

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

Taylor Bridge and Table Mountain Fires Cause Public Health Concerns

In August, Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) responded to the Taylor Bridge Fire which caused roughly six days of air quality that was considered unhealthy for the general population. In addition, clean up efforts presented some potential health issues for those involved, such as ash clean up, food safety, chemical handling, retardant clean up, etc. Robin Read, Public Information Officer for KCPHD, reported having eleven contacts with the media about the air quality and other public health issues related to the fire during this time.

In September, the Table Mountain Fire caused roughly fifteen days of unhealthy air quality. The poor air quality would continue into October. KCPHD had twenty-one media contacts about air quality as of September 30.

During each incident, KCPHD staff attended multiple meetings at the Emergency Operations Center at the Kittitas County Sheriff's office as well as community meetings held for the public. Dozens of calls from the public, schools, child cares, institutions, and sports organizers were fielded to answer air quality questions.



A Note from the Health Officer: Bullying as a Public Health Issue

Staff at the Kittitas County Public Health Department have been busy recently with air quality issues. The public has been able to see the value of Public Health and how we help them to protect their health. I am looking forward to snow and the cold putting out the smoldering fires for good.

We had twelve applications for the Public Health Administrator position. We have completed four interviews and have two call-backs for a second interview. I am hopeful that we will soon have a fully staffed department and that we can focus on doing more good work in the community.

As school is back in full swing I would like to focus on a public health problem of significant importance. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among

school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that children can help stop bullying when they see it happening. Be sure to talk to the child about how they can be more than a bystander. Those who witness bullying can:

- Be a friend to the person being bullied.
- Tell a trusted adult, like a family member, teacher, or coach.

- Help the person being bullied to get away from the situation.
- Set a good example. Do not bully others.

Don't give bullying an audience. Adults should stop bullying on the spot. When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time. There are simple steps adults can take to stop bullying on the spot and keep kids safe. It is our responsibility to address this public health problem. With the help of our community partners we can make a difference.

Mark W. Larson, M.D.
Kittitas County Public Health Officer

Department-Wide

Financial

Existing Fund Sources	22
New Grants Awarded	0
New Fund Sources--Other	0
Grant Applications	3

Staff

Current FTEs	14.3
Current Active Volunteers	4

Assessment

Health Data Requests	0
Quality Improvement Projects	0

Communications

Media Contacts	72
Health Care Provider Releases	8

Other

Community Mtgs & Presentations	150
Updates to Codes and Policies	1

Vital Records

Births	101
Birth Certificates Issued	276
Deaths Registered	59
Certified Copies of Deaths	237
Fetal Deaths Reported	0
Child Deaths Reported	1

Tobacco Prevention and Control

Smoking in Public Places Complaints	0
Educational Contacts with	57

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

New Enrollees	4
Referrals Received	4

KCPHD Welcomes New Staff Members

Several new staff members joined the public health team recently.

Alisa Spieckerman and Amy Fuller joined the Health Promotion Team in July. Ms. Spieckerman is a Public Health Associate funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and will be stationed at KCPHD for two years. Her first year will be working with chronic disease prevention and her second year will be spent working in environmental health. She has a Master's degree in Public Health. Ms. Fuller is a Health Educator who will be working on the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program as well as teaching a variety of health education classes. Ms. Fuller's degree is in psychology.

Jeff Seapulski was hired in August as an Environmental Health Specialist in the food safety and vector borne disease programs. Mr. Seapulski was a summer intern for KCPHD in 2010 and has a Bachelor's

degree in Health and Safety Management.

Annemarie Hill and Liz Whitaker started in September on the Community Health Services Team. Ms. Hill is a part-time Public Health Nurse working on the immunizations and communicable disease programs. Ms. Whitaker is the Community Health Services Supervisor. She is a nurse and previously worked for KCPHD in the First Steps and Children with Special Health Care Needs programs.

Lisa Morin started as a Public Health Clerk in September and works at the front desk. Ms. Morin previously worked at Ellensburg Pediatrics.

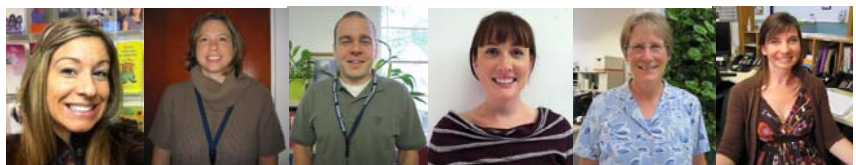
KCPHD also wished another staff person well in her new endeavors. Kodi Allemand, Environmental Health Specialist, started nursing school. Ms. Allemand worked at KCPHD for five years and worked diligently to improve the food safety and vector

programs while she was with the environmental health division. "Kodi always went the extra mile to do her best and protect the public's health when it came to food safety and preventing vectors. She will be missed by all staff, but we wish her the best of luck and she will be a great nurse someday," said James Rivard Environmental Health Supervisor.



Above: Kodi Allemand

Below (left to right): Alisa Spieckerman, Amy Fuller, Jeff Seapulski, Annemarie Hill, Liz Whitaker, Lisa Morin.



Temporary Nurses Help Staff Public Health Department

This summer, KCPHD found itself without any public health nurses. One nurse moved on to a new job, one was on maternity leave, and a part-time nurse position had been unfilled for months.

Fortunately, Bobbi Spinazola and Celia Johnson, two nurses who work at the Central Washington University Student Medical and Counseling Clinic,

stepped up to the plate to assist. They were hired temporarily to work two days a week each at the health department.

Ms. Spinazola and Ms. Johnson assisted with clinic hours, immunization work, and communicable disease work until Tiffany Beardsley returned from maternity leave, Liz Whitaker was hired as the Community Health Services

Supervisor, and Annemarie Hill was hired as another Public Health Nurse.

In addition to the nurses help, Julia Karns, Community Outreach Worker, worked hard to keep our communicable disease reporting and investigations going.

Thanks to Julia, Bobbi, and Celia!

New Access to Baby and Child Dentist (ABCD) Champion

The Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program of is pleased to announce that Dr. Brendan Davis of Ellensburg Dental Care has been appointed as our new Dental Champion. Dr. Davis has extensive experience in the field of oral health and is an active community health advocate. From 1997-2003, Dr. Davis served in the U.S. Army as a Mental Health Specialist. He graduated with a B.S. in Biology from University of Utah 2005. He went on to further his education in the field of oral health and graduated in 2009 from the Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health (ASDOH) with a dual degree:

Doctorate of Dental Medicine (DMD), and Masters of Public Health (MPH). In July of 2009, Dr. Davis was hired as the first Dental Director for Community Health of Central Washington. In November of that same year, he opened Ellensburg Dental Care (EDC).

An ABCD provider since 2010, Dr. Davis continues to be an active oral health advocate on a local, state and federal level. He meets quarterly with other dental directors throughout Washington in order to stay informed on current oral health issues facing the state.

He currently serves as a Captain in the Washington

National Guard, performing dental exams for Washington's Guard members. As a member of our ABCD steering committee and Oral Health Coalition for Kittitas County, he brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the table. With his valuable feedback, we hope to continue increasing community awareness of the issues surrounding pediatric oral health. He will also be helping our coalition to further our efforts in the area of educational outreach and provider collaboration.

Free Tdap Vaccine Helps Fight Whooping Cough Epidemic

In July, KCPHD submitted a request for free Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) through the AmeriCares program. AmeriCares "assembles product donations from the private sector" in order to assist in times of disaster. AmeriCares worked with vaccine manufacturer, Sanofi Pasteur, to provide 300 Tdap vaccine to KCPHD in order to assist our fight against pertussis, or whooping cough.

The free vaccine is for anyone who does not have insurance or who is underinsured. Specifically, KCPHD is trying to target people who will have contact with young children. "We have been fortunate to have partners helping to distribute the free vaccine," said Liz Whitaker, Community

Health Services Supervisor. Partners administering the free Tdap vaccine have included Kittitas Valley Community Hospital, OBGYN of Ellensburg, Valley Clinic, and Community Health of Central Washington.

Without the free Tdap vaccine

program, an individual would be required to pay \$63.00 for the vaccine in addition to a \$65.00 office visit. Liz Whitaker is certain that "this program makes it possible to increase the level of protection against whooping cough in Kittitas County."



Communicable Disease (CD) & Tuberculosis (TB)

Active TB Confirmed Cases	0
Suspect TB Investigations	0
CD Confirmed Cases	27
Other CD Investigations	14
STDs Reported	30
Food Illness Complaints	2
TB Skin Tests (PPD and/or QFG)*	35
Latent TB Infection Referrals	1

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

Immunization

Total Vaccinations	88
Adults Receiving Vaccinations	36
Children Receiving Vaccinations	5
Flu Vaccinations	14

Overseas Travel

Travel Consultations	11
Specialty Travel Vaccinations	12



Dr. Brendan Davis of Ellensburg Dental Care performs an ABCD exam on a child during the 2010 ABCD dentist training.

HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Testing

HIV Tests	0
Hepatitis C Tests	0

Syringe Exchange

Syringe Exchange Participants	60
Syringes Exchanged	1345

Education

High Risk Presentations	0
People in Attendance at High Risk Presentations	0
Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	2
People in Attendance at BBP & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	16

Breast, Cervical, and Colon Health

New Clients Enrolled	10
Total Clients Screened	N/A

Child Care Health Promotion

Nurse Consultant Site Visits	0
Other Consultations	0

Hospital Agrees to Store Vaccine in Case of Emergency

An agreement was recently approved by the Board of Health (BOH) between KCPHD and Kittitas Valley Community Hospital (KVCH) for emergency storage of KCPHD’s vaccine inventory.

In the event of a power or equipment failure at KCPHD, vaccine will be stored at the KVCH pharmacy.

A power failure occurred earlier this year during the night and over \$5,000 worth of vaccines were lost.

If a failure occurs, the vaccine will be labeled and transported to KVCH where it will be monitored until it can be returned to KCPHD



Pertussis Outbreak Continues

While the number of new pertussis (whooping cough) cases declined in the third quarter, the pertussis epidemic in Washington State is not yet over. In a news release dated Sept. 12, 2012, Washington State’s Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes said, “Now that kids are back in school and around each other for longer periods of time, germs can spread more easily. It’s important for kids and everyone around them, including teachers and other

caregivers, to practice good health habits and make sure their immunizations are up to date.”

During the third quarter of 2012, the number of confirmed pertussis cases increased in Kittitas County from thirteen to fifteen cases. Probable cases of pertussis increased from eighteen to nineteen. However, there were no new pertussis cases in September. In the State of Washington, as of September

22, there were 4,190 reported cases of pertussis compared to 427 for the same time period last year. Only two of the thirty-nine Washington counties have not reported pertussis activity.

Adults who need vaccination against pertussis but have no health insurance, or insurance that doesn’t pay for vaccinations, can receive a free vaccination at Kittitas County Public Health Department.

Quiet West Nile Virus Season

This summer, KCPHD interns Trevor Alkrie and Angela McDermott conducted West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance trapping activities. They set mosquito traps up at random locations in the county, trapped mosquitos overnight, and then sent the mosquitos to the Washington State Department of Health Laboratory. None of the mosquito samples collected in Kittitas County came back positive for WNV and zero dead birds were reported.

In Washington State, only five mosquito samples were identified to have WNV. There were zero birds, one horse, and four human cases. The number of human cases was the highest since 2009. However, nationwide WNV activity has been high. It is unclear exactly why WNV activity can come and go in waves, but flooding, warmer than normal winter temperatures, and migratory

patterns of birds (as the primary vector reservoir) all play a significant role in WNV activity.

Most people who are infected with WNV will not get sick. About one in five people infected will have mild symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches. One in 150 people infected, will have more severe symptoms. Nevertheless, WNV remains a significant public health issue.



KCPHD Travel Clinic Services

Thinking about travelling overseas? Before you pack your bags, a travel consultation at the health department may be in order.

Did you know that some countries require certain vaccinations in order to enter and to exit the country?

The nursing staff at the health department provides travel consultations, which typically last an hour and start at one hundred and fifteen dollars. Topics ranging from potable water to healthcare available at the travel site, in addition to vaccine administration, are covered with every group or individual.

Based on where a person is travelling, staff will assess the

traveler's risks including accommodations, length of stay, activities, current health conditions of the traveler, and immunization history. Staff utilize a tool, Travax, which specifically address travel related disease per geographic area using information from The World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Travax provides guidance for anyone travelling to any country in the world. For example, if someone was visiting Peru, they would be instructed to take malaria prevention medicine.

Immunizations and medications are the best way to prevent some diseases such as yellow fever and typhoid. However,

some diseases do not have a vaccine available. In those instances, based on disease prevalence, education is provided to best prevent transmission of something such as dengue fever.

“Travel related medicine can be complicated and we try to help patients navigate through all of that information in order to keep them safe,” says Annemarie Hill, KCPHD public nurse. Travelers walk away with seventy five pages of written information, so that they have reference material after the consultation. KCPHD’s goal “is to help people to enjoy their travels by staying safe and healthy.”

KCPHD Gets in Fair and Rodeo Mode

Several KCPHD programs got involved in the Kittitas County Fair this year.

The Food Access Coalition for Kittitas County was represented this year at the Kittitas County Fair with a information table designed by Alisa Spieckerman, Public Health Associate for KCPHD. The display included coalition membership sign-up sheets, sponsor forms, pamphlets, coalition fact sheets, community survey summary of results, canning kit flyers, community garden information, and assessment information. The table also included a board with pictures from our community garden and healthy foods.

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, with support

from the Community Transformation Grant through Grant County Health District, engaged youth in assessing tobacco sponsorship and utilization at the Kittitas County Fair and Ellensburg Rodeo. Kasey Knutson, Health Educator, recruited five youth to attend the events and track any tobacco advertising, tobacco usage, and tobacco litter they observed. No tobacco advertising was observed at the rodeo, all participants observed multiple people using tobacco products at the fair, and four of five observed cigarette butt litter. The information will be used to work with organizers of local events to decrease exposure to environmental tobacco smoke

and reduce litter.

KCPHD Environmental Health Specialists conducted a significant number of inspections at the county fair food booths. KCPHD staff inspected each fair booth daily for a total of 150 inspection visits in an effort to ensure that the thousands of people who attend the fair and rodeo annually could rely on food that was safety stored and prepared. Over the next year, environmental health staff will work closely with the fairgrounds to make sure they are prepared for the 2013 Fair and Rodeo event that is protective of human health and the environment.

Zoonotics and Vector

Animal Quarantine Required	0
Animals Tested for Rabies	1
Dead Bird Phone Calls	0
Dead Birds Collected	0
Mosquito Clusters Collected	4

Living Environment

Schools

Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	0
Playground Inspections	0
Complaints	0

Public Pools & Spas

New Permits	1
Renewal Permits	3
Routine Inspections	10
Re-inspections	1
Complaints	0

Camps & Parks

New Permits	0
Renewal Permits	5
Routine Inspections	6
Re-inspections	0
Complaints	0



Solid Waste

New Facility Applications	0
New Exempt Facility Applications	0
Permit Renewals	7
Permitted Facility Inspections	8
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	3
Incidents	1

On-Site Sewage (OSS)

Records Requests	21
Complaints	1

Permits & Inspections

New Installation Permits	26
Repair Installation Permits	4
Renewal Installation Permits	0
Site Evaluations	38
Final Inspections	22
Final Permits	23

Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	0
Soil Logs	4

Health Promotion Staff Attend Social Norms Training

Kasey Knutson, Health Educator, and Alisa Spieckerman, Public Health Associate, attended a social norms training held by Kittitas County Community Network Coalition. To gain the training and expertise needed to implement social norms change on a community level, new uses of social norms marketing are being utilized in the field of health promotion and public welfare.

Social norms help shape behavior, and the intent of a

social norms campaign is to produce long-term change in behaviors. An example of normative change is the way we now perceive the importance of wearing seat belts, our understanding of damage created by smoking, and our understanding of the risks to a fetus when a pregnant woman consumes alcohol. These are examples of long-term normative change. The change affects the way an entire population thinks about a behavior, how they respond to it, and the choices people make

to support or engage in the behavior.

Social norms studies indicate people think risk-taking behavior is more prevalent than it really is. So promoting already existing healthy norms can foster positive changes in attitudes and behavior. These effective and research-based models for creating positive community change provide us with the tools to assist residents throughout Washington in improving the quality of life for their families and neighbors.



KCPHD Staff Gains Skills in Joint Information Systems

KCPHD's Public Information Officer (PIO), Robin Read, attended the second level of PIO training offered by the Washington Emergency Management Division in August in Spokane, Washington. The next level is a national four day advanced PIO training.

The second level of PIO training is a one day workshop about Joint Information Systems (JIS) and Joint Information Centers (JIC.) The course objectives were to equip PIOs with the skills needed to establish and organize a JIS and/or JIC, and to gain knowledge of operations practices for performing PIO

duties within the National Incident Management System (NIMS) multiagency coordination system.

During an emergency, a PIO represents and advises incident command, manages media and public inquiries, and works with partners and audiences to ensure unified and consistent messaging. A JIS allows multiple PIOs to coordinate efficiently and consistently during an emergency that requires a multi-agency response. A JIC is a central location that enhances information coordination, reduces misinformation, and maximizes resources by co-locating PIOs from different

agencies.

Information about how a JIS operates in Kittitas County can be found in the Kittitas County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan under Emergency Support Function #15—Public Affairs (www.co.kittitas.wa.us/sheriff/emergency.asp). It is also referenced in the KCPHD Emergency Response Plan.

Amy Diaz, Public Information Officer for Kittitas Valley Community Hospital also attended the training. Ms. Read and Ms. Diaz were able to discuss how to better coordinate joint information between the two organizations for future incidents.



In Case You Missed It

This quarter's health watch articles in the Daily Record were about unsecured loads, child immunizations, and emergency preparedness.

In July, James Rivard wrote about the dangers and consequences of driving with an unsecured load. Four hundred accidents are caused in Washington State by unsecured loads. Having an unsecured load is a citable violation that results in a \$216 ticket.

Strapping a load, using tie down straps, or using ropes are examples of ways to secure a load. Unsecured loads also contribute to a considerable amount of debris and roadside litter.

In August, Tiffany Beardsley wrote about the importance of childhood vaccinations and making sure your children are up to date on vaccinations every year before school starts. Immunizations are one of the

safest ways to keep people in our community healthy. It is because of vaccinations that disease like polio are no longer a major concern in this country. Kids who are healthy learn and function better.

In September, Kasey Knutson wrote about our emergency preparedness and response program. KCPHD's annual drive-thru flu vaccination clinic was highlighted as the staff's primary opportunity to practice the incident command system and practice the possibility of a public health emergency requiring mass distribution of medication or vaccination. The drive-thru flu vaccination clinic is on October 9th in the parking lot of the Grand Meridian Cinema.



Strategic Issues for Community Health Improvement Chosen

The Community Health Improvement Project Steering Committee met in September and identified twelve strategic issues that need to be addressed in order to work towards the community health vision of "Kittitas County is a compassionate and safe community where essential needs are met and we are empowered with tools to lead a purposeful life."

Strategic issues are identified by closely examining the results of the comprehensive community health assessment and identifying common themes that emerged. They are issues that can be addressed at the community level and allow a community to be proactive instead of reactive.

The twelve draft issues identified are:

1. How can we increase public awareness/preparedness regarding natural disaster response?
2. How can we increase public buy-in regarding alternate modes of transportation and city beautification?
3. How can we help adolescents develop a support network (social connections to reduce stress?)
4. How can we increase access to affordable housing?
5. How can we increase availability of living wage jobs?
6. How can we support the implementation of programs to improve air and water quality?
7. How can we work effectively

to improve funding for health care?

8. How can we educate the public on the benefits of vaccinations?
9. How can we encourage our population to access health prevention screenings like immunizations?
10. How can we improve knowledge on how to deal with stress in a healthy way?
11. How can we best provide education and awareness to improve preventative care for individuals and in systems?
12. How can we strengthen coordination and communication among service providers?

A subcommittee will meet in October to finalize and prioritize the strategic issues.

Food Safety

Permits

New Food Establishment Applications	0
Renewal Food Establishment Applications	0
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	36
Food Handler's Permits	634

Inspections

Pre-Opening Inspections	4
Routine Inspections	196
Re-inspections	7
Temporary Event Inspections	45

Contractual Inspections

CWU Quarterly	1
Jail Quarterly	1
School Kitchens	0

Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >35 pts	6
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0
Operating without a Permit	0
Temporary Closures	0
Complaints	3

Drinking Water

Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	2
Group B Water System Inspections	2
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	11
Well Site Inspections	1
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	39
Well Delegation Inspections	4
Group B Paperwork Received	0
Group B Systems Approved	2
Complaints	2

? **Did you know** ?

Each year, the Kittitas County Public Health Department distributes data about the health of our youth from the Healthy Youth Survey which is conducted in Washington State every other year. Data sheets called “In Your Classroom” are distributed to all teachers and school staff in the county.

Did you know that in a classroom of twenty-five 12th graders...

- **Twelve have had sexual intercourse**
- **Twelve report a low quality of life**
- **Ten drank alcohol in the last thirty days**
- **Nine are trying to lose weight**
- **Eight have no after school activities**
- **Seven have been depressed within the last year**
- **Six smoked marijuana within the last thirty days**
- **Six skipped school within the last month**

Information is based on the most recent Healthy Youth Survey, 2010. For a copy of the “In your Classroom” datasheet, contact Kasey Knutson at 509-962-7090.



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

Public Health Department a County Budget Priority

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has designated the Kittitas County Public Health Department to be a county budget priority for 2013. Each year, BOCC designates one county department as a budget priority. Prior years have

resulted in significant upgrades to the county’s information technology department’s systems and the expansion of the county jail.

BOCC has requested budget scenarios for the department at current staffing levels and at ideal staffing levels. They will

be examining and considering alternative funding sources that could provide a sustainable source of revenue for the department.

Executive Advisory Committee Meets to Discuss Attendance

The executive committee for the Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) met in August to discuss BOHAC attendance and role. Five members attended along with three health department staff.

The executive committee examined and revisited the

BOHAC mission statement, asked health department staff about the value they get from BOHAC, and discussed options to address the lack of ability to have a quorum at BOHAC meetings.

It was decided to email BOHAC members who have

not had regular attendance to determine their interest in continuing on the committee and consider the option of returning to monthly meetings.

KCPHD Receives Another \$10,000 for Quality Improvement

KCPHD will receive another \$10,000 from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013 to complete a new quality improvement project. The funding originates with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and is awarded to KCPHD by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Performance Management Centers for

Excellence. In 2011-2012, KCPHD received a similar grant to conduct quality improvement training for all staff and initiate a quality improvement project.

To determine an appropriate project for the new grant cycle, project ideas were collected from staff. The ideas were then rated by staff based on several criteria.

The project chosen will seek to streamline and improve data collection, entry, and reporting for environmental health programs. Staff from assessment, front desk, and environmental health will be involved in the project.

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