

Kittitas County Public Health Department

Volume 2, Issue 1

First Quarter 2008:
January—March 2008

Did you know:

- *The physician to population ratio in Kittitas County is 1 physician per 1,000 population, compared to 2.4 physicians per 1,000 population across Washington State. (NW Area Foundation 2004)*
- *88.2% of Kittitas County adults say they are in good, very good, or excellent health. 86.9% of Washington State adults report the same. (BRFSS 2004)*
- *There were 325 “good” air days in Kittitas County in 2005. This is measured by particulate matter at a monitoring station in Ellensburg. (DOE 2006)*

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Shape Up Implements Healthy Dining Out Project



Shape Up Kittitas County administered a local dining out survey to find out if residents would like nutritional information when dining out. 67% of survey respondents are influenced by the availability of healthy or low-fat entrees when choosing a restaurant. 40% of survey participants would like restaurant menus to include nutritional information for all menu items and 75% would like menus to label the healthy or low-fat entrees.

With these results in mind Shape Up partnered with CWU Nutrition Science students to implement a Healthy Dining Out project in Ellensburg.

CWU students partnered with interested restaurants to craft a nutritious, delicious menu item that will leave diners feeling guilt free. The



participating restaurants served the featured healthy menu items during National Nutrition Month in March.

“Aside from choosing healthy menu options, restaurant patrons can make other dishes healthier by making small changes,” said Megan

Woltring, Health Educator. “Some good things to try are using ketchup, BBQ sauce or mustard instead of mayo, asking for 1% or skim milk instead of whole milk or half ‘n’ half, and drinking water or unsweetened iced tea instead of soda.”

For more information, call 509-962-7515.

Participating Restaurants Include: Campus U-Tote-Em; Cattleman’s Steakhouse; Dakota Café; El Caporal; Ellensburg Pasta Company; Grant’s Pizza; The Pita Pit; Morrelli’s Café Italiano; The Palace; The Red Horse Drive In; The Soup Bowl; The Valley Café

A Note from the Administrator: Environmental Health Indicators

The demand for timely, accurate information related to potential and actual environmental threats to health is immense. In response, environmental health assessment is a new focus for Kittitas County Public Health Department in 2008.

There are many challenges associated with collection and monitoring of environmental health data. Mainly, it is difficult to connect the

causative hazard or agent with the disease, illness or injury. For instance, if a person were to contract a gastroenterological illness, it is difficult to make a direct connection to drinking water source. Many other factors contribute to acquiring gastroenteritis making it difficult to pinpoint the causal factor.

Sara Burnet, Kittitas County Assessment Coordinator II is

championing the environmental health assessment work for the department this year. She was paired with a mentor from Thurston County to guide her efforts with the goal of producing a set of Environmental Health Indicators.

Building on the work of national and state experts, Sara has embarked on an ambitious project of developing and

First Steps Program

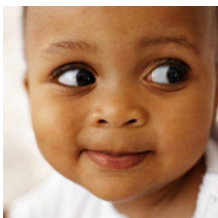
PHN Home Visits: 185

Communicable Diseases

CD Cases Confirmed: 17
 Other Investigations: 0
 Food Illness Complaints: 1
 Lead Poisoning Cases: 0
 Chlamydia Reported: 34
 Herpes Reported: 3
 Gonorrhea Reported: 6

Child Vaccine Administered

DtaP: 7
 DT: 0
 Td: 1
 HIB: 4
 IPV: 6
 MMR: 1
 Hep B: 3
 Varicella: 13
 Hep A: 20
 Influenza: 15
 Pneumonia: 0
 Prevnar: 6
 ProQuad: 4
 MCV4: 8
 HPV: 33
 Pediarix: 4
 Tdap: 15
 Immune globulin: 1
 Rotavirus: 5
 Oral typhoid: 1
 Injectable typhoid: 4



Community Health of Central Washington to take MCH Programs

As of January 1, 2009, several Maternal & Child Health programs will be housed at Community Health of Central Washington instead of the public health department. Affected programs include the First Steps, Children with Special Health Care Needs, WIC, and Infant Case Management programs.

This change will not affect service delivery, as staff, program work plans, funding, clients, and case loads will remain comparable.

“This is an exciting opportunity for our staff, our clients, and our community,” said Cathy Bambrick, Administrator. “By moving these maternal and child health programs to Community Health of Central Washington, clients will find a better continuity of care, while

continuing to receive high-quality services like they always have at the public health department.”

If interested, all staff currently working in the affected programs will be hired by Community Health of Central Washington.

Details of the transfer are still being worked out, but all parties are working together to make the transition as seamless as possible.

Mike Maples, MD, CEO of Community Health of Central Washington is also excited about the move. He has been studying comprehensive community health center models around the country, and is excited about the opportunity to develop a similar model in Kittitas County.

“I’ll be sad not to see the constant flow of clients through our building,” said



Bambrick. “But this move really is all about our clients. We can provide a more convenient and reliable service to our clients by offering one place where they can access all the services they need. Community Health of Central Washington has the infrastructure, funding, and space to host these programs. Overall, this is a very exciting opportunity for our community.

Please contact Bonnie Corns, Community Health Services Director, with any questions at 509-962-7515.

Kittitas FCCLA wins Student Body Peer Education Award

With the support and guidance of Communicable Disease Nurse Carrie Bland, RN, the Kittitas High School Future Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) have implemented a project to increase Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunizations in Kittitas County. The HPV vaccine is a 3-part series.

Kittitas HS students Ali Kilgore and Morgan Uceny, co-chairs for the project, picked HPV for their project after learning that “of the approximate six million new cases of HPV in the United States each year, 74% occur in 15-24 year olds.” (CDC)

Kittitas FCCLA implemented an educational campaign in the school, including posters advertising free first doses of the vaccine for students ages nine through eighteen. The free doses were administered at an

event on January 23, 2008.

After a brief power point presentation by the FCCLA and a question and answer session with Dr. Mark Larson, Health Officer, at the event, public health nurses administered 22 HPV vaccines.

After a write-up in the Daily Record about the event and the FCCLA’s efforts, KIMA-TV contacted the FCCLA to film the second event.

“We had not initially planned to sponsor the second shot,” said Cheryl Uceny, Kittitas FCCLA Chapter Advisor. “Ms. Bland was kind enough to ask the health department if it would be possible to waive the fee for the second shot as well.”

The fee was waived, and the second event was a greater success than the first. 17 of the original 22 HPV recipients returned for the second shot,

and 14 new girls were given the first dose of HPV vaccine. This was a great success, as there are only 82 girls total at Kittitas HS. KIMA-TV captured the event and covered it on both the 5pm and 6pm evening news.

Kittitas HS FCCLA’s efforts have paid off, as they recently won the Student Body award. This is a national award for peer education. They will accept the award in Florida in July.

The group is also competing in the STAR Event, and has already progressed to state with their project. If they win state, they will represent Washington in the STAR Event competition in Florida in July.

Good luck Kittitas FCCLA!

For more information, contact Carrie Bland, RN, at 509-962-7515.

After School Recreation Program Successful; Due to Repeat

Prompted by the Children with Special Health Care Needs public health nurse, Central Washington University hosted an After School Recreation Program throughout the first quarter. The program is specifically for children with special needs, to whom typical after school activities are not accessible.

Ten children participated, with ages ranging from 7 to 15. Special needs included

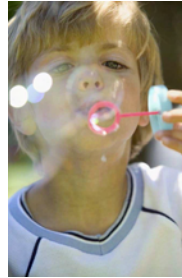
autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy.

“It was a great success!” said Liz Whitaker, public health nurse. “The next session is already full.”

With a ratio of 2-3 children for each supervisor, children receive lots of attention in the weekly sessions. Fun activities were supervised by CWU students, their professor, two high school students, and the

middle school special education teacher.

The next session will run once weekly from April 8 to May 27. The session is fully enrolled again and looks like another fun group! Contact Liz Whitaker, RN, BSN, at 509-962-7023.



Quality Improvement Leadership Team Making Strides

After a successful Rapid Cycle Improvement project last fall, the Quality Improvement Leadership Team (QILT) was chosen to present at the annual statewide Learning Congress in SeaTac. Unfortunately, winter weather closed Snoqualmie Pass.

“The weather kept us from presenting the Tdap immunization project,” said Linda Navarre, Public Health Nurse.

The Tdap project’s goal was to increase the rate of medical office staff who are up to date on their Tdap—Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Acellular

Pertussis—immunization. With high traffic through their office, staff are at high risk to contract and spread Pertussis, more commonly known as Whooping Cough.

After providing education and immunizations to three medical offices in Kittitas County, QILT discovered that in order for medical office staff to be updated on the Tdap and other vaccines, the immunizations needed to be required and free. Without these two components, immunization rates were significantly lower.

“It was a great learning experience,” said Navarre.

“Now we’ll apply those learnings as we work with the remaining medical offices to increase immunization rates. Eventually we hope to do a similar project with the schools.” Two thirds of Pertussis cases are seen in children.

The QILT team also helped the On Site Sewage program revise their Site-Evaluation process and forms, and is preparing for the 2008 Standards Review in May.

For more information, contact Sara Burnet at 509-933-8265.

Oral Health Manages Two Clinics Simultaneously

In response to a high need for dental services in Kittitas County, the Oral Health Program recently sponsored two dental clinics, simultaneously. A dental clinic for pregnant women was set up in the Morris Sorenson building, while a similar clinic for senior citizens was set up at the Adult Activity Center in Ellensburg. Each clinic ran for two consecutive days.

While there is a high demand for services from both

populations, the system of referrals and met appointments do not work equally.



“The system among seniors works very well,” said Christie Waddington, Oral Health

Coordinator. “The system for pregnant women does not work as well. This is something we’re working to improve.”

The need for volunteers also became apparent during the clinics. Waddington was able to use the Adult Activity Center’s volunteers to help run the clinic at that site, but struggled without volunteers at the other location. Combined, 32 clients received dental services.

For information, call Christie Waddington at 962-7515.

Children with Special Health Care Needs Program

Established Clients: 76
Lost or Closed Files: 9
New Clients: 22
Home Visits: 17
Office Visits: 3
No Shows: 1

Early Intervention Program

Referrals: 6
Home Visits: 8

Medical Nutritional Therapy

New Referrals: 0
Returning Patients: 1

Women, Infants, Children (WIC) Enrollment

TOTAL Clients: 2,345
Pregnant: 291
Breastfeeding: 209
Post-Partum: 124
Infants: 571
Children >1 yr: 1150
Checks issued: 2,289
% non-participating clients: 10.7%

School-based Sealant Programs

Valley View Elem: *
Parke Creek Group Home: 10*

* data incomplete due to reporting inconsistencies

Mobile Units/Volunteer Clinics

Dental Patients: 38
Sr. Dental Patients: 20

Oral Health Education

Kittitas Elem: 125
Valley View Elem: 235
Mt. Stewart Elem: 225
Thorp Elem: 43
Damman School: 40
Cle Elum/Roslyn: 325
Kittitas Middle: 58
Child Care Centers: 66

Tuberculosis Program

TOTAL TB Tests: 55
 TOTAL Positive TB Tests: 0
 Cases Active TB: 0
 Suspect TB Investigations: 0
 INH Preventive TX New: 0
 INH Preventive TX Completed: 1



Travel Consultations: 43

Adult Vaccine Administered

Hep A: 28
 Hep B: 12
 TwinRix: 35
 Immune Globulin: 2
 Influenza: 3
 IPV (polio): 18
 Meningococcal: 1
 MMR: 4
 Pneumococcal: 0
 Tetanus/Diphtheria: 0
 Oral Typhoid: 23
 Injectable Typhoid: 6
 Varicella: 5
 Yellow Fever: 5
 Rabies: 0
 Japanese Encephalitis: 0
 ProQuad: 0
 Tdap: 21
 Td: 6

Zoonotics and Vector Program

Animal Bites/Complaints: 18
 Rabies/Animals Tested: 0
 Quarantine Required: 3
 Dead Birds Collected/Mailed: 0
 Mosquito Clusters Collected: 0
 Dead Birds Phone Calls: 0

Bacterial Meningitis Case Prompts Quick Response

Bacterial meningitis is a very contagious air-borne disease that can be deadly in children.

Due to the disease's potentially high impact on the public's health, the public health department responded quickly when a case of probable Bacterial Meningitis was reported at Kittitas Valley Community Hospital (KVCH).

"The call came in from our emergency line at 10:30pm," said Cathy Bambrick, Administrator. "After a late-night discussion with Dr.

Larson [Health Officer], we decided to communicate that evening with the family of the sick child, KVCH and other impacted parties. All communication that evening occurred within a 2 hour time span."

The response continued the next day as Public Health Nurse Linda Navarre and Dr. Larson worked closely with KVCH and local providers to contact identified contacts of the sick child to provide prophylaxis (preventive measures).

The probable Bacterial Meningitis case was later confirmed. Fortunately, no other cases were reported, and the sick child recovered.

"We learned a lot from this response," said Bonnie Corns, Community Health Services Director. "Some things we did well, like communicating quickly and directly with the child's family. We could improve other things, such as continued communication with providers. But all in all, I was very happy with the response."

Beef Recall Affects County Schools

The same week that public health nurses were controlling a case of Bacterial Meningitis, Environmental Health staff were assisting local schools as they destroyed recalled beef.

Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co., a Chino, Calif., establishment, voluntarily recalled 143 million pounds of raw and frozen beef products. The meat was recalled because the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service determined that it was unfit for human consumption after the cattle did not receive a complete and

proper inspection.

The recall was designated as Class II due to the remote probability that the recalled beef would cause adverse health effects if consumed.

This recall affected Kittitas County School Districts, as the packing company distributes some of its meat products to schools through the National School Lunch Program.

Kodi Still, Environmental Health Specialist II, worked closely with every school in the county to ensure they

properly disposed of all potentially contaminated beef. Within one day, all recalled beef in Kittitas County had been destroyed, and no cases of illness were reported due to consumption of tainted beef.

"It was a great exercise in food recall procedure," said Holly Myers, Environmental Health Director. "This was a relatively small recall, but helped us make sure we had the policy and procedure in place in case we have a larger recall in the future."

Gearing Up for West Nile Virus Season

With spring and summer right around the corner, Environmental Health staff are starting to prepare for the 2008 West Nile Virus season.

Fortunately, there were no cases of West Nile Virus in Kittitas County last year, but there were 6 equestrian cases in Yakima County.

"You never know if we'll get a case," said Kodi Still, Environmental Health Specialist. "We hope not, but

we have to be prepared just in case."

Preparations include training on mosquito cluster sampling



and packaging to send out for testing, providing community education, and developing policies and procedures for dead bird reporting and testing.

"We're collaborating with other county agencies to make sure we're all on the same page," said Still. "Hopefully nothing happens, but we'll be ready if we do have a case!"

For more information, call Still at 509-933-8225.

Kittitas County and Dept. of Ecology Reach Agreement

Last fall, a private organization in Kittitas County, Aqua Permanente, raised concern about the ground water quantity in Kittitas County. They requested that no new wells be drilled until state and county officials determined the impact of new drilling on the ground water supply in Upper Kittitas County.

In response to this request, Kittitas County and the State of Washington, Department of Ecology established a DRAFT Memorandum of Agreement, which outlines measures the two agencies and their partners will take to ensure sufficient ground water supply before allowing further land development.

The first step is to conduct a ground water supply study in Upper Kittitas County. The Department of Ecology is currently investigating funding for this study.

At this time, this Memorandum of Agreement will not impact the Lower Kittitas County.

Until the study is complete and the ground water quantity in Upper County is known,

interim measures impacting residential land use will be implemented.

These interim measures will not impact agricultural production in Kittitas County, as farmers rely on surface water for irrigation and have state issued valid surface water rights.

This DRAFT Memorandum of Agreement between Kittitas County and Washington State Department of Ecology was released March 4, 2008 for a 30 day public comment period. Two community meetings were held to provide a forum for question and answer with Kittitas County and Washington State Department of Ecology. A Public Hearing was held April 1st, at 6:00 PM for a final decision by Kittitas County BOCC.

Interim measures include:

- A more advanced SEPA process
- A hydrogeologic report will be available during the SEPA review process, available for public comment
- A source meter will be established for each lot, at each

household.

- Kittitas County Public Health Department will coordinate the metering process of each residence.

- A mechanism to report source data for Group A and Group B water systems will be investigated.

- EXISTING Parcels sized 10 acres or larger will be held to the 5,000 gallons/day/40 acres allowance.

- EXISTING Parcels sized 10 acres or smaller will be limited to 1,250 gallons/day, regardless of lot size.

- Landowners and homeowners may purchase water rights from the Department of Ecology to supplement their water supply. This water will be drawn from a water-banking source controlled by DOE.

These provisions will go into effect July 1, 2008. Responsible agencies have 30 days to implement the provisions.

Please contact Cathy Bambrick or Holly Myers with questions: 509-962-7515.

Food Safety

Permits

Food Establishments: 302
Temporary Food Service: 4
Food Handler Permits: 174

Inspections

Routine Inspections: 50
Re-inspections: 4
Pre-Opening Inspections: 2
Temporary Food: 8

Contractual Inspections

CWU Quarterly: 1
Jail Quarterly: 1

School Kitchens: 0

Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >30 pts: 4
Red Item Violation >70 pts: 0
Operating without a Permit: 0
Complaints: 7
Temporary Closures: 1
Complaints Resolved: 7
Design Plans Reviewed: 3

On Site Sewage

Permits

New: 49
Repair: 4
Renewal: 6
Site Evaluation Applications: 22
Site Evaluations Performed: 34
Designs Approved: 59

Final Inspections: 16
Final Re-inspections: 12

Plat Approval

Soil Logs - Long: 4
Soil Logs - Short: 19
Complaints: 3

Solid Waste

Solid Waste Permit Renewal: 7
New Permits Issued: 4
Inspections Performed: 11
Trash Complaints: 23
Incidents: 1

EH Staff Earn Certifications, Advanced Trainings

Congratulations are in order for Joe Gilbert, who recently passed the On-Site Wastewater Treatment System Designer's Licensing Examination, and to James Rivard, who earned his HAZWOPER 40-hour certification.

With his new certification, Gilbert no longer requires the supervision of a licensed Wastewater Treatment System Designer while performing certain tasks. Previously a certified inspector from Chelan Douglas Health District had to supervise Gilbert on certain

activities. Now fully certified, Gilbert enables the Kittitas County Public Health Department to act with independence befitting the agency.



This was a very difficult certification to earn, as it takes most people several tries in two years. Gilbert earned the

certification in one year. Congratulations Joe!

James Rivard's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) certification followed a 40-hour training, in which he learned about, as the name implies, hazardous waste operations and emergency response.

Several EH staff will be studying for the Registered Sanitarian certification test, coming up this summer. Good luck!



Child Care Health Promotion

Nurse Consultant visits: 11
Other Consultations: 7

Administrative Services

Births: 82
Birth Certificates Issued: 303
Deaths Registered: 57
Certified Copies of Deaths: 312
Home Births Registered: 0
Fetal Deaths: 2
Child Deaths: 1

Living Environment

Schools

Plans Reviewed: 0
Inspections: 16
Playgrounds: 11
Complaints: 1

Public Pools & Spas

Permits: 5
Inspections: 4
Complaints: 0

Camps & Parks

Permit Applications: 0
Inspections: 0

HIV/AIDS and Hep. C

Presentations: 6
People in attendance: 37
Blood Borne Pathogen Classes: 1
People in BBP Classes: 6
Case Management Clients: 2

Shape Up's Food Access Coalition

The Food Access Coalition, part of Shape Up Kittitas County, has been busy studying and taking action to address food access issues in Kittitas county.

The group recently toured the food bank in Cle Elum to ensure all coalition members were familiar with the resources available in the county.

The Food Access Coalition also helped FISH, Friends In Service to Humanity, a food bank in Ellensburg, apply for a grant to purchase a walk-in cooler to store fresh produce. "Obtaining fresh produce is difficult, but keeping it refrigerated and fresh is an even bigger challenge," said Robin Read-Ochoa, Health Promotion Manager and coalition member. "If FISH is awarded this grant, they'll be

able to offer a larger selection of fresh produce to their clients."

The Food Access Coalition gained new memberships from the WIC program's Christine Scharpenberg. "It's a great fit, because our clients overlap and are struggling with the same issues," said Scharpenberg.

For more information, contact Read-Ochoa at 509-962-7003.

Administrative and Assessment Services Expanded

Welcome, Candi Blackford and Amy Diaz! Blackford is a new Public Health Clerk I, and Diaz is a new Assessment Coordinator I. Both are new positions, funded by "Blue Ribbon Funds," state funding to expand service in Communicable Disease.

Blackford will assist with data

entry, inventory control, and help develop new systems to expand service surrounding disease prevention and tracking.

Diaz will provide assessment and data analysis for disease prevention and tracking efforts, and will work with the communicable disease team to develop new tracking and

monitoring systems for any communicable disease.

"I'm thrilled to have them here," said Cathy Bambrick, Administrator. "We'll really be able to improve our communicable disease work."

For more information, call 509-962-7515.

HIV Prevention Program Takes on New Focus

The HIV Prevention Program has changed its focus from prevention among statistically high-risk groups to case management and harm reduction working with HIV positive clients. This change comes at the direction of the federal and state governments, which fund the HIV Prevention Program. These changes also come with a partial funding cut.

As new information is gathered on the effectiveness of intervention and prevention programs, funders may change the program requirements for grant recipients.

The largest change in the program will be the absence of the summer outreach work among migrant farm workers in Mattawa. "It's sad to lose that piece," said Julia Karns, Community Health Outreach

Worker. "But this change also gives us the opportunity to do more work with medical providers, and better



coordinate our services with other agencies."

The work of the HIV Prevention Program must lead

toward a medical outcome, whether helping an HIV positive client obtain regular medical care, providing harm-reduction education to positive clients so they don't spread the disease, or providing case management services.

This change in the HIV Prevention Program funding also provides a new opportunity to collaborate with the Communicable Disease program around HIV and Hepatitis C testing and prevention. A planning committee is working out details on how to provide risk-reduction education and supplies to at-risk clients to prevent the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.

For more information, please call Karns at 509-962-7028.

The Best Protection is Early Detection

The Breast and Cervical Health Program, which helps women access breast and cervical cancer screenings, has made strides reaching women who have never been screened before.

“It’s tough because our target population is a group of hard to find women,” said Julia Karns, Community Health Outreach Worker. “They can often be isolated, or part of

communities that are difficult to access. Finding them takes a lot of pounding the pavement and follow up.”

These strategies have worked, as Karns and Robin Read-Ochoa, Health Promotion Manager, have enrolled a record number of women in the last year.

In addition to enrolling women without insurance between age 40 and 64 who meet income

guidelines, BCHP is also working to recruit additional medical providers to offer the cancer screening services.

“The more providers we can refer clients to, the lesser the load on each individual provider,” said Read-Ochoa.

For more information, call Read-Ochoa (509-962-7003) or Karns (509-962-7028). Both are bi-lingual in Spanish and English.



Breast and Cervical Health

New Clients Enrolled: 18
 BCHP Interpretation: 6
 Year to Date Enrollment: 66*

*July 07-March 08

Media Literacy Training Helps Students Resist Tobacco Ads

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Program is in the full swing of things, as trained Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) peer educators continue to educate middle and elementary school students about the dangers of tobacco use. At the end of the school year, the peer-educators from Morgan Middle School will enjoy a day at the Lazy F Ranch in celebration of their work, thanks to a grant from

the American Lung Association of Washington. TPCP Health Educators also provided media literacy trainings to local youth. One presentation was to Ellensburg High School’s alternative program EXCEL with 31 students participating, and a second training was done at Morgan Middle School’s alternative program Discovery with 28 students. The trainings, which focused on

defining marketing, how it is used, and how to deconstruct it, were well received by students. The media literacy trainings ended with specific information on tobacco marketing, especially to youth. “It was great to see their faces light up as they understood how they were being targeted,” said Sarah Bedsaul, Health Educator.

For more information, contact Bedsaul at 509-962-7680.

Tobacco Program

Compliance Checks: 0
 Compliance Rate: n/a

Emergency Preparedness

It has been a busy first quarter for Emergency Preparedness. Jerry Harris, Emergency Response Specialist, led the whole public health department in a **tabletop exercise** based on a highly contagious disease. “It was great to get everyone thinking about what we would do,” said Michelle Arrellano, WIC Certifier.

Harris has been an active participant on the **Kittitas County Security Committee**, which recently revamped the courthouse’s Security Procedures. The committee’s work has helped install a full time law enforcement officer

in the court house, as comprehensive security and evacuation planning are still in process.

Harris has assisted the county in the development of a **continuity of business plan**, a plan that outlines the critical services and minimal staff and equipment for maintaining the basic county services. Next, Harris will work with a county team to refine the list, review that with all departments, and present the plan to the commissioners. The plan will be tested next fall in an all-county exercise.

Additionally, the Red Cross

and Emergency Preparedness programs hosted a **coloring contest for county elementary students**. One student from each participating school was selected to attend the Red Cross Real Heroes breakfast on March 11. The drawings are all on display in the Health Department.

Harris also participates on a **Mass fatalities Committee**, which is planning an exercise in Upper County this spring. Stay tuned for more details!

To volunteer, or for more information on Emergency Preparedness, contact Jerry Harris at 509-962-7515.

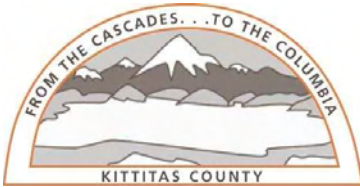
Drinking Water

Water & Sewage Evaluations

Sewage: 0
 Water: 0
 Both: 0
 Sanitary Surveys: 0
 Group B Water Systems: 0
Plat Approval
 Well Site Inspections: 8
Other
 Well Delegation: 12
 Private Bacteriological Sampling: 0
 Private Nitrate Sampling: 0
 Group B Paperwork Received: 1
 Group B Systems Approved: 1
 Farm Exemptions Received: 0
 Farm Exemptions Approved: 0
 Complaints: 0
 Group A/B Sources GPS’d: 0
 Group A Nitrate Samples Drawn: 0

Kittitas County Public Health Department

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Public Health... Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Kittitas County

www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/



Cathy Bambrick,
Administrator

BOH Approves Solid Waste Policies, Hepatitis C Expansion

The first quarter provided several packed agendas for the Board of Health, with issues including Solid Waste policies, Performance Measures for new funding, financial updates, emergency response activities, Department of Ecology Exempt Wells, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and Hepatitis C program expansion.

The Solid Waste Policies were a long time coming, according to Cathy Bambrick, Administrator. The new policies and forms provide a better outline for inspectors to follow when performing on-site inspections and enforcement and follow-up activities. Environmental Health Specialists were involved in every step of the creation process, ensuring the policies and forms would be as user friendly as possible. The Board

of Health unanimously approved the new policies and forms.

At the March meeting, Dr. Mark Larson, Health Officer, presented the idea of expanding the HIV & Hepatitis C prevention program. Currently, the Outreach Worker exchanges needles on an as-needed basis to clients after an intensive counseling session.

By expanding the program to include a larger needle-exchange, the Outreach Worker would be able to offer Hepatitis C and HIV testing, counseling, and a needle-exchange to more clients. The focus of the expanded program would remain on harm reduction. By reducing the spread of this disease, we can decrease medical costs, and, more importantly, save and improve

quality of life for patients as well.

The Washington State Hepatitis C division will also help the program by providing home-test kits, essentially providing free Hepatitis C testing for needle-exchange clients.

“The cost of treating Hepatitis C is roughly \$80,000 per year per client,” reported Dr. Larson. “By stopping the spread of this disease, we can save money, but more importantly lives and quality of life as well.”

Commissioner Mark McClain saw a great opportunity to collaborate with law enforcement in this endeavor as well, an idea public health staff will follow up on.

For more information on the Board of Health, please call 509-962-7515.

BOHAC Tackling Key Health Issues in Kittitas County

After reviewing the 2007 Key Health Indicator Report, Board of Health Advisory Committee members voted on 4 priority issues. Obesity, youth tobacco use, medical care access, and youth depression & suicide topped the list.

Obesity and youth tobacco use are currently addressed by the Shape Up and Tobacco Prevention and Control

Programs. Health department staff are investigating possibilities to address youth depression & suicide, and BOHAC has tackled medical care access.

BOHAC chair Joan Baird Glover also serves as a Hospital District #2 representative, keeping her in touch with local medical care access issues. Each month Glover reports to

BOHAC, which in turn makes recommendations for action.

“It’s a complex issue,” said Glover. “But it’s important, and we need to do something to improve access to medical care in our county.”

For more information, call the public health department at 509-962-7515.

A Note From the Administrator, Continued

implementing new data tracking systems, and collaborating with local partners to establish a data collection and sharing network.

The expertise of Washington State Department of Health and Washington State Department of Ecology has also been employed.

Successes to date include identification of potential environmental health

indicators, verification of reliable data sources for each indicator and determination of the need for new data tracking systems. Sara has also completed logic models for most of the environmental health programs.

The next step will include a prioritization of the environmental health indicators by community partners and final approval by the Board of Health Advisory Committee and Board of

Health.

Kittitas County Public Health Department will be among the first Health Departments in the state to have an Environmental Health Indicator Report and tracking system as well as an environmental health evaluation system. Look for the Environmental Health Indicator Report in September of 2008.

-Cathy Bambrick