

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## Kittitas County Public Health Department Has a New Customer Feedback Process

The new customer survey link is live! Visit [co.kittitas.wa.us/health](http://co.kittitas.wa.us/health) and the customer survey link is available for your feedback.

To date, KCPHD has received and reviewed 11 responses.

Customer feedback information is now available on all outgoing communication including forms, email signatures, correspondence, et cetera.

“We want to know how we are doing and how we can improve our customer service,” states Administrator Tristen Lamb. “However, complaints about safety should still be made by contacting the front desk at 509-962-7515.”

Give us your feedback - visit our website and click on the survey link!



## Car Seat Safety in Kittitas County Needs Your Help

According to Safe Kids Washington, about 73% of car seats are not installed correctly. Safe Kids is a program that works to reduce unintentional injuries in children, but Kittitas County no longer has a Safe Kids program. The program no longer exists because of funding reductions and the closing of the Kittitas County Community Network.

Car seat safety is important, so Kittitas County has taken on that portion of the program, but without dedicated funding. We have been fortunate to receive some local grant funds, and to use partnerships like Bright Beginnings for Kittitas County to provide car seat installation checks, but there is the need

for additional car seat supplies and more certified car seat technicians.

Since 2016, KCPHD has distributed nearly 100 free car seats. Technicians from partner organizations have provided over 100 seat safety checks. “We get referrals for free car seats from partner agencies like WIC or Head Start, and we do our best to make sure families get access to a seat immediately. We do not want kids to be unsafe,” states Nea Alfaro, Health Promotion Specialist.

If you or your agency is interested in contributing, please contact KCPHD at 509-962-7515.



#### Department Wide

New Grants /Fund Sources	1
Volunteer Hours	384
Health Data Requests	9
Quality Improvement Projects	3
Health Provider Releases	1
Media Contacts	10
Code/Policy Updates	1
Total Number of Clinic Appointments Provided	50

#### Vital Records

Hospital Births Registered	72
Birth Certificates Issued	288
Deaths Registered	68
Death Certificates Issued	396

#### Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

Outreach Contacts	155
Referrals to Dentists	2

#### Communicable Disease (CD)

CD Investigations	27
Confirmed CD Cases	16
STD's Reported	50
TB Tests	11
HIV Tests	0
Hepatitis C Tests	1
Syphilis Tests	0
Chlamydia/Gonorrhea Tests	1

#### Harm Reduction Activities

Syringe Exchange Participants	193
Syringes Distributed	13700
Naloxone Kits Distributed	32
HIV Education Participants	22

## Health Promotion Has a New Supervisor

On September 13, KCPHD held interviews for internal candidates for the Health Promotion (HP) Supervisor position.

"KCPHD is incredibly lucky to have multiple, beyond competent staff who applied for the position," states Administrator Tristen Lamb.

"We are excited to provide leadership and growth to all of the candidates, and officially announce Chelsey Loeffers as the new HP Supervisor."

Ms. Loeffers has been working with KCPHD since February of 2018. She previously worked with Worksource and has



strong connections with agency partners.

Ms. Loeffers will oversee three Health Promotion staff and

manage approximately eight different grant funding streams. The new Health Promotion Supervisor will provide project management, staff oversight, and will be responsible for grant writing.

Ms. Loeffers says she is excited about working with a great team of people who are enthusiastic about promoting health. "We have amazing staff and amazing agency partners who I am lucky to work with," states Chelsey Loeffers.

## Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Visits KCPHD

On August 15, KCPHD hosted staff from the Washington State Department of Health from Olympia, along with personnel from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from Atlanta, Georgia.

The site visit was to showcase the current efforts in the county with KCPHD's new physical activity and nutrition grant.

The visit began with meeting our agency partners like Dr. Tishra Beeson from CWU and Lucy Temple, City of Cle Elum, to discuss the work that has already occurred in our county around strategies like breastfeeding friendly policies and built environment.

Visiting personnel had the opportunity to visit in Ellensburg and the upper

county including Cle Elum and Roslyn.

"It was a pleasure to showcase our county and our visitors were impressed with the efforts our county has made to keep people healthy," states Kasey Knutson, Special Programs Coordinator.

## Survey Results Are In

Data collection is an essential part of public health, so our grant funded work in the upper county for built environment started with a survey.

Survey results are in! With these results, KCPHD can focus our efforts on how to help the City of Cle Elum increase their walkability and bikeability.

Safety was clearly a concern, as were lack of sidewalks, but

interestingly, most people walked or biked for recreation, and not as a regular means of transportation.



## KCPHD Restructures

The majority of KCPHD's budget is dedicated to staff costs, including salary and benefits. For a decade or more, KCPHD has struggled with financial sustainability. "After the financial issues experienced in 2009, our agency is well aware that if we lose full time employees - we may not get that back," states Administrator Tristen Lamb. "We continue to work towards financial sustainability but realize our decisions have lasting staff impacts."

Recently, KCPHD staff in the Community Health Division have retired. With that, KCPHD will be enacting changes to cross train staff and not rehire for specific positions. For example, Candi

Blackford, Administrative Supervisor, will start managing more of the clinic operations and staff. All Environmental Health staff are cross training over all programs and working towards multiple certifications. And, the Health Promotion (HP) Supervisor position no longer includes the Developmental Disabilities (DD) program coordination. HP and DD are separate.

With the HP and DD separation, Kasey Knutson's title has changed to Special Programs Coordinator and she will focus on DD along with emergency preparedness and public information.

All efforts with staff restructuring are aimed at increasing financial

sustainability.

Since 2015, KCPHD's Strategic Plan has identified increasing sustainability and stability of public health funding as a priority.

Currently, KCPHD is operating with 19.05 full time employees to complete our mission to protect and promote the health and the environment of the people of Kittitas County, within 2,315 square miles for 46,570 residents.

## KCPHD Participates in Three School Vaccination Clinics

Mobilizing partnerships is also an essential public health service, so school vaccination clinics are an excellent way to help get our kids vaccinated.

KCPHD provided vaccines at the Cle Elum Roslyn School District (CERSD), Morgan Middle School, and the Kittitas School District.

For school based clinics, we deploy staff and volunteer nurses, along with an intake staff person to handle paperwork and vaccination record inquiries.

Vaccines are required for school attendance, depending on the child's age. Students must have proof of vaccination for hepatitis B, DTaP, Hib, Polio, PCV, MMR, and Varicella. Otherwise, students must have an exemption to attend school.

According to the Washington State Department of Health, Kittitas County kindergarten vaccination rate shows that 84.7% of students have completed the required vaccines. CERSD has a rate of 89.7% completion, Ellensburg is 84.7%, and Kittitas has a 91.1% completion rate for kindergarteners! (2018-19 data)

"The more students we have with completed requirements for vaccination, means that we have a decreased risk of an outbreak in our schools," states Dr. Mark Larson, Health



Officer. "Historically we have had outbreaks of pertussis that have affected our schools and students, but our main goal is to prevent outbreaks from happening."

### Environmental Health (EH)

EH Complaints	13
---------------	----

### Living Environment

School Inspections	1
Pool Facility Permits Issued	9
Pool Facility Inspections	0
Camp & Park Inspections	14

### Solid Waste

Permits Issued	0
Inspections	9

### On-Site Sewage

Installation Permits Issued	87
Finalized Permits	28
Site Evaluations	56
Inspections	61

### Food Safety

Permanent Food Establishment Applications	113
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	11
Food Handler's Permits	893
Permanent Food Establishment Inspections	100
Temporary Food Establishment Inspections	109

### Drinking Water

Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	5
Group B Water System Inspections	0
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	41
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	75
Well Delegation Inspections	13
Well Site Inspections	2



## Did you know ?

- Public health's vital records is part of surveying birth and death rates in our county.
- Surveying birth and death rates is part of monitoring health, which is an essential public health service.
- Washington State Department of Health has birth and death certificates taking place from 1907 to present.
- According to the CDC the life expectancy in the US is 78.6 years (2017 data).
- According to the Worth Health Organization, women live longer than men all around the world.
- According to the Health Rankings, Kittitas County ranks 12 of 39 counties for length of life.
- Cancer is the leading cause of premature death in Kittitas County.
- Requests for birth and death certificates can be made online via the health department.



## Board of Health Provides Input on UC Syringe Exchange

On July 18, Kittitas County Board of Health (BOH) heard an update regarding syringe exchange services in the upper county.

Staff presented information about the history and purpose of syringe exchange and program evaluation results. After presenting information, KCPHD asked BOH for

direction on how to proceed with upper county services.

BOH discussed the information and provided direction to put the program on pause while searching for other locations in the upper county.

Services are still available in the upper county for syringe exchange, but we ask that

appointments be made with staff while we proceed with BOH direction.

## BOH Advisory Committee to Support Injury Prevention

### Want to Help Keep Kids Safe?

All Kids Need to be in Car Seats

*For \$50.00, you can provide a car seat to a family that is unable to afford a safe, new, and reliable seat.*

Donations are accepted by the Kittitas County Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC)  
Donations can be mailed or delivered to BOHAC/Attn: Dr. Bob Davis/ Valley Vision & Hearing Associates/2201 West Dolarway Road, Ste 2, Ellensburg, WA 98926

BOHAC can accept cash or check. The organization cannot accept new or used car seats.

For more information, contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department at 509-962-7515.

KCPHD provides free car seats to those in need, but is almost out of car seats without any funding. So BOHAC has agreed to assist in receiving possible donated

funds. "As a county government, we cannot accept donations," states Nea Alfaro, Health Promotion Specialist. BOHAC, a 501Cc3, can accept those funds and purchase car seat equipment as needed.

## KCPHD Updates Strategic Plan

On September 9, KCPHD Management staff reviewed the most recent Strategic Plan.

The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan was updated in 2017, but the strategic initiatives remained the same.

Management began the current update by reviewing activities related to strategies and determined whether they were

complete, if they were still a priority for our organization, or if it was still an issue.

For example, KCPHD will be utilizing social media instead of presentations to provide awareness of public health's role in the community.

"Strategic planning is important in stepping back and looking at the big picture,"

states Assessment Coordinator Amy Fuller. "Especially when we have 19.05 full time employees who do not have time to think about where KCPHD needs to be in the next five years."