

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## Community Food Assessment Survey Results Compiled

Kittitas County Public Health Department and the Food Access Coalition of Kittitas County recently completed a community food assessment survey of 844 Kittitas County residents. Preliminary results were available on March 15.

Highlights of the results include:

- ▶ 61.8% of respondents have access to a fruit or vegetable garden
- ▶ 24.1% of respondents skipped meals or ate less because they didn't have enough food
- ▶ 20.8% of respondents ate things that they considered to be less healthy because they were cheaper "often" or "all of the time"
- ▶ 82.6% of respondents eat dinner

- ▶ that is prepared at home on 5 or more days per week
- ▶ 73.8% of respondents purchased at least a little food at a farmer's market when in season
- ▶ 16.5% of respondents received at least a little food from a food bank or soup kitchen in the past month

"We start to see things that we can have an impact on," said Robin Read, Health Promotion Manager. "For example, people who own a home are much more likely to garden than those who rent [78.7% vs. 38.7%]. Almost 75% of renters say they can't garden because they don't have a place for it. If we get information out to renters about community and container

gardening, I think we might see the number of people gardening increase."



## A Note from the Department: Revised Strategic Plan Adopted

We are pleased to announce the adoption of a revised strategic plan for Kittitas County Public Health Department. This strategic plan, intended for 2011-2014, has been revised to ensure that all of the current standards for public health departments in Washington State are addressed. The standards for public health departments in Washington were modified to more closely match proposed national accreditation standards since the completion of the previous strategic plan.

There are ten Strategic Initiatives in the

2011-2014 plan, including:

1. Community Health Data Tracking, Use, and Distribution
2. Communication to the Public and Key Stakeholders
3. Community Involvement
4. Threats to the Public's Health and Responding to Emergencies
5. Prevention and Education
6. Addressing Gaps in Critical Health Services
7. Performance Management and Quality Improvement
8. Financial Management Systems
9. Infrastructure and Collaboration

with County Departments  
10. Leadership and Governance

The intent of this document was for all health department staff to be able to see how their work fits into the plan, even though it is written at a broad level.

The plan was initially drafted by the department's management team. Staff were able to review the draft document and provide feedback before the plan was brought to the Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) in January. After review and amendment

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Communicable Diseases**

CD Cases Confirmed	16
Other Investigations	7
Food Illness Complaints	5
Lead Poisoning Cases	0
Chlamydia Reported	32
Gonorrhea Reported	1
Herpes Reported	3
Syphilis Reported	0

**Child Vaccine Administered**

DTaP	1
DT	0
Hep A	4
Hep B	2
HIB	1
HPV	4
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	11
Meningococcal	3
MMR	2
Pediarix (DTaP + Polio + Hep B)	0
Pentacel (DTaP + HIB + Polio)	0
Pneumococcal Conjugate	1
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide	1
Polio	1
Rotavirus	0
Td	0
Tdap	4
Varicella	2

**Tuberculosis Program**

TOTAL TB Tests	38
TOTAL Positive TB Tests	2
Cases Active TB	0
Suspect TB Investigations	2
New Preventive Treatment	1
Finished Preventive Treatment	0

## Regional Epidemiologist Assists Kittitas County

Dr. Jackie Dawson is probably an unfamiliar face to those who visit Kittitas County Public Health Department regularly, though she is an instrumental employee, especially during disease outbreaks.

Dawson is an epidemiologist who works for three local health jurisdictions in addition to Kittitas County Public Health Department—Grant, Chelan-Douglas, and Okanogan County Health Districts. When there are no pressing disease outbreaks, she typically works at the Kittitas County office once per week. Sometimes,

however, she can be in the office quite a bit more. During an *E. coli* outbreak that affected three Kittitas County child care facilities in July 2010, Dawson spent a significant amount of time in Kittitas County interviewing families of the

affected children and trying to track down the source of the illness. She also recently assisted with a Kittitas County pertussis investigation.

“We can do a pretty good job of connecting people who are ill,” said Dawson, “but it’s rare that we are able to pinpoint the exact food or animal that caused the illness.”

By connecting people who are ill, disease investigators can attempt to stop the spread of the illness by notifying those who may have come into contact with contagious individuals.



Dr. Jackie Dawson,  
Regional Epidemiologist

## Upper County Office Open Tuesdays by Appointment Only

To more effectively manage staff time, the Upper County office of Kittitas County Public Health Department is now open by appointment only.

Previously, the office had been open for drop-in appointments on Tuesdays.

“By moving to an appointment-only schedule at the Upper County office, staff can conduct other activities in Upper County

when they are not scheduled to assist a client,” said James Rivard, Co-Interim Administrator.

Services offered at the Upper County office include food handler’s permits, HIV and hepatitis C testing, and enrollment for the Breast, Colon, and Cervical Health Program.

Appointments are available each Tuesday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. To make an appointment call the front desk at (509) 962-7515. Food handler’s permit appointments can also be made online at [www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health](http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health).

The office is located at the back of the Upper Kittitas County Senior Center, 719 E 3rd St, in Cle Elum.

## James Rivard Elected Central Regional Vice Presented of WSEHA

Interim Co-Administrator James Rivard was recently elected Central Regional Vice President for the Washington State Environmental Health Association (WSEHA).

WSEHA is a non-profit professional and educational organization that was established to provide a forum for dialogue and a vehicle for advanced training opportunities.

The association works to provide regionally located single-day trainings and webinars in place of more expensive overnight training sessions.

“I’m excited to be part of an organization that is so passionate about environmental

health,” said Rivard.

WSEHA is affiliated with the National Environmental Health Association. Members represent both the public and private sectors. Congratulations James!



## Sarah Bedsaul to Teach Chronic Health Conditions Courses

Health Educator Sarah Bedsaul is working with Kittitas Valley Community Hospital (KVCH) and Aging and Long Term Care to teach free workshops focused on self-management of chronic medical conditions to the public.

Bedsaul and KVCH employee Rhiannon Raaka were trained in the “Living Well with Chronic Health Conditions” workshop in February.

The workshops includes once weekly classes over a six-week period. Course curriculum was developed by Stanford University and has been extensively researched; those who complete the series have been shown to have improved

health behaviors, improved health status, and decreased days in the hospital.

Chronic conditions are health problems or illnesses that last for a long period of time or frequently recur. This includes diabetes, arthritis, depression, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, chronic pain, and many others.

“Anyone suffering from or caring for someone who suffers from a chronic health problem should attend,” according to Bedsaul. “This series is designed to help people live a healthy lifestyle by self-managing their symptoms.”

Classes are interactive and

teach participants how to:

- ▶ Deal with fatigue frustration, and isolation,
- ▶ Eat better and start an exercise program,
- ▶ Handle stress and relax,
- ▶ Solve problems and meet personal goals,
- ▶ Learn to navigate the medical system, and
- ▶ Communicate effectively with a physician.

The six-week series is free and will be offered in Ellensburg beginning April 7 or September 13, and in Cle Elum, beginning June 7. For more information or to sign up, contact Amy Morrow in the KVCH Quality Management Department at (509) 933-8719.

## Oral Health of Kittitas County Youth Better than State Average

Every five years a statewide oral health evaluation called the Smile Survey is conducted in young children across Washington. Data are used to determine the level of untreated tooth decay and measure the burden of dental disease in children.

In 2010, kindergarten and third grade students were examined. A total of 373 participating students in Kittitas County at Kittitas, Lincoln, Mt. Stuart, Thorp, and Valley View Elementaries received a brief oral health exam by retired dentist Dr. Howie Blessing in June 2010.

Initial results were presented in September 2010, but recently released statewide results offer an opportunity to compare Kittitas County to the rest of

the state. This comparison shows several positive local results:

- ▶ More Kittitas County children have never had a cavity (57.4% vs. 51.4%),
- ▶ Fewer Kittitas County children had a history of seven or more cavities (9.9% vs. 16.9%),
- ▶ More Kittitas County children had dental sealants in place (37.8% vs. 28.1%).

Though data cannot be directly compared to the 2005 survey because the age of children examined differs, Kittitas County moved from below to above the state average for children who have never had a cavity.

“I think the oral health of Kittitas County children will only continue to improve due to the increase in dental providers within the county that we have seen over the past few years,” said Kasey Knutson, Oral Health Coordinator.



### Adult Vaccine Administered

Hep A	4
Hep B	8
Twinrix (Hep A + Hep B)	48
HPV	0
Immune Globulin	0
Influenza	8
Meningococcal	1
MMR	5
Pneumococcal	0
Polio	4
Td	0
Tdap	17
Varicella	2

### Travel Clinic

Travel Consultations	22
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### Adult Vaccine Administered

Japanese Encephalitis	0
Injectable Typhoid	7
Oral Typhoid	3
Rabies	4
Yellow Fever	8

### Child Vaccine Administered

Japanese Encephalitis	0
Injectable Typhoid	2
Oral Typhoid	1
Rabies	6
Yellow Fever	2

### Children with Special Health Care Needs

Home Visits	not avail.
Office Visits	not avail.
No Shows	not avail.
New Referrals	not avail.

Data not available

**School-based Sealants**

Cle Elum-Roslyn School District	0
Damman School District	0
Easton School District	0
Ellensburg School District	4
Kittitas School District	9
Thorp School District	2
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	14
Playground Inspections	10
Complaints	0

Public Pools & Spas

New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	0
Routine Inspections	6
Re-inspections	3
Complaints	0

Camps & Parks

New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	0
Routine Inspections	0
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0

## Sanitary Survey Training Course Held in Ellensburg

About 20 environmental health professionals from around the state attended at three-day training in Ellensburg to learn about sanitary surveys. James Rivard, Environmental Health Supervisor, was able to attend.

Sanitary surveys are thorough inspections that each Group A water system undergoes at least every three years. Group A water systems generally

serve more than 14 households. City water systems, for example, are Group A systems.

Surveys take several hours and cover items ranging from inspection of the well cap, review of written plans addressing operation and maintenance, and potential sources of contaminants.

Inspection frequency was recently increased to a three year cycle from a five year cycle.



## Public Health Job Losses Felt Nationwide

A recent survey conducted by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) revealed that 29,000 public health jobs have been lost nationwide between 2008 and 2010. Jobs were lost either to layoffs or attrition (non-replacement of staff who chose to leave). These job losses constitute about 19% of the public health workforce in the United States.

In addition, 18,000 public health employees (about 12%

of the nationwide workforce) had their hours reduced or were required to take furlough time.

According to NACCHO, 40% of local health departments made cuts in at least one program area between July 2009 and June 2010. Maternal and child health programs were among the hardest hit.

About 44% of local health departments said their budgets were lower in 2010 than in the previous year, making it the

third consecutive year that a large proportion of local health departments reported budget cuts. Twenty-seven percent of departments reported cuts in 2008 and 45% had cuts in 2009.

In total, 52% of local health departments experienced layoffs, attrition, reduced hours, or mandatory furloughs in 2010.

For more information, view the summary at [www.naccho.org/lhdbudget](http://www.naccho.org/lhdbudget).

## ABCD Program Up and Running

Kittitas County Public Health Department received funding for an Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program in 2010. Now that four local dental offices are actively accepting new ABCD patients, the program is up and running!

ABCD is a program that focuses on early child dentistry. Children who are age five or younger and are enrolled in the Medicaid

program can become ABCD patients. This qualifies them to receive two dental exams, two family education sessions, and three fluoride varnish applications yearly. Dental providers who treat ABCD patients receive special training in early child dentistry and are able to receive enhanced reimbursement from the Medicaid program.

“Caring for baby teeth is the key to healthy teeth for a

lifetime,” said Kasey Knutson, Oral Health Coordinator. “Experts recommend a first dental visit by the first birthday and cleaning young children’s teeth twice a day using a clean cloth or small, soft toothbrush. They also recommend that if you put your child to bed with a bottle, it should only be filled with plain water.”

Contact the health department at (509) 962-7515 to see if your child is eligible to enroll.



## Annual Training and Emergency Exercise Day Held March 9

Kittitas County Public Health Department closed its doors to the public on March 9 for its annual staff training and emergency exercise day.

This year, staff participated in an emergency exercise to plan a Tier Two evacuation shelter with the assistance of the American Red Cross. A Tier Two shelter would be used for those with minor medical needs, as opposed to a traditional Tier One shelter intended for healthy individuals. Patients requiring shelter at a Tier Two facility would not have acute medical conditions (such as those requiring hospitalization), but would need some assistance to care for themselves.

“The annual all-staff training

day is a chance to allow staff from different areas of public health – environmental health, health promotions, community health – to work together to practice skills that might be needed in an emergency,” said



Interim Co-Administrator Linda Navare. “These skills were important during the 2009 H1N1 outbreak when the health department organized a large scale immunization clinic for the community. Staff from all areas worked together to carry

out the clinic, just as we practiced.”

In addition to the emergency preparedness exercise, staff learned about health disparities and using prioritization matrices. Health disparities are population-specific differences in the presence of disease, health outcomes, quality of health care, or access to health care services. A prioritization matrix is a quality improvement tool that can assist in allocating limited resources.

Other items presented included a course on the National Incident Management System, instructions on how to use an automated external defibrillator, and a review of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

## County Health Rankings Released – Kittitas County Does Well

Kittitas County is healthier than ever, according to the second annual release of the County Health Rankings by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

In 2010, the Rankings listed Kittitas County as the fourth healthiest in the state for both Health Outcomes and Health Factors. In 2011, Kittitas County moved up to second healthiest in the Health Outcomes area and remained in fourth place for Health Factors.

The Rankings use several public health indicators ranging from items like violent crime and teen birth rates to diabetic and mammography screening rates to arrive at the final positions.

“Kittitas County is doing very well in most areas, leading to its high rank” according to Amy Diaz, Assessment Coordinator. “However, there are still areas for improvement that aren’t immediately obvious when you just see second best or fourth best in the state.”

Binge drinking and heavy drinking rates, for example, are high in Kittitas County. In fact, the county ranks 39th out of 39 in that area, with an estimated 20% of the population drinking alcohol in excess.

One area where Kittitas County did particularly well is a sub-category labeled “Quality of Care.” In this area, Kittitas County ranked first in the state. Preventable hospital stays, diabetic screening rates, and

mammography screening rates of Medicare enrollees are considered in the Quality of Care area.

Kittitas County did well and placed in the top five counties in Washington for:

- ▶ Diabetic screening
- ▶ Mammography screening
- ▶ Adequate social support
- ▶ Good physical health days
- ▶ Normal birthweight babies
- ▶ Low teen birth rate
- ▶ Fewest preventable hospital stays
- ▶ Low air pollution

Kittitas County was in the bottom five counties only for excessive drinking.

For more information visit [www.countyhealthrankings.org/washington/kittitas](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/washington/kittitas).

### Zoonotics and Vector

Animal Bites/Complaints	2
Quarantine Required	0
Animals Tested for Rabies	0
Dead Bird Phone Calls	0
Dead Birds Collected	0
Mosquito Clusters Collected	0

### Solid Waste

New Applications Received	1
New Exempt Facility Permits	0
Permit Renewals	7
Permitted Facility Inspections	8
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	1
Incidents	0

### On Site Sewage

Realtor Requests	13
Complaints	2

### Permits

New Applications Received	8
New Permits Issued	8
Repair Applications Received	0
Repair Permits Issued	0
Renewal Applications Rec’d	1
Renewal Permits Issued	1
Site Evaluations Applications	16
Site Evaluations Performed	15
Final Inspections	11
Final Re-inspections	3
Final Permits Issued	13

### Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	0
Soil Logs Performed	2

**Food Safety**

Permits

New Applications	7
Renewal Applications	1
Temporary Applications	8
Food Handlers Permits Issued	464
Design Plans Reviewed	8

Inspections Conducted

Pre-Opening Inspections	9
Routine Inspections	129
Re-inspections	3
Temporary Event Inspections	2

Contractual Inspections Conducted

CWU Quarterly	1
Jail Quarterly	1
School Kitchens	0

Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >35 pts	1
Red Item Violation >70 pts	1
Operating without a Permit	0
Complaints	8
Temporary Closures	2

**Drinking Water**

Sewage or Water Evaluations	0
Sanitary Surveys	0
Group B Water Inspections	6
Well Site Plan Reviews	6
Well Site Inspections	1
Water Availabilities	26
Well Delegation Inspections	2
Prvt Bacteriological Sampling	0
Private Nitrate Sampling	0
Group B Paperwork Received	3
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

## Syringe Exchange Expanded to Include Evening Hours

Volunteer Kim Hitchcock has worked with Outreach Worker Julia Karns to expand the hours of the Never Share Syringe Exchange.

Syringe exchange programs are meant to reduce exposure to bloodborne communicable diseases by allowing people to exchange used syringes for

new, clean ones.

The current exchange is held from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Ellensburg Methodist Church (210 S Ruby Street). The expanded hours now cover Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Evening hours were suggested

by the North American Syringe Exchange Network, which provides technical assistance to Kittitas County Public Health Department.

“Kim’s dedication as a volunteer is amazing,” said Karns. “We are truly lucky to have her assistance with the syringe exchange program.”

## Kittitas School District “Safe Routes to School” Event Planned

On Earth Day, April 22, Kittitas Elementary School students will conduct a walkability audit of city streets while they pick up and remove litter.

In addition to these outside activities, students will be attend a school assembly where Health Educator Sarah Bedsaul will talk about walking and biking to school, including safety information.

Kittitas Elementary was chosen as one of two schools in Kittitas County to be a part of the Safe Routes to Schools project funded by American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funding. The

funding runs until December 2011 and is meant for health department staff to assist schools with improving safety for the daily commute of children who walk or bike to school.

Kittitas School District was chosen because it is unique within Kittitas County; it does not bus students to school if they live within the city limits. As a result, more students attending Kittitas Elementary walk or bike than at other school districts within the county.

“After the kids finish the walkability audit in April

we’ll be able to revise the suggested walking/biking route maps that are sent home to parents each year,” said Bedsaul. “We’ll try to direct kids away from the yards with barking dogs and towards the best marked road crossings.”

In addition, ARRA funding will purchase equipment for crossing guards and pay for road markings to be painted that ask drivers to slow down.



## Japan Radiation Event Causes Unnecessary Concern in States

Nuclear power plants damaged by a massive earthquake and tsunami in March have caused unnecessary concern in the United States about potential health effects of radiation.

“The tragic events in Japan don’t pose a radiation exposure risk to people in our state,” said Washington Secretary of Health Mary Selecky in a news release. “Dangerous levels of radiation are not expected to reach

Washington.”

The radioactive material that was released did not reach the upper atmosphere where it could be carried toward North America by the jet stream. Even after the Chernobyl incident, when radioactive material did enter the jet stream, protective action was not needed in Washington.

State health officials began looking for radioactive iodine

in the air soon after the incident. Expected trace levels of radioactive iodine (I-131) were detected, but at levels much too low to pose a health threat.

Daily radiation measurements are posted on the Washington Department of Health website for four cities within the state (Richland, Seattle, Spokane, and Tumwater). Data can be accessed at [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov).

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## Fuel Up to Play 60 Activities Planned at Lincoln Elementary

Health Educator Sarah Bedsaul worked with Lincoln Elementary in Ellensburg to submit a proposal requesting \$3000 in funding from the Washington State Dairy Council through the Fuel Up to Play 60 program. The request was successful, and Lincoln Elementary has several events planned for the month of April that meet the goals of the Fuel Up to Play 60 program (fueling up with nutrient-rich foods and physical activity play of 60 minutes per day).

Each week in April will feature a different healthy eating event and physical activity focus.

► Week One

*Healthy eating:* Each 3rd grade class prepares a healthy wrap that will be judged by

students at lunch time. The winner will be on the school menu.

*Physical activity:* Football fitness camp

► Week Two

*Healthy eating:* Food Factor assembly where students try to identify healthy foods while blindfolded.

*Physical activity:* Badminton challenge

► Week Three

*Healthy eating:* Parent cooking demonstration and taste testing

*Physical activity:* Children's fitness night, soccer drills

► Week Four

*Physical activity:* Golf/batting practice

"I think this will be a great way

to get kids motivated to eat healthy foods and get out to play," said Bedsaul. "If we can turn these into lifelong habits, the health benefits for the kids will be tremendous."

Lincoln Elementary won a statewide award for participation in a slightly different version of the Fuel Up to Play 60 program in 2010.



## Staff Assist with Central Washington University Health Fair

Seniors majoring in Public Health at Central Washington University (CWU) held the first ever health fair for students on March 31 at the Student Union Building.

Following a needs assessment conducted during fall quarter to determine the areas of health that were most important to those attending CWU, students taking a Public Health capstone series chose ten focus areas and planned health interventions, including booths at the health fair. Focus areas included stress, vaccinations, back pain, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), among others.

Those students working on the STI focus area contacted Outreach Worker Julia Karns to request assistance. Karns

supported the students during their process to choose an intervention strategy and attended the March 31 fair to demonstrate motivational interviewing techniques.

"It's difficult to talk to people about sensitive subjects," said Karns, "but it is an essential skill for Public Health professionals."

The booth at the health fair had a theme of "No Glove, No Love" and asked students to sign a pledge to be tested for STIs at the Student Medical and Counseling Clinic on campus.

Karns noted that she was impressed with the students' idea to collaborate with the Student Medical and Counseling Clinic. "That kind

of co-collaboration within an organization makes an intervention much more successful, but it isn't something people always think to do," she said.

To draw students in, many booths at the health fair had interactive activities. A booth for back pain allowed students to weigh their backpacks. A booth promoting physical activity had a Wii dancing game projected on a large screen.

The reaction from students was overwhelmingly positive. Hopefully this health fair will be the first annual health fair, and students will be able to learn about health topics relevant to them in the coming years as well.

### HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Presentations	6
People in Attendance	48
Blood Borne Pathogen Classes	1
People in BBP Classes	3
Case Management Clients	3
Syringes Exchanged	not avail.
HIV Tests Conducted	3
Hepatitis C Tests Conducted	11

### Breast and Cervical Health

New Clients Enrolled	14
Total Clients Screened	22
BCHP Interpretation	2

### Administrative Services

Births	96
Birth Certificates Issued	302
Deaths Registered	67
Certified Copies of Deaths	195
Home Births Registered	0
Fetal Deaths	0
Child Deaths	0

### Child Care Health

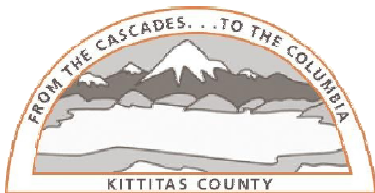
Nurse Consultant Visits	14
Other Consultations	12
Presentations	0
People in Attendance	0

### Tobacco Program

Compliance Checks	13
Compliance Rate	100%

? **Did you know?** ?

- If you renew your Washington State food handler's card before it expires, your new card will be valid for three years instead of two (at no extra cost).
- There were 234 marriages and 114 divorces in Kittitas County during 2009 (Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics).
- There were 431 live births and 213 deaths of Kittitas County residents during 2009 (Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics).
- There were 151 alcohol retail licenses active in Kittitas County during 2009, for a rate of 3.78 active licenses per 1000 residents. This is nearly twice the state rate of 1.99 licenses per 1000 residents (Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis Division).



[www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/](http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/)

## BOH Continues to Work Towards Water Code Allowing Cisterns

Board of Health (BOH) members continue to discuss proposed revisions to county water code in an effort to allow cisterns as an alternative water source. Discussions began in early 2010.

At each of the two BOH meetings during the first

quarter, members reviewed the current version of the code proposal and provided feedback to legal and health department staff.

Health department staff expect to begin the process required by the State Environmental Protection Act soon, which

allows the public to comment on the proposed code, either by written letter or during a public hearing.

Details about the public hearing will be published in the legal section of local newspapers when they are finalized.

## BOHAC Recommends Approval of Department Plans

During the January 10 Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) meeting, the committee voted to recommend approval of the department strategic plan and quality improvement plan to the Board of Health, with minor changes.

These items were presented at the January 20 Board of Health meeting where they were formally adopted.

In addition to the recommendation for approval of the department plans, the committee heard a short presentation summarizing the

complaints, violations, and enforcement activities conducted during 2010. There were 49 food safety or illness complaints, 12 on-site sewage complaints, 125 solid waste complaints, and one water recreation injury that staff reviewed during the year.

## QILT Works to Redefine Food Establishment Descriptions

The first quarter project for the Quality Improvement Leadership Team (QILT) is focused on the Environmental Health Division.

"We noticed that some food establishments fit into more than one category in our fee schedule – and those categories have different fees associated with them!" said James Rivard, Interim Co-

Administrator.

To correct this, Rivard collected fee schedules with food establishment descriptions from eight other local health jurisdictions in Washington State.

Next, the QILT will review the definitions of food establishments and revise the current definitions.

Some health jurisdictions define food establishments by the number of seats inside the restaurant, others assign different categories of risk based on the types of food served.

By the end of the project each food establishment will match with only one category, making the permit renewal process run more smoothly.

## A Note from the Department, continued

(Continued from page 1)  
by BOHAC, the plan was presented to the Kittitas County Board of Health where it was formally adopted on January 20.

The document is posted on our website at [www.co.kittitas.wa.us/](http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/)



James Rivard,  
Interim  
Co-Administrator



Linda Navarre,  
Interim  
Co-Administrator

[health/aboutus.asp](http://health/aboutus.asp).

We encourage you to review the plan, and see what public health is doing for you.

Regards,

Linda and James  
Interim Co-Administrators