outbreak.

The outbreak was discovered in Tennessee in September and has killed 45 people and sickened more than 600 nationwide. It was caused by drugs linked to the Framingham-based New England Compounding Center, which produced a contaminated steroid and has since closed.

The unannounced inspections were conducted over the past several months at 40 Massachusetts sterile compounding pharmacies, which custom-mix medications in doses or forms generally not commercially available.

Besides the 11 cease-and-desist orders, public health inspectors cited 21 other pharmacies for minor deficiencies that have since been corrected or are being addressed.

Pharmacies that have been shut down must submit plans and take corrective actions before they can begin producing drugs again.

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