

#### Volume 3, Issue 1

First Quarter 2009 January – March 2009



- The USDA estimated that monthly groceries for a family of four using a low-cost meal plan cost \$770.60 in February 2009, compared with \$626.60 in February 2004.
- In 2006, there were only 1.0 physicians in Kittitas County per 1000 residents, compared with 2.4 physicians per 1000 residents statewide. (Northwest Area Foundation)
- The median age for Kittitas County residents is 32.76 years, compared with 36.74 years statewide. (2008 Office of Financial Management estimate)
- There were 257 marriages and 119 divorces that occurred in Kittitas County during 2007. (Washington State Department of Health)
- Only 32% of Kittitas County adults reported receiving a flu shot during the previous 12 months. (BRFSS 2006)



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

### Board of Health Re-Appoints Dr. Solberg for Three Year Term

At the recommendation of the Board of Health Advisory Committee, the Board of Health (BOH) chose to reappoint Dr. Don Solberg for a second three year appointment. Dr. Solberg is a physician with Valley Clinic in Ellensburg. On other business, the BOH

approved a West Nile Virus

(WNV) emergency response plan that had been amended slightly from a version of the plan adopted for the 2008 WNV season.

The WNV plan includes mosquito and dead bird surveillance to identify the presence of WNV in Kittitas County, coordination with the

state Department of Health for testing, and communication with local veterinarians. among other things.

There was one positive case of WNV in Kittitas County during 2008; this case was in a horse though humans can also be affected.

### Health Department Staff Update BOHAC on Program Activities

The Board of Health Advisory In February, staff from the Committee (BOHAC) heard from several Kittitas County Public Health Department programs at their monthly meetings during the first quarter.

In January, the school and playground inspection program requested the support of BOHAC for a new inspection form and updated policy.

Tobacco Prevention and Control Program presented the work including testing and activities of the Teens Against Tobacco Use group. This group, reported on in the previous newsletter, trains teens to be peer educators about the risks of tobacco use.

Finally, in March, staff from the HIV program updated BOHAC about current work

being done. The HIV program includes a wide variety of counseling, case management, and a prevention intervention program known as Partnership for Health.

BOHAC also reviewed the West Nile Virus emergency plan that they had supported and recommended to the Board of Health during 2008.

### **QILT Works On Immunization Reminders**

The Quality Improvement Leadership Team, or QILT, continues to work on projects designed to increase the efficiency of services offered by the health department.

During the first quarter of 2009 the administrative division was chosen as the QILT focus, with a desired output of imple-

menting a reminder/recall system to let clients know when they are due for additional doses of vaccines that are given in a series. HPV vaccine, for example, is given in three doses, with the additional doses spaced at two and six months after the first dose. This system should increase client compliance

with multi-dose series, according to Candi Blackford, Administrative Assistant.

Administrative staff have finished planning for the reminder/recalls and hope to begin implementation after the health department transitions to the use of a software system for client management.

### A Note From the Administrator, Continued

(Continued from page 1)

• Office to improve financial reporting systems.

The transition from a team of dedicated managers to a team of working managers necessitated by the November 2008 budget cuts has not been easy, but managers have begun much of



Administrator

the work that was identified as a 2009 goal. I am confident that the Management Team will do great work in 2009, to the benefit of the department and the community.

Cathy Bambrick





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# **PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION**

### Pertussis Outbreak Hits Kittitas County

Kittitas County Public Health Department has been investigating pertussis, or whooping cough, in Kittitas County since February 10. At the end of the first quarter, a total of 26 cases of pertussis had been identified and the health department had contacted or attempted to contact 997 individuals who might have been exposed to the illness.

Pertussis is a highly contagious airborne illness that can be severe in children under one year of age, pregnant women, and those with chronic respiratory illness. It is also a "notifiable condition." This means that health care providers diagnosing the illness are required by law to

contact the health department. "This allows health department staff to begin an investigation, contact those who may have been exposed, and hopefully prevent further spread of illness," according to Dr. Mark Larson, Kittitas County Health Officer.

The health officer has been busy during this outbreak. Two health orders were issued during the first quarter, postponing field trips and scheduled events including other schools, school districts or family members of students at Kittitas Secondary School and all schools in the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District. These orders were issued to help stem the spread of illness outside of the affected school communities.

Kittitas County Public Health Department continues to recommend pertussis containing vaccines as the most effective way to prevent the illness.



### A Note From the Administrator: Management Team Plans for 2009

The Management Team of the Kittitas County Public Health Department met for a half-day of planning on February 13 to revise our 2009 goals. To help prioritize the goals for 2009, the team reviewed the recommendations given during the last department evaluation, known as a standards review.

Standards reviews occur every three years; all local health jurisdictions are visited by two evaluators who assess the department's adherence to the Standards for Public Health in Washington State (available on the Washington State Department of

Health website, www.doh.wa.gov). Strengths of each department are noted, as well as areas for improvement.

The Management Team used information from this evaluation, as well as observations from their own daily work, to compile a list of goals including:

- Spending more time in the community presenting Public Health work,
- Publishing food inspection reports on the Kittitas County website.
- Developing and/or updating

- county code for on-site sewage systems
- Developing and/or updating county code for isolation and quarantine requirements in the event of a communicable disease outbreak,
- Developing a future technology plan to become an 'almost' paperless department,
- Creating division level plans that summarize program level work plans and connect the budget to planning documents, and
- Continuing to work with the Kittitas County Auditor's

(Continued on page 8)





#### Communicable Diseases

CD Cases Confirmed	37
Other Investigations	8
Food Illness Complaints	3
Lead Poisoning Cases	0
Chlamydia Reported	30
Gonorrhea Reported	3
Herpes Reported	1

#### **Child Vaccine Administered**

DTaP	3
DT	0
Нер А	17
Нер В	1
HPV	15
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	16
Meningococcal	9
MMR	2
Pediarix (DTaP + Polio + Hep B)	3
Pneumococcal Conjugate	2
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide	1
Polio	3
ProQuad (MMR + Varicella)	0
Rotavirus	0
Td	0
Tdap	17
Varicella	10

#### **Tuberculosis Program**

aberealosis i rogram		
TOTAL TB Tests	70	
TOTAL Positive TB Tests	1	
Cases Active TB	0	
Suspect TB Investigations	0	
INH Preventive TX New	1	
INH Preventive TX Finished	0	

### **Environmental Health Responds to January Flooding**

Environmental Health staff at the Kittitas County Public Health Department were kept busy during the flooding of January 2009 caused by unusually warm temperatures and rapid snowmelt. Staff were divided between two main tasks: assisting the Community **Development Services** department with assessment of damages and providing information to homeowners about flood impact on private water and on-site sewage systems.

Environmental Health Specialists accompanied staff



from Community Development Services to assess property and building damage after the floodwaters receded. This assessment was required for the county to qualify for FEMA disaster recovery funds. It also provided Environmental Health staff a chance to view affected areas of the county first-hand to better understand the impacts to public health.

Some property owners affected by the flooding had their wells contaminated by floodwaters or had damaged on-site sewage systems. Both are health concerns because of the potential for illness. The health department recommended that homes served by wells with a wellhead that had been submerged at any time should boil their water until it had been tested for contaminants. Test kits were available at the health department.

### Free Children's Immunization Clinic to be Offered April 18

Administrative staff have been busy planning a children's immunization clinic to be held on Saturday, April 18. Kittitas County Public Health Department has been able to offer immunizations for children through age 18 free of charge during a yearly Saturday clinic for the past several years.

This year's clinic will offer recommended vaccines and

those required for school or licensed child care entry. Entry requirements vary by age and can be found on the Washington State Department of Health website at www.doh.wa.gov/ cfh/Immunize/schools/ vaccine.htm.

Also available will be fluoride varnishes for children to help prevent tooth decay and helmet fittings from Safe Kids.

Helmets will be available for purchase from Safe Kids for \$7. Activities planned include seed planting, a Grab 'N Go dinner demonstration, and coloring.

"I'm so grateful that we will be able to offer the free immunization clinic again this year. I expect a lot of families to visit because of the tough economic situation," said Linda Navarre, Public Health Nurse.

## Sharon Smith Retires January 30

Sharon Smith retired January 30 after five years of service to the community through her position as a Public Health Nurse at Kittitas County Public Health Department.

Sharon was involved in several programs offered by the Health Department including First Steps, immunizations, the Early Intervention Program, and in investigation of communicable diseases like salmonella.

Clients are sure to miss Sharon, especially those that she adopted near the holidays. Each year Sharon would choose a family or two that could use a helping hand and organized donations of furniture, food, and clothing from other health department employees to be delivered to their home.

"Sharon touched a lot of hearts in the community with her strong dedication to helping others," said Cathy Bambrick, Administrator. "We consider ourselves lucky to have worked with her, and wish her the best of luck during her retirement."

Sharon plans to continue with her quilting and travel the country during her retirement.

### Immunizations Important for Out-of-Country Travel

Though the economy may be down and travel activity is slowing, the importance of seeking a consultation from a Public Health Nurse before traveling abroad has not decreased.

Kittitas County Public Health Department offers private consultations with a nurse where clients are able to discuss health risks specific to the location they will be traveling to. Clients may also receive vaccines to protect against illnesses such as Japanese encephalitis, yellow fever, and typhoid fever, depending on their destination. Anti-malarial medications are also available through the health department.

"If you're going to spend several thousand dollars to

travel out of the country, I absolutely recommend that people protect their trip by getting the proper immunizations. You don't want to ruin your vacation by getting sick, or bring anything home other than memories and mementos!" exclaimed Linda Navarre, Public Health Nurse.

Clients who access services at the health department are frequently travelling for a vacation or religious mission. Kittitas County Public Health Department recommends a travel consultation for those travelling to any country outside of the United States. Even travel to countries that aren't thought of as risky areas can increase your risk of contracting vaccine-preventable diseases.

Switzerland, for instance, has had a large number of measles cases since 2006 due to low vaccination rates among Swiss children.

Travel consultations are longer than regular immunization appointments; they are scheduled for 45 minutes and have an associated fee of \$75. Vaccine costs are not included.



To schedule an appointment, or for more information, call (509) 962-7515.

### Budget Impact Competition Undertaken by Health Department Staff

Staff of the Kittitas County Public Health Department are working to lower costs and raise revenues of the health department through a creative competition.

The competition was suggested by the Business Manager, Amber Simon, after she experienced its impressive impact at a previous company she worked for.

The premise of the competition was presented to the Board of Health during the March meeting, along with some of the early ideas that had been suggested. The Board of Health complimented

the health department on their pro-active efforts to positively impact the budget.

Employees are divided into three teams and are challenged to recommend money-saving or revenue-generating opportunities. Teams submit lists of ideas to the Business Manager biweekly. Each of the ideas proposed is reviewed for feasibility and budget impact. If implementing an idea is possible and it will have a positive impact on the budget, the task will be put into practice.

The team that generates the most impact on the budget will

"win" the competition.

The competition began February 18 and has generated enthusiasm from staff. As of March 31, 76 ideas have been submitted from requesting an energy analysis for the building to sharing vehicles between department divisions. Other ideas include review of equipment leases and working to increase teleconferencing capabilities, which would have a positive impact on the travel budget.

One revenue-generating opportunity suggested is to increase applications for outside grant funding.

### HIV/AIDS and Hep. C

resentations	11
eople in Attendance	73
lood Borne Pathogen Classes	1
People in BBP Classes	12
ase Management Clients	2

#### **Breast and Cervical Health**

New Clients Enrolled	22
BCHP Interpretation	3
Year to Date Enrollment*	101

\*July 08 - June 09

#### Administrative Services

Births	89
Birth Certificates Issued	345
Deaths Registered	56
Certified Copies of Deaths	220
Home Births Registered	0
Fetal Deaths	1
Child Deaths	0

#### **Child Care Health**

Nurse Consultant Visits	6
Other Consultations	9

#### **Early Intervention Program**

Referrals	7
Home Visits	8

#### **Tobacco Program**

Compliance Check	18
Compliance Rate	77.78%

2





#### Food Safety

Permit Applications		
New	0	
Renewal	16	
Temporary	5	
Food Handlers	309	
Design Plans Reviewed	0	
Inspections Conducted		
Pre-Opening Inspections	5	
Routine Inspections	113	
Re-inspections	1	
Temporary Event	0	
Contractual Inspections Conducted		
CWU Quarterly	1	
Jail Quarterly	1	
School Kitchens	0	
Enforcement Activities		
Red Item Violation >30 pts	3	
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0	
Operating without a Permit	1	

18

#### Drinking Water

**Temporary Closures** 

Complaints

0
1
0
14
0
6
0
0
2
2
0
0
0
0
0

### Food Access Coalition Gears Up for 2009

"The cheapest foods you can buy are also the highest in sugar, fat, and sodium, and the lowest in nutrition," according to Robin Read-Ochoa, Health Promotion manager. Read-Ochoa is also the facilitator of the Food Access Coalition of Kittitas County. She collaborates with other community members and agencies in Kittitas County to advocate consistent access to

healthy food and understanding of nutrition for all residents.

The Food Access Coalition hopes to increase support for local food banks in 2009 by promoting produce donation and gleaning programs, where farm or homeowners can give extra fruits and vegetables directly to the food banks to help support those in financial need. They were successful during 2008 and hope to expand the program in

The coalition also plans to support community gardening programs during the upcoming growing season.



### Upper Kittitas County Groundwater Advisory Committee

Holly Duncan, Environmental Health Specialist, has recently concluded her work as co-chair of the Upper Kittitas County Groundwater Advisory Committee. This committee was formed as a requirement of a Memorandum of Agreement signed between Kittitas County and the Washington State Department of Ecology in



response to concern about the availability of groundwater in Upper Kittitas County.

The committee met once per month between November and February to develop a scope of work for a hydrogeologic study of Upper Kittitas County and to prepare a request for proposals allowing contractors to provide a bid for the cost of conducting the hydrogeologic study.

There were 12 members on the committee, with broad representation including state agencies, county agencies, academia, and local business owners. "It was a very

fascinating process to watch the interactions between committee members," according to Duncan. "People with such different backgrounds worked together wonderfully towards a common goal."

The study, once begun, will analyze water availability in Upper Kittitas County and should take two to three years to complete. Interim water management measures include limitations on water allowances for new residential developments and data collection of water use.

### Regional Epidemiologist Assists with Pertussis Case Investigations

Kittitas County Public Health Department received support from an epidemiologist who covers the North Central region of Washington State during the recent pertussis outbreak. Jackie Dawson also assisted **Grant County Health District** 

during a measles outbreak in

Dawson managed much of the pertussis outbreak investigation, assisting Kittitas County Public including interviews with positive clients. "We have been and she continues to help in a so impressed with Jackie's work," said Cathy Bambrick,

Administrator, "she has been an incredible resource for us."

Dawson spent over one month Health Department full-time, part-time capacity.

### Tobacco Retailer Checks Underway

Local youth are working with the Kittitas County Public Health Department to conduct compliance checks at local tobacco retailers.



During a compliance check, a teen attempts to purchase tobacco from a retailer. Compliance checks must be done on a regular basis at random locations selected by the Washington State Department of Health.

The youth who participate are trained and accompanied to the location by health department staff when they attempt to purchase tobacco, though the health department staff member does not enter the establishment with the teen. Youth who participate are

between 15 and 17 years of

age, have photo identification on their person, and are not allowed to lie to retailers.

During the first quarter of 2009, 18 establishments have been targeted for compliance checks with four sales allowed. "We hope that with more frequent checks, the number of retailers selling tobacco to youth will decrease even further," said Kasey Knutson, Health Educator.

About 78% of the Kittitas County establishments checked were compliant with tobacco sales laws during the first quarter.

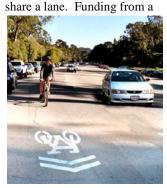
### Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Passed, More Work Ahead

Health Educator Sarah Bedsaul the council about a pilot has been working with the Ellensburg city council to move forward with the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan the council accepted December 15, 2008. This plan replaced an existing plan which had been adopted in 1997.

The latest Non-Motorized Transportation Plan aims to improve the environment for walkers, bikers, and hikers in the community while increasing safety, and has goals that community leaders, policymakers, and residents can work on addressing. Goals range from simple education about bicycle/pedestrian safety for local youth organization participants to items requiring amendment of city code.

Bedsaul recently approached

project to mark the lanes of a street well-traveled by bicycles be sought before expanding the using a sharrow stencil. A sharrow marked street does not create a separate bike lane but allows bicycles and vehicles to



Healthy Communities grant received by Kittitas County Public Health Department would allow for the purchase of the sharrow stencil.

After one year of availability, feedback from bicyclists would markings to other routes.

A second project Bedsaul hopes to prompt is the creation of a volunteer committee similar to that convened during the creation of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to influence code revision. As Bedsaul puts it, "The city and Non-Motorized Transportation Plan committee volunteers spent quite a bit of time on the plan that we just had approved. I can't wait to take things to the next level and implement code changes that reflect the great work that we have done!"

If you have questions about the new plan or the upcoming work contact Sarah Bedsaul at (509) 962-7680.

#### **Adult Vaccine Administered**

Нер А	17
Нер В	16
Twinrix (Hep A + Hep B)	67
HPV	0
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	18
Meningococcal	1
MMR	1
Pneumococcal	0
Polio	9
ProQuad (MMR + Varicella)	0
Rabies	0
Td	3
Tdap	33
Varicella	1
•	

#### Travel Clinic

Travel Consultations	19
Adult Vaccine Administered	
Japanese Encephalitis	0
Injectable Typhoid	3
Oral Typhoid	9
Yellow Fever	4
Child Vaccine Administered	

# Oral Health Education

Injectable Typhoid

Oral Typhoid

Yellow Fever

Cle Elum-Roslyn School District	195
Damman School District	20
Easton School District	22
Ellensburg School District	284
Kittitas School District	41
Thorp School District	65
Child Care Centers	0
Other	85

Toothbrushes distributed

0

0

0



#### School-based Sealants

Cle Elum-Roslyn School District	/
Damman School District	0
Easton School District	0
Ellensburg School District	5
Kittitas School District	0
Thorp School District	5
Child Care Centers	0
Other	0

#### **Volunteer Oral Health Clinics**

Dental Patients	34
Senior Dental Patients	23

#### Fluoride Varnishes

Children Receiving Varnish

#### **Living Environment**

Schools

Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	15
Playground Inspections	11
Complaints	0
Public Pools & Spas	
New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	0
Routine Inspections	2
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0
Camps & Parks	
New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	1
Routine Inspections	0
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0

### Twinrix Vaccine Given to High-Risk Individuals

Public Health Nurse Linda Navarre and Outreach Worker Julia Karns have been working to identify and vaccinate individuals who may be at higher risk for contracting Hepatitis A or B.

42 doses of vaccine were given during the first quarter, thanks to a limited supply of free

vaccine from the Washington State Department of Health. The vaccine, Twinrix, protects against both Hepatitis A and B. There are three doses in the Twinrix vaccination series.

Individuals are at higher risk for contracting Hepatitis A or B if they have an occupational risk factor (such as health care -7515.

workers), chronic liver disease, or use street drugs, among other things.

If you are at higher risk for contracting Hepatitis A and B or are uninsured and work at a health care facility, contact the health department to inquire about free vaccine at (509) 962

### Tire Piles Cleaned in Collaboration with Dept. of Ecology

In collaboration with the Kittitas County Public Health Department, the Washington Department of Ecology completed tire clean-up at a site in Kittitas County during February 2009. Clean-up efforts were directed by state legislature in 2005 for piles of more than 800 tires, and were funded by a \$1 surcharge on the sale of new replacement tires.

Five tire piles were identified

in Kittitas County; the latest clean-up effort, which led to the recycling of 386 tons of tires, was the fourth completed clean-up project. It was also the largest. A total of 176 waste tire piles were identified in Washington State.

The pictures to the right are before and after photos of a tire clean-up in Kittitas County that was completed in 2008.

For more info contact James Rivard at (509) 962-7005.





### Oral Health Activities Continue with Dedicated Volunteer

Christie Waddington continues to volunteer her time with the Kittitas County Public Health Department, despite the loss of her position during the budget cuts in November 2008.

Waddington continues the Cavity Wranglers peer education program that she has led for several years. A total of 627 toothbrushes purchased with Kittitas County Public Health Department funds were distributed to Kittitas County school district students, and 85

additional toothbrushes were distributed at Central Washington University's Career Day for middle school aged girls.

Waddington has also coordinated three free dental clinics, serving 57 clients, in



2009. Each of these dental clinics was a two-day event and served uninsured seniors or individuals with Medicaid. Clinics ran January 19 and 20. and March 19, 20, 26, and 27,

"Christie's dedication to oral health care access and education is phenomenal," stated Cathy Bambrick. Administrator, "The people of Kittitas County are very lucky to have a person like her working for them."

Thank you, Christie!

### Staff Prepare for West Nile Virus in 2009

Environmental Health staff have been working hard to prepare for the upcoming West Nile Virus (WNV) season. WNV is a virus transmitted by mosquitoes. It can also infect birds, horses or other mammals, including humans. WNV was confirmed in one horse in Kittitas County during 2008, and staff expect to see activity during the 2009 season as well.

Staff have made changes to the West Nile Virus emergency response plan (see p. 8) and are working on improving the Kittitas County Public Health Department website, www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/ vector.asp, to include an online

form that can be used to report dead birds. Some dead birds, including crows and magpies, can be tested for WNV.

Kittitas County Public Health Department also send mosquito samples for testing between April and September. Positive tests in mosquitoes are an early indicator that WNV is present in the county. Illness can also occur in

humans. Of those people who do become infected with WNV most will develop no symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they can include fever, headache, or a stiff neck. Severe illness is more likely to occur in adults 50 years of age



Steps you can take to prevent WNV include wearing a mosquito repellent when going outdoors, staying indoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, and eliminating standing water where mosquitoes can breed.

There is a vaccine available for horses. Contact your local veterinarian for more information.

# New Compost Facility to Open in Kittitas County

Kittitas County residents will soon have an alternative to throwing away yard debris. permit for a new compost facility January 5, as recommended by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

The Kittitas County Solid Waste Programs began work this quarter on the new composting facility. The facility will accept materials such as yard waste, grass clippings, leaves, branches, hay and manure of agricultural origin. The facility will ultimately produce useable compost for distribution back to the community.

The new compost facility will divert yard waste away from

burn piles which will have a positive effect on the health of the community. "Burn piles The Board of Health approved a can release harmful chemicals and smoke into the air," said James Rivard, Environmental Health Specialist. "These chemicals and smoke can sit in the valley if there is no wind and can cause health complications for the very young, very old, or anyone with respiratory ailments like asthma."

> The facility will use windrow technology. This means that piles of ,accepted waste will be less than 100 feet long and the piles will be turned every three days for fifteen days to provide proper aeration. Adequate aeration is necessary to allow rapid decomposition; this helps

to eliminate odors that can be associated with composting.

The compost facility is located at the Ellensburg Transfer Station on Industrial Way and is expected to be open by June 2009.



For more information contact James Rivard at (509) 962-

### Zoonotics and Vector

Econotics and vector	
Animal Bites/Complaints	14
Quarantine Required	0
Animals Tested for Rabies	0
Dead Bird Phone Calls	0
Dead Birds Collected	0
Mosquito Clusters Collected	0

#### Solid Waste

Juliu Waste	
New Permits	0
New Exempt Facility Permits	1
Permit Renewals	6
Permitted Facility Inspections	7
Exempt Facility Inspections	2
Complaints	35
Incidents	1

### On Site Sewage

Realtor Requests	5
Complaints	0
Permits	
New Applications Received	22
New Permits Issued	26
Repair Applications Received	3
Repair Permits Issued	4
Renewal Applications Rec'd	8
Renewal Permits Issued	7
Site Evaluations Applications	12
Site Evaluations Performed	12
Final Inspections	13
Final Re-inspections	4
Final Permits Issued	26
Short and Long Plats	
Plat Applications	6
Soil Logs Performed	8