

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## Location Change for Upper County Office of Kittitas County Public Health Department

The Kittitas County Public Health Department's Upper County office has moved to a new location inside the Centennial Center in Cle Elum. The Centennial Center is also commonly known as the Upper County Senior Center.

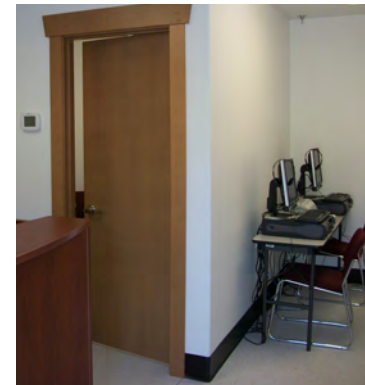
The reconstruction of the Centennial Center after a fire in August 2009 allowed the health department to establish space for a permanent home inside the building.

"The new space is small but perfect for us," according to Health Educator Kasey Knutson. "Being able to offer food handlers' permits in Upper County is a great service for residents and doesn't require much room."

The Upper County office offers:

- ▶ Food handler's permits on Tuesdays between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. This is a computer course. Bring \$10 cash and photo ID.
- ▶ Syringe exchange on Thursdays between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- ▶ Enrollment in the Breast and Cervical Health Program by appointment.
- ▶ HIV and hepatitis C testing by appointment.

The address of the new office is 719 E 3rd Street, Cle Elum. The phone number to make appointments, (509) 962-7515, remains the same.



## A Note from the Administrator: Policy Development in 2010

The health department has made tremendous progress on implementation of effective enforcement policies during the first half of 2010. The increased emphasis on enforcement policies was initiated in response to passage of new enforcement code by the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office. This new code provided staff with the ability to assess fines and has enabled the department to effectively conduct enforcement activities for the first time ever. However, policies and procedures were needed to guide staff

in the use of the new code on a daily basis.

New policies and procedures were passed by the Kittitas County Board of Health for Solid Waste, Smoking in Public Places and On-Site Sewage programs. Input from a community advisory group (the Board of Health Advisory Committee) was considered when designing the policies.

Each policy follows the same format where an owner of a facility, residence, or property receives a written warning to correct a violation within a specific time frame followed by a \$500 fine if

compliance is not achieved.

Staff has already experienced success implementing the new enforcement policies. For example, staff recently documented a solid waste violation which included garbage piled by a potable drinking water well. After receiving the written notice of the violation and the threat of a \$500 fine, the property owner had the garbage removed within the required time frame. The cost for disposal of the garbage was much cheaper than paying the \$500 fine.

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Communicable Diseases**

CD Cases Confirmed	27
Other Investigations	30
Food Illness Complaints	6
Lead Poisoning Cases	0
Chlamydia Reported	22
Gonorrhea Reported	1
Herpes Reported	6
Syphilis Reported	0

**Child Vaccine Administered**

DTaP	19
DT	1
H1N1 (2009)	16
Hep A	39
Hep B	3
HIB	5
HPV	16
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	4
Meningococcal	21
MMR	20
Pediarix (DTaP + Polio + Hep B)	3
Pentacel (DTaP + HIB + IPV)	4
Pneumococcal Conjugate	12
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide	0
Polio	19
Rotavirus	2
Td	0
Tdap	29
Varicella	34

**Tuberculosis Program**

TOTAL TB Tests	32
TOTAL Positive TB Tests	2
Cases Active TB	0
Suspect TB Investigations	1
New Preventive Treatment	0
Finished Preventive Treatment	0

## Smoking in Public Places Enforcement Policy Enacted

Kittitas County Public Health Department has established new guidelines to enforce Kittitas County Code and state law related to smoking in public places.

State law enacted in 2005 and county code enacted in 2010 prohibit smoking in public places, places of employment, and within a distance of 25 feet from building entrances and exits. The intent of the law is to protect the health and welfare of all citizens, including workers in their place of employment.

In 2006, the first year the law was in place, restaurant and bar employee exposure to secondhand smoke decreased from 29% to 3%.

County code established in 2010 allows the health department to enforce the law. Establishments will only be subject to the penalties outlined in county code if the violation is witnessed by a Public Health staff member.

At the first violation, a fine of \$500 will be given. At a second violation, an additional \$500 fine will be given. With

any additional violations the responsible party for the establishment will be referred to the Kittitas County Prosecutor’s Office to be charged with a misdemeanor. “Our goal isn’t to police the streets, but there are now consequences for businesses that continue to break the law,” said Kasey Knutson, Health Educator.

To report a business smoking violation, call (509) 962-7090. You do not have to identify yourself to report a complaint.

## Packaging and Shipping of Infectious Substances

Public Health Nurse Tiffany Beardsley and Environmental Health Specialists Holly Duncan and Kodi Still obtained a certification for packaging and shipping of infectious substances. It turns out that their certification came just in time!

With the recent *E. coli* outbreak in Kittitas County, a health order temporarily closed two

local child care facilities and required children to be tested at least one time for the illness before they could return to care.

This meant that clinical specimens from over one hundred children and about thirty staff members needed to be packaged and delivered to the Public Health Laboratories in Shoreline, Washington. With the new certification

obtained by the three women, *E. coli* testing was able to be undertaken with confidence in the packaging process.

Other samples that these staff members are now able to package and ship include rabies specimens (from animals suspected to have rabies), blood, serum, or cerebral spinal fluid, and environmental samples.

## *E. coli* Outbreak Affects Local Child Care Facilities

Seven Kittitas County residents, all under age 8, have recently been diagnosed with the illness *E. coli*.

The outbreak began on June 21. On June 30 two child care facilities were temporarily closed due to the illness.

“I don’t think that we have seen the end of this outbreak yet,” said Health Officer Dr. Mark

Larson. “We want to stress that *E. coli* does not come from child care facilities, but we need to separate sick children from well children to prevent further spread of the illness.”

*E. coli* is typically thought of as a foodborne illness but can also be transmitted from person to person if people don’t properly wash their hands after using the restroom or after changing a

diaper.

The centers will be closed for at least a week. Children and staff must meet certain testing guidelines before they can return to care.

Most people will recover from the illness without treatment but complications can occur, most often in children under the age of five years.

## “Ask Me” Campaign Targets Women Needing Mammograms

A new campaign of the Breast, Cervical, and Colon Health Program (BCCHP) in Washington State is making use of community partners and businesses to target low-income women so they can receive financial assistance in receiving recommended mammograms.

With the “Ask Me” campaign community volunteers and employees of local businesses or social service agencies can wear bright blue and yellow buttons with the slogan *Ask Me!* When asked, they give women information about how the BCCHP can provide free mammograms for women who qualify.

Eligible women are between age 40 and 64, are uninsured or underinsured, and meet certain income guidelines. For a family of three, an annual income of \$45,775 or less would qualify a woman for the program. Special emphasis is placed on enrolling women age 50 and older, women who are gay, and women in minority groups.

In 2009, 110 women in Kittitas County received a mammogram through the BCCHP. Three of these patients received a final diagnosis of breast cancer.

“We have seen women in Kittitas County benefit from the free mammograms

provided by this program,” said Outreach Worker Julia Karns. “I hope that this expansion to community partners will increase the number of women who can benefit.”



## Educational Session Held for Local Health Care Providers

Local health care providers enjoyed an opportunity to learn more about influenza and pertussis during a dinner event in early June. Twenty-five providers attended the event.

Kittitas County Public Health Department invited Dr. Steve Kohl, a clinical professor of pediatrics at Oregon Health and Sciences University to speak about the two illnesses. Afterwards, the health department held a discussion about the impact 2009 H1N1 influenza had on the community and invited health care providers to share their experiences.

The dinner was hosted by the health department in conjunction with pharmaceutical company sanofi pasteur.

Dr. Kohl spoke about the Tdap vaccine, which provides protection against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. The current recommendation is for adults to replace one of their 10-year booster doses of tetanus vaccine with a Tdap.

He also spoke about the importance of immunizing new parents with Tdap vaccine to protect their infants from pertussis. Most pertussis deaths in the United States occur in infants. Infants less than two months of age are too young to be immunized so all family members and close contacts of infants should receive the vaccine.

Information Dr. Kohl gave about this year’s flu vaccine will be welcomed by flu shot recipients and health care

providers alike. The new vaccine will provide protection against the H1N1 strain that sickened millions across the nation. This means patients will only need to receive one shot to be protected from flu this year. Last year, the H1N1 flu vaccine was a separate vaccine.

Dr. Kohl also informed the group of changes to flu vaccine recommendations. Beginning with the 2010–2011 flu season, everyone over six months of age is recommended to receive a flu shot. Pregnant women, those with chronic illness, young children, and older adults remain more at risk for flu-related complications so they should continue to remain as priority focus groups for vaccination efforts.

### Adult Vaccine Administered

H1N1 (2009)	17
Hep A	9
Hep B	22
Twinrix (Hep A + Hep B)	42
HPV	0
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	7
Meningococcal	2
MMR	2
Pneumococcal	0
Polio	19
Rabies	1
Td	12
Tdap	9
Varicella	1

### Travel Clinic

Travel Consultations	70
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### Adult Vaccine Administered

Japanese Encephalitis	2
Injectable Typhoid	16
Oral Typhoid	17
Yellow Fever	23

### Child Vaccine Administered

Japanese Encephalitis	0
Injectable Typhoid	6
Oral Typhoid	1
Yellow Fever	0

### Children with Special Health Care Needs

Home Visits	19
Office Visits	4
No Shows	0
New Referrals	24

**School-based Sealants**

Cle Elum-Roslyn School District	0
Damman School District	0
Easton School District	0
Ellensburg School District	18
Kittitas School District	0
Thorp School District	0
Child Care Centers	0
Other	0

**Volunteer Oral Health Clinics**

Dental Patients	0
Senior Dental Patients	0

**Fluoride Varnishes**

Children Receiving Varnish	0
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**Living Environment**

Schools	
Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	3
Playground Inspections	1
Complaints	0
Public Pools & Spas	
New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	0
Routine Inspections	6
Re-inspections	1
Complaints	0
Camps & Parks	
New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	11
Routine Inspections	0
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0

## Decontamination Training Event Held at KVCH

Two staff members of Kittitas County Public Health Department attended a one day training event at Kittitas Valley Community Hospital (KVCH) in Ellensburg to practice with hazardous materials suits and decontamination techniques.

Environmental Health Supervisor James Rivard and Public Health Nurse Tiffany Beardsley attended the event in

late May with about 25 others, including hospital and emergency response staff.

To simulate being covered in a hazardous chemical, student volunteers from Central Washington University were covered in mustard. Trainees donned hazardous materials suits with air purifying respirators and practiced different steps of

decontamination.

Clothing was cut off of the volunteers, and they were hosed down and scrubbed with brushes to remove all traces of the material.

The event was hosted by the Washington State Hospital Association and the Washington State Department of Health.

## Community Food Access Survey in Progress

A community food access survey is now available for residents of Kittitas County.

Robin Read, Health Promotion Manager, has been leading the Food Access Coalition for Kittitas County in their efforts to conduct a community food assessment. A planning workshop was held in January 2010, and attendees expressed an interest in conducting a survey with members of the public about their shopping habits, food needs, and access

to locally grown foods.

The survey is ready! Colorful boxes have been set up around the community and volunteers expect to collect responses at events like farmer's markets and the Kittitas County Fair. **Those who complete the survey can enter a drawing to win a \$25 gift certificate for a local farmer's market or grocery store.**

The survey can also be taken online through October 31 at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/kccfa](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/kccfa).

[kccfa](http://kccfa).

Watch for the results of the survey in late 2010.



## Health Officer Passes Required Provisionary Period

Dr. Mark Larson has passed the required provisional period for new health officers in Washington State. He is now the permanent Kittitas County Health Officer.

Larson began working as the health officer in June 2006, though he had been in private practice as a health care provider in Kittitas County since 1998. In just under four years Dr. Larson received approval from the State Health

Officer to work independently. During the provisional period, new health officers are supervised by the State Health Officer.

In day-to-day work Larson won't see much of a difference with his new status, but administrator Cathy Bambrick is pleased anyway.

"I'm very happy with the decision to retain Dr. Larson after his provisional period has ended," said Bambrick.

"Dr. Larson is a tremendous asset to the health department. He is trusted and respected by the local health care providers, which is very important for a local health officer." Health decisions are sometimes made that require the cooperation of local health care providers.



## Food Inspection Reports Now Available for Online Viewing

Food inspections are conducted at each food service facility in Kittitas County to help ensure that food establishments are safe places to eat. The results of these inspections are now accessible online at the Kittitas County Public Health Department website, [www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/food-establishments.asp](http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/food-establishments.asp).

Inspection reports are available for all routine and follow-up inspections conducted after July 31, 2009. This means that most establishments will have one to two inspection reports available for the public to view.

The number of routine food inspections a facility receives each year is based on risk factors including menu items and the extent of food

preparation, with higher risk facilities receiving at least two inspections each year, and lower risk facilities receiving at least one.

Follow-up inspections are required in Kittitas County if an inspection results in more than 30 red violation points. Facilities are immediately closed until changes can be made if an inspection results in more than 70 red violation points. Red violations indicate



practices that may put the public at higher risk for foodborne illness or injury. Food inspectors also check for blue violations which are lower risk items.

There are about 275 total food service facilities in Kittitas County, including restaurants, schools, mobile vendors, coffee houses, delis, convenience stores, grocery stores, and other sites where food is sold.

It is important to remember that inspection reports are snapshots of the food handling practices at an establishment at the time of the inspection. Conditions may vary on a daily basis.

For more information call (509) 962-7515.

## West Nile Virus Prevention and Surveillance Activities Begin

Kittitas County Public Health Department is beginning another season of West Nile virus surveillance.

West Nile virus is an illness that can lead to headache, fever, convulsions, and paralysis in people, though only about 1 in 150 people infected will develop severe symptoms. It is transmitted by infected mosquitoes and can also affect horses and some birds. The first death of a Washington State resident was recorded in 2009. The death was of a Yakima County resident.

“We will be trapping mosquitoes and collecting dead birds to be submitted for testing again this year,” said Kodi Still, Environmental Health Specialist.

The health department traps and tests mosquitoes to see if those that carry illness are present in the county. Last year, two samples of mosquitoes tested positive for the virus.



Birds and horses can also become infected and die from West Nile virus. Tracking illness in these sentinel animals can help the health department decide if the public is at greater risk of developing the illness.

There were no reports of West Nile virus in Kittitas County

residents last year but two mosquito samples, two birds, and 16 horses tested positive for the virus.

“We expect to see West Nile virus activity in Kittitas County this year,” said Still. “There have already been mosquitoes with the virus identified in Grant County.”

Residents can assist with West Nile virus surveillance this summer by reporting certain types of dead birds online through the Washington State Department of Health website ([www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)).

If you have suggestions on areas of heavy mosquitoes where the health department can conduct trapping, please call (509) 962-7515.

### Zoonotics and Vector

Animal Bites/Complaints	9
Quarantine Required	1
Animals Tested for Rabies	0
Dead Bird Phone Calls	1
Dead Birds Collected	0
Mosquito Clusters Collected	0

### Solid Waste

New Permits	0
New Exempt Facility Permits	0
Permit Renewals	1
Permitted Facility Inspections	8
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	33
Incidents	0

### On Site Sewage

Realtor Requests	42
Complaints	3

### Permits

New Applications Received	47
New Permits Issued	37
Repair Applications Received	5
Repair Permits Issued	3
Renewal Applications Rec'd	4
Renewal Permits Issued	10
Site Evaluations Applications	42
Site Evaluations Performed	44
Final Inspections	31
Final Re-inspections	3
Final Permits Issued	30

### Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	4
Soil Logs Performed	2

## Solid Waste Enforcement Procedures Passed

The Board of Health acted on the recommendation of the Board of Health Advisory Committee and passed a solid waste complaint investigation, documentation, and enforcement policy and procedure.

The new policy and procedure will allow Kittitas County

Public Health Department to impose a fine of up to \$500 per day when an individual or business is in violation of solid waste code or law.

After a complaint is received, a solid waste inspection will occur. If a violation is noted, the individual or business will be notified of the violation and

will have a set time period during which they must correct the violation. If the infraction has not been corrected at the end of the time period specified a fine may be issued. Repeat violators will be referred to the Prosecutor's Office.

To report a solid waste compliant call (509) 962-7515.

### Food Safety

#### Permits

New	15
Renewal	5
Temporary	27
Food Handlers	358
Design Plans Reviewed	2

#### Inspections Conducted

Pre-Opening Inspections	0
Routine Inspections	103
Re-inspections	3
Temporary Event	27

#### Contractual Inspections Conducted

CWU Quarterly	1
Jail Quarterly	1
School Kitchens	11

#### Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >30 pts	3
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0
Operating without a Permit	1
Complaints	15
Temporary Closures	0

### Drinking Water

Sewage or Water Evaluations	0
Sanitary Surveys	1
Group B Water Inspections	1
Well Site Plan Reviews	25
Well Site Inspections	4
Water Availabilities	70
Well Delegation Inspections	8
Prvt Bacteriological Sampling	0
Private Nitrate Sampling	0
Group B Paperwork Received	4
Group B Systems Approved	2
Farm Exemptions Received	0
Farm Exemptions Approved	0
Group A/B Sources GPS'd	0
Group A Nitrate Samples	0
Complaints	0

## Sharrow expansion

Health Educator Sarah Bedsaul has been working with the Ellensburg City Council since April 2009 on a pilot of a project included in their non-motorized transportation plan: painting sharrows on city streets.

Sharrows are shared lane pavement markings that reinforce existing rules of the road. They remind those in cars and those riding bicycles that they share a lane of traffic.

After the first sharrows were painted along 5th Avenue in Ellensburg last summer, residents were surveyed about their reactions.

A total of 724 people responded to the survey and over 80% of the survey takers had seen the sharrows. Residents showed strong support for the sharrows: almost 90% of those responding said they would prefer a sharrow over no markings if there was not enough room for a dedicated bike lane.

Bedsaul presented this information to the Ellensburg City Council and a decision was made to expand the sharrow project onto Chestnut Street in the near future. The city plans to have the additional sharrows painted on the street by July 2010.



"I'm very pleased that the City of Ellensburg is expanding on this project, and that we were able to help," said Bedsaul. "Projects that result in a better and safer environment for people to pursue physical activity are great for the community."

## ServSafe Food Safety Training Completed

Environmental Health Supervisor James Rivard and Environmental Health Specialists Kodi Still and Melissa Schumaier completed a nationally accredited six-hour food safety training course known as ServSafe.

Each of the staff members also successfully passed the 90-question exam at the end of the course, allowing them to obtain a 5-year ServSafe certification.

"The course is similar to the class required for a food handler's permit at the health department," according to Schumaier. "It covers all of the same topics in greater detail."

ServSafe and the standard food handler's class cover the topics of sanitation, allergens, high-risk populations, employee training, facility layout, and foods.

Some employers that deal with

high-risk populations require employees to take the ServSafe certification course. High-risk populations are those who are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill if they contract a foodborne illness, such as young children, the chronically ill, and the elderly.

According to Schumaier, all food handler's classes have the same goal: to protect the public from foodborne illness.

## Free “Back to School” Immunization Clinics Planned

For the third year, Kittitas County Public Health Department has been invited to hold free immunization clinics at local schools during sixth grade orientation events.

Any child 18 and under can attend any clinic, regardless of school enrollment or grade. A parent or guardian must be present. All vaccines are free and are given on a first-come, first-served basis. No appointments are necessary.

Incoming sixth grade students will need a booster dose of Tdap vaccine, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Other immunization requirements for school entry vary by grade level and can be found on the Department of Health website at [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov).

**Cle Elum:** 2 – 3 p.m., Thursday, September 2, Walter Strom Middle School  
**Ellensburg:** 12 – 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 24, Morgan Middle School  
**Kittitas:** 6 – 7 p.m., Tuesday, August 31, Kittitas Secondary School



Vaccines that are required for all grades include polio and hepatitis B vaccines, and MMR

to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella. Varicella vaccine, which protects against chickenpox, is required for children in grades 6 and lower. Vaccines that are recommended but not required for school will also be available for free at the clinics. These include meningococcal, hepatitis A, and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines. This year, HPV vaccine is also available for boys.

For more information call (509) 962-7515.

## Viability of Cisterns as a Residential Water Source Explored

Since October 2009, Kittitas County Public Health Department staff have been compiling information about using cisterns as a residential water source.

Due to the moratorium on exempt groundwater withdrawals in Upper Kittitas County (in the absence of mitigation), the demand for an alternate source of residential water has increased. Administrator Cathy Bambrick and Health Officer Dr. Mark Larson presented the issue to the Board of Health Advisory Committee and the Board of Health in May.

In addition, members of the public were able to provide their comments to the Board of Health during the regularly

scheduled May meeting.

Topics covered by Bambrick and Larson during the presentations included:

- ▶ An overview of the state law, state code, and county code related to water availability approval for building permits,
- ▶ A review of Washington State counties allowing water storage/cisterns as a residential water source (only San Juan County),
- ▶ Examples of the code adopted in two other states that permit water storage (Arizona and Ohio),
- ▶ Considerations of the Department of Ecology and Department of Health,
- ▶ A cost analysis for Kittitas County and homeowners,

A decision was not reached by the Board of Health during the May meeting. Members asked that the health department present an outline of proposed county code that would meet the satisfaction of the health officer and readdress the topic at a future meeting.

### HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Presentations	6
People in Attendance	69
Blood Borne Pathogen Classes	26
# People in BBP Classes	3
Case Management Clients	5

### Breast and Cervical Health

New Clients Enrolled	n.a.
BCHP Interpretation	0
Year to Date Enrollment*	n.a.

\*July 2009 – June 2010

n.a. = not available at printing

### Administrative Services

Births	81
Birth Certificates Issued	310
Deaths Registered	60
Certified Copies of Deaths	256
Home Births Registered	0
Fetal Deaths	0
Child Deaths	0

### Child Care Health

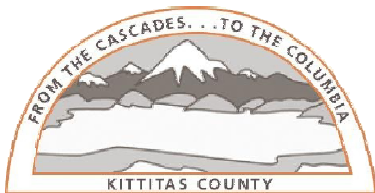
Nurse Consultant Visits	11
Other Consultations	10
Presentations	1
People in Attendance	22

### Tobacco Program

Compliance Check	19
Compliance Rate	89%

? Did you know ?

- The five leading causes of death in Kittitas County are (in order from most to least deaths): heart disease, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, accidents, and Alzheimer’s disease (Center for Health Statistics, 2006-2008).
- Only 3.0% of babies born to Kittitas County residents during 2006 had a birthweight of 5.5 pounds or less. Nationally, 8.2% of babies have a low birthweight. Babies with a low birthweight are at increased risk for health problems (DSHS and CDC).
- More than 50% of women who become pregnant at age 18 or 19 in Kittitas County will have an abortion (Center for Health Statistics, 2006-2008).
- About 14% of children in Washington State have special health care needs (2006, National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs).



## BOH Passes Three Enforcement Policies

During May and June, the Board of Health (BOH) passed three enforcement policies that will allow health department staff to issue fines if violations are not corrected.

At the May meeting, BOH passed smoking in public places and solid waste

enforcement policies and procedures. Separate stories about each of these policies are on pages 2 and 6, respectively.

At the June meeting, BOH passed an enforcement policy and procedure related to on-site sewage systems.

“These enforcement policies

will allow Public Health staff to better conduct their jobs,” according to Environmental Health Supervisor James Rivard. “For the first time there will be repercussions if the public does not comply with state law or county code in these policy areas.”

## BOHAC Hears Quality Improvement Updates

The Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) received several updates from the health department Quality Improvement Leadership Team (QILT) during the second quarter.

BOHAC was updated on a rapid-cycle improvement

project that was taken on by environmental health staff to update the water availability form filled out by land owners as part of the building permit application process. This project was completed during the first quarter of 2010.

The committee also received

copies of a logic model that was created for the communicable disease program. Logic models are a graphical representation of a program work plan. At the health department these also contain quantifiable indicator measurements.

## QILT Implements “Ask Me” Campaign

A rapid-cycle improvement project surrounding the Breast and Cervical Health Program’s new “Ask Me” campaign (see story on page 3) was conducted during the second quarter by the Health Promotion team with the assistance of the health department’s Quality Improvement Leadership Team (QILT).

“We had a very short period of time to implement the new campaign,” stated Health Promotion Manager Robin Read. “The rapid-cycle improvement plan process really helped us keep moving with our project and identify tasks that we needed to accomplish.”

Rapid-cycle improvement projects are typically set for 13

weeks. They usually involve one to two “pilot” events before full implementation. Pilot events can include asking a few staff members to test out a new form or survey, trying out a presentation at one business before scheduling a large meeting, or conducting one interview. Successful pilot projects are then implemented on a larger scale.

## A Note from the Administrator, continued

*(Continued from page 1)*

In the past, staff sent multiple enforcement letters but rarely achieved success. The ability to assess fines has already greatly improved the success of our enforcement efforts.

Staff is currently working on enforcement policies and



Cathy Bambrick,  
Administrator

procedures for the Food Safety and Drinking Water programs.

We hope that these policies will help the health department in its mission to protect and promote the health and the environment of the people of Kittitas County.

Cathy Bambrick