

PUBLIC HEALTH *CONNECTION*

KCPHD Receives Numerous Grants and Awards

In a time of ever increasing need and limited resources, Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) staff have been fruitful in their efforts to seek new opportunities and funding sources.

In June, the Health Promotion Team was notified that they would be awarded a third year of funding from the Washington Dental Service Foundation for the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry program in the amount of \$25,794. The Washington State Department of Health also decided to renew tobacco prevention funds for one more year in the amount of \$6,982.

Finally, the Health Promotion Team applied for and was awarded \$25,000 to work on policies around tobacco free public spaces through Grant County's Community Transformation Grant program which focuses on chronic disease prevention.

The Environmental Health Team was awarded additional Community Prevention Grant funds for surveillance monitoring on illegal waste dumping grounds in the amount of \$17,367.

KCPHD was also chosen to be one of 100 host sites for a fellowship sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The

fellow starts at KCPHD on July 16 and will be with the department for two years to work in chronic disease, food access, and environmental health.



A Note from the Health Officer: An Agenda for Change

Public health has profoundly improved the lives of people in our state for more than 100 years. In the 1900s, the average life expectancy in the U.S. was forty-nine years. Today it is eighty years. While clinical healthcare has contributed to this increase, most of it is due to public health actions – for example, the dramatic drop in infant mortality and death from infectious disease resulting from improved hygiene, sanitation, immunization, and communicable disease control.

Public health in Kittitas County is at a crossroads. After decades of effectively preventing death and illness and increasing the quality of life of our residents, today we face the challenges

of a severe funding crisis and a change in the nature of preventable disease and illness in our state.

To adapt we must rethink how we do our work in ways that will allow us to:

1. Protect our capabilities to prevent and respond to communicable disease threats; ensure safe drinking water, food, soil and air; give children a healthy start to life; and prepare and respond to emergencies and disasters
2. Prevent and reduce chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease resulting from underlying tobacco use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity as well as prevent injuries and reduce health disparities

that are a result of race and class differences.

3. Forge new partnerships and use technology to build a better, more effective public health system.

We, the employees of your public health department, are up for these challenges. We will continue to do our work, protecting your health, while looking to the future. I welcome your input. My door is always open.

Mark Larson MD,
Health Officer



Department-Wide

Financial

Existing Fund Sources	19
New Grants Awarded	0
New Fund Sources--Other	0
Grant Applications	2

Staff

Current FTEs	13.9
Current Active Volunteers	6

Assessment

Health Data Requests	0
Quality Improvement Projects	0

Communications

Media Contacts	41
Health Care Provider Releases	10

Other

Community Mtgs & Presentations	100
Updates to Codes and Policies	6

Vital Records

Births	95
Birth Certificates Issued	298
Deaths Registered	46
Certified Copies of Deaths	39
Home Births Registered	0
Fetal Deaths	0
Child Deaths	0

Tobacco Prevention and Control

Smoking in Public Places Complaints	0
Educational Contacts with Tobacco Retailers	65

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

New Enrollees	166
Referrals Received	171

Pertussis Cases Turn from “Outbreak Mode” to Epidemic

During the second quarter of 2012, the number of pertussis (whooping cough) confirmed cases increased in Kittitas County from nine to thirteen cases. Probable cases of pertussis increased from eleven to eighteen. According to the Washington State Department of Health pertussis has reached epidemic levels in Washington. As of June 30, there were 2,647 reported cases of pertussis compared to 187 for the same time period last year. Only eight of the thirty-nine Washington counties have not reported pertussis activity.

Four health orders have been issued to schools due to whooping cough. The latest health order to exclude students, staff, and volunteers at Cle Elum Roslyn Elementary and Walter Strom Middle school expired on June 5. The health orders exclude individuals not up-to-date on pertussis vaccinations for twenty-one days.

KCPHD disease staff continues to work closely with patients, families, and close contacts to reduce exposure and prevent the spread of this highly contagious disease. Every staff

member at the health department is educated about pertussis and can answer questions from the community.

According to Robin Read, Public Information Officer, “Staff receive updated talking points regularly, because we know that in our small community, we will be called upon to answer important questions about the situation as well as symptoms, treatment, and prevention.”

The pertussis outbreak investigation will close forty-two days after the most recent case is reported.

Ch Ch Ch Changes

Due to a downward trend in funding and resources over the past few years, KCPHD has made changes to some of its services. The department now only offers immunizations and tuberculosis tests to individuals who do not have an established health care provider. Clinic hours have also been reduced to Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:00 pm to

5:00 pm only.

KCPHD will continue to provide overseas travel immunization services as many health care providers do not offer this service. In addition, HIV and hepatitis C tests will still be available.

Community members seeking immunizations or tuberculosis tests from KCPHD will be

referred back to their health care provider if they have an established medical home.

“While we are committed to meeting the needs of community members, we also feel that it is not a good use of our limited resources to duplicate services already provided in our community,” according to Mark Larson, M.D., KCPHD Health Officer.

KCPHD Recognizes Local Child Care Center

The Daily Record covered a recent story about Tiffany Beardsley, Public Health Nurse, recognizing Creative Kids Learning Center for their efforts at preventing the spread of pertussis. For the last three years, every staff person at Creative Kids has been vaccinated against pertussis. Ms. Beardsley, in her work with child care centers in Kittitas County, has been able to work

closely with Creative Kids director, Mechelle Moran. “Vaccination is *the* best prevention against whooping cough” stated Beardsley “and now everyone who enters Creative Kids knows that staff have done their part to protect the children from whooping cough.” A window decal and certificate were given to Ms. Moran and her staff.

“As a new parent, I want to know that my child is as safe as possible while in childcare,” said Ms. Beardsley. Pertussis is most dangerous to young children, especially infants under one.



KCPHD Welcomes New Staff...

Dean Tonseth started a new position as the Developmental Disabilities Coordinator in April. The position is part-time and oversees the county's developmental disabilities contracts with local agencies. Mr. Tonseth is currently retired, but has over 20 years of experience working with adults with disabilities.

Kristin Jensen joined the KCPHD team in June as a Public Health Clerk II. "I think we got really lucky to find someone with previous

experience working in a public health department," said Candi Blackford, Administrative Assistant. Ms. Jensen formerly worked for the Yakima Health District, but lives here in Ellensburg. Ms. Blackford believes that Ms. Jensen will fit in nicely with her upbeat attitude. She has picked up tasks quickly and brings a new friendly face to the front desk of the department.



...And Says Farewell to Two Long Term Public Health Staff

KCPHD is saying farewell to two long time health department staff, Sarah Bedsaul and Linda Navarre.

Ms. Bedsaul has accepted a position as the Executive Director of the Kittitas County Community Land Trust where she will develop a community land trust organization. The organization is currently under the umbrella of Elmview but will eventually be its own non-profit organization. We are certain that her passion for the health of this county and her drive to get things done, will continue to impact the citizens of Kittitas County in a positive way.



Ms. Bedsaul was with the health department

for ten years since 2002. She worked as a Health Educator coordinating programs such as food handler education, blood borne pathogen and HIV education, Teens Against Tobacco Use peer education trainings, tobacco cessation counseling, Shape Up Kittitas County (chronic disease prevention) activities, logistics for mass vaccination clinics, and most recently emergency preparedness activities.

Linda Navarre has accepted a position with Kittitas Valley Community Hospital as the new Quality Assurance/Risk Management Coordinator for the hospital. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your support and perseverance to improve the health of our community members. I have truly enjoyed working with all of you and

hope to continue health prevention work with you in the future in some manner," said Ms. Navarre.

Ms. Navarre has worked for KCPHD for five years this term but previously worked for the department for four years prior. As the Community Health Services Supervisor and a Public Health Nurse, she was responsible for overseeing the department's communicable disease prevention and investigations, immunization services, overseas travel consultations, and HIV and hepatitis C testing services. She also had a key role in the department's emergency preparedness activities.



Communicable Disease (CD) & Tuberculosis (TB)

Active TB Confirmed Cases	0
Suspect TB Investigations	1
CD Confirmed Cases	14
Other CD Investigations	41
STDs Reported	49
Food Illness Complaints	5
TB Skin Tests (PPD and/or QFG)*	29
Latent TB Infection Referrals	0

*tuberculin skin test (purified protein derivative) and/or QuantiFERON-TB Gold

Immunization

Total Vaccinations	124
Adults Receiving Vaccinations	47
Children Receiving Vaccinations	14
Flu Vaccinations	4

Overseas Travel

Travel Consultations	17
Specialty Travel Vaccinations	16



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Exchanging Information about Exchanging Syringes

HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Testing

HIV Tests	9
Hepatitis C Tests	9

Syringe Exchange

Syringe Exchange Participants	24
Syringes Exchanged	696

Education

High Risk Presentations	3
People in Attendance at High Risk Presentations	36
Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	3
People in Attendance at BBP & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	31

Breast, Cervical, and Colon Health

New Clients Enrolled	6
Total Clients Screened	35

Child Care Health Promotion

Nurse Consultant Site Visits	9
Other Consultations	3

Julia Karns, Community Outreach Worker, was formally asked to participate in a panel discussion hosted by Washington State Department of Health.

Mary C. Selecky, Secretary of Health for the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), sent a memo to distinguished panelists requesting they join in a conversation about “modernizing syringe access.” The meeting took place in June in Tacoma, Washington.

During the meeting, participants shared recommendations of how to continue the critical services provided by syringe exchange programs.

Ms. Karns has been involved with the “Never Share Syringe

Exchange” since its creation in 2008. “I am honored to be invited to speak on the panel. Having a syringe exchange program in rural Washington can prove to be challenging and difficult. Our plans to continue this effort are strong and the fight to reduce communicable disease is a must.”

The Never Share Syringe Exchange in Ellensburg exchanged over 1,100 syringes during the first half of 2012. In 2011, staff and volunteers exchanged over 1,500 syringes. Kittitas County’s syringe exchange is one of at least

twenty in Washington State and nearly two hundred across the United States. Thirty-five million syringes are exchanged each year through these programs. Syringe exchanges are present in about thirty-three states.



Julia Karns Participates in Women’s Health Leadership Institute

Julia Karns, Community Outreach Worker, was accepted to participate as one of twenty people in a two day Women’s Health Leadership Institute for Region X (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington) of the Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women’s Health. The training was held in May in Seattle, Washington.

The purpose of the institute is to train and support experienced community health workers across the country in leadership development to enhance their capacity to influence change in their communities by addressing women’s health disparities. The institute’s aim is to generate change in communities around chronic

disease and other women’s health issues. “Participating in the training was an amazing experience,” said Ms. Karns. “The participants were a diverse group of women who are already leaders in their communities doing a wide range of health education.”

The institute curriculum is based on the Paolo Freire education methodology that embraces education as a participatory process to encourage reflection and interaction in problem solving and social change. The training draws on the collective

knowledge and experience of participants in a dynamic way that is adaptable for culturally diverse communities.



PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

KCPHD Staff Participate in Regional Emergency Exercise

On March 21, KCPHD employees Kasey Knutson and Robin Read participated in a full scale emergency preparedness exercise in Wenatchee. The exercise was in partnership with the Region 7 Health Care Coalition.

The scenario was a bombing at a local nursing home that resulted in dozens of people needing some basic medical attention. Wenatchee Valley Community College (WVCC) was the check-in and triage site. The Town Toyota Center was the site for an alternative care facility (ACF) that could provide basic medical attention to people who didn't need to be hospitalized or receive emergency room attention.

With the help of the four other

counties in the region (Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan) there were five portable ACF trailers set up to provide a care facility for patients who are medically fragile. The "patients" were volunteer students from WVCC and dozens of other volunteers from around the region participated. Volunteers had the opportunity to become more familiar with the procedures of setting up an ACF situation and become more familiar with the supplies and equipment in the ACF trailers.

Robin Read, Health Promotion Supervisor was an

external evaluator for the event. "It is amazing to see that scale of cooperation to provide services in the case of an emergency," stated Ms. Read. "Being an evaluator allowed me to observe the activities from different perspectives and think about how we would apply a similar situation in Kittitas County."



Community Health Improvement Project Makes Progress

The Community Health Improvement Project continues to make progress on the community health assessment phase of the project.

In April, health department staff convened community partners to complete a Local Public Health System Assessment. The assessment consisted of questions that covered thirty public health standards within the ten essential public health services. Participants rated each question in terms of how well our local public health system meets each standard. "Although this piece of the community health assessment was time consuming, it really helped the participants understand how different organizations contribute to the

local public health system," said Robin Read, Health Promotion Supervisor and project facilitator.

Because the Community Health Improvement project is a demonstration project for the National Association of City and County Health Officials, KCPHD staff had the opportunity to receive some on site technical assistance from project faculty. On April 25, Bridget Booske Catlin, PhD, Director of the County Health Rankings, visited KCPHD and spent a day with staff helping to plan the next steps of the assessment phase.

In May, members of the project steering committee had the opportunity to provide input into the selection of community

health status indicators in the areas of clinical care, health behaviors, physical environment, and social and economic factors. The categories were chosen as a starting point based upon the County Health Rankings model. In June, a draft list of health indicators was presented to the committee and staff worked on collecting the indicator data.

Once the indicator data is collected, all of the assessment data will be compiled into a Community Health Profile which will be used to create a Community Health Improvement Plan.

Zoonotics and Vector

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

Living Environment

Schools

Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	6
Playground Inspections	3
Complaints	0

Public Pools & Spas

New Permits	1
Renewal Permits	0
Routine Inspections	5
Re-inspections	2
Complaints	1

Camps & Parks

New Permits	3
Renewal Permits	8
Routine Inspections	1
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0

HEALTH FACTORS & OUTCOMES	INDICATOR GROUPS	INDICATORS/MEASURES
Physical Environment	Air quality	Percent of 24 hour time period measurements with an average PM2.5 reading at or above Single Standard
	Chemicals	Percent of homes built before 1980 lead
	Water	Yearly average number of pesticide stress tests reported Pesticide tests in streams
	Food safety	OSU failures Percent of permitted food establishment routine inspections with more than 20 red violation points
	Vector	OSU failures Percent of restaurants classified as fast food
	Healthy Food	Lower income per 1000 Percent of food banks
	Homeless & shelter	Percent of population living below poverty level APHS
Social and Economic Factors	Poverty	Percent of the employed labor force below poverty level Free and reduced lunch Percent of total population using Basic Food Program services
	Education	Percent of 10 th graders who report that they or their family did not use or skiped meals some or almost every month in the past year (because not enough money for food) Median annual household income
	High school graduation	Percent of 10 th graders who graduate high school in 4 years
	College education	Percent of population age 25+ with some post-secondary education
	Disability	Percent of adults with any disability
	Unemployment	Average annual unemployment rate for ages 18 and older
	Health insurance	Percent of population 18 to be employed with health insurance coverage
Employment	Disability counts Unemployment	
Community	Crime Wanted crime rate per 1,000 (10-11 average)	

Solid Waste

New Facility Applications	0
New Exempt Facility Applications	0
Permit Renewals	0
Permitted Facility Inspections	8
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	5
Incidents	0

On-Site Sewage (OSS)

Records Requests	33
Complaints	5

Permits & Inspections

New Installation Permits	41
Repair Installation Permits	11
Renewal Installation Permits	2
Site Evaluations	44
Final Inspections	28
Final Permits	16

Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	3
Soil Logs	6



KCPHD Staff Practice Anaphylaxis Procedures

An inter-departmental collaboration helped KCPHD staff practice what to do in the case of a patient having a reaction to a vaccination.

Community health services staff Linda Navarre, Tiffany Beardsley, and Julia Karns staged a scenario where an immunization patient started

having adverse reactions to the vaccine. Health promotion staff Robin Read and Kasey Knutson played the patient and documented the exercise. Front desk staff was also involved in providing assistance in the case of a patient who couldn't be left alone.

During the exercise, the public health nurses were able to practice their skills in caring for a patient with anaphylaxis and other staff learned how to assist with the situation and respond appropriately.

Joe Gilbert, Good Samaritan...Registered Sanitarian

In April, Joe Gilbert passed the Registered Sanitarian (RS) exam. Mr. Gilbert is an Environment Health Specialist II in addition to a certified on-site septic system inspector. The Registered Sanitarian (RS) credential further shows that Mr. Gilbert is competent in all facets of environmental health.

The RS exam is a comprehensive assessment of many disciplines within public health, including questions about food protection, wastewater, potable water, vectors, housing, statutes, hazardous materials, and air quality. "I had to answer

questions from the water temperatures of institutional laundry facilities to what vector causes dengue fever," Mr. Gilbert stated.

As a Registered Sanitarian, a person commits to serve the public in whatever they are able to do in the course of carrying out professional responsibilities to maintain and provide a healthful environment for all. Mr. Gilbert's expertise in the environmental health field is a significant asset to Kittitas County.



Code Advisory Committee Reviews Campground Regulations

On May 3, the Citizen Advisory Committee for public health code revision discussed a draft campground and festival regulation that was based on regulations from other counties. A major topic of discussion was determining what qualifies as a temporary campground. Factors considered in the discussion included the number of camping units and the length of time that camping units should be allowed on site without a

temporary campground permit. On June 28, the committee was continued discussion about the campground and festival regulation. Members came to a resolution that a private event by invitation only should not need a temporary campground permit. The committee recognized that although a permit may not be required in that case, that there may be other requirements from county

and city planning and code enforcement agencies.

The committee also started reviewing the existing and proposed school regulations that will be effective July 1, 2013. The committee did not have any concerns about the school regulations. In July, the committee will review and discuss the current water code.

Kittitas County is Second Healthiest County in Washington

Kittitas County has some of the healthiest residents in Washington, according to the third annual *County Health Rankings*, released in April by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

According to the *Rankings*, of 39 counties in Washington State, Kittitas County ranks second in overall health outcomes (illness and death) and eighth in health factors (health behaviors.)

“A long history of health promotion in this county has

paid off with good health outcomes. We have a long way to go and still have quite a few issues to work on. We should all be proud of the work that has been done in our county,” said Mark Larson, MD, Health Officer for Kittitas County Public Health Department.

The *County Health Rankings* rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states, using a standard way to measure how healthy people are and how long they live. According to the 2012 *Rankings*, the five healthiest counties in Washington State,

starting with most healthy, are San Juan County, followed by Kittitas, Island, Whitman, and Whatcom Counties.

The *Rankings*, available at www.countyhealthrankings.org includes a snapshot of each county in all states with a color-coded map comparing each county’s overall health rankings. Besides measuring health outcomes, the *Rankings* also consider factors that affect people’s health within four categories: health behavior, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

Health Watch Articles Share Information with Community

Health Watch articles are published on the third Tuesday of every month in the Scrapbook section of the Daily Record.

In April, Holly Duncan, Environmental Health Specialist II, wrote an article about the importance of playground safety. About 68% of deaths associated with playground equipment are the result of hanging or asphyxiation. Falls account for 80% of playground injuries. Improper supervision is associated with 45% of playground injuries.

Playground safety is not only important in schools and parks, but also in home playgrounds.

In May, Julia Karns, Outreach Worker, submitted an article for Hepatitis Awareness

Month. Over 5 million Americans are living with a chronic hepatitis infection, and many more are infected but don’t know it. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 75% of people with hepatitis C are baby boomers born between 1945 and 1965. Hepatitis C is also commonly transmitted through injecting drugs with unsterile needles. KCPHD offers a syringe exchange program, which provides access to free and clean needles. Hepatitis C and HIV testing is also available.

In June, Kodi Still, Environmental Health Specialist II, wrote about the importance of sanitization, especially in areas of food preparation. Sanitizers can

remove microorganisms from surfaces that soap and water cannot. However, not following certain guidelines can result in ineffective sanitization, such as not removing debris first (food, soil, etc.), mixing bleach with soap, and using hot water with bleach.



Food Safety

Permits

New Food Establishment Applications	0
Renewal Food Establishment Applications	0
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	32
Food Handler's Permits	652

Inspections

Pre-Opening Inspections	14
Routine Inspections	97
Re-inspections	1
Temporary Event Inspections	14

Contractual Inspections

CWU Quarterly	1
Jail Quarterly	1
School Kitchens	11

Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >35 pts	3
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0
Operating without a Permit	0
Temporary Closures	0
Complaints	1

Drinking Water

Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	3
Group B Water System Inspections	0
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	15
Well Site Inspections	4
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	60
Well Delegation Inspections	6
Group B Paperwork Received	1
Group B Systems Approved	1
Complaints	1

? Did you know ?

- Tobacco-related diseases kill about 7,600 Washington residents every year.
- Tobacco use causes 90 percent of lung cancer deaths, 45 percent of heart disease deaths in people younger than 65, 33 percent of all cancer deaths, 18 percent of stroke deaths, and 10 percent of newborn deaths.
- Secondhand smoke exposure is associated with 150,000-300,000 cases of bronchitis and pneumonia in children under 18 months.
- Tobacco-related medical costs in Washington exceed \$1.6 billion annually.
- The tobacco industry spends more than \$146 million annually in Washington promoting its products and generating new smokers.



Board of Health Approves New Solid Waste Facility Permit

On June 21, a public hearing was held to discuss a permit for Waste Management of Ellensburg to open a recycling facility on the south corner of Third Avenue and Wenas Street.

KCPHD staff received comments from the City of

Ellensburg and Friends of the Northern Pacific Depot expressing concerns about litter, odor, noise, and aesthetics. There were no other public comments made during the hearing.

KCPHD made a mitigated determination of non-

significance during the SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) process in May. Proposed mitigations included fencing to prevent litter, a corrective action process in the case of persistent complaints, storage control to avoid pests, and financial assurance.

Committee Remembers Long Time Member Shirley Fischer

Shirley Fischer had been an active member of the Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) for over 20 years when she passed away on April 29. During the May BOHAC meeting, members and KCPHD staff observed a moment of silence to

remember Ms. Fischer, one of the longest serving members of the committee. Ms. Fischer was a nurse who after retirement remained active in her community and passionate about health issues such as oral health and nutrition. Her contributions to the community

will be greatly missed.



Food Handler's Education Undergoes Quality Improvement

A quality improvement team consisting of staff members from nearly every division in the health department are working together to improve the food handler's education and permit issuance process using quality improvement methods.

Due to upcoming changes in food code, the current food handler's education delivery method will soon be outdated.

In efforts to move toward an online method that will stay current and provide more convenience for food workers, the team started collecting some data. It was discovered that a lack of a current food worker's card has typically been the most common violation noted during food establishment inspections. The team then surveyed food workers, food establishment

owners, and other health departments to find out common barriers to obtaining food handler's cards, and potential solutions. The results are currently being reviewed and used to determine the next steps in the process.

A quality planning approach is also being incorporated to ensure a seamless implementation process and transition to the online method.