

PUBLIC HEALTH *CONNECTION*

2012-2013 Influenza Season Winding Down

The 2012-2013 influenza season is coming to a close, but the virus is still circulating in some parts of the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), influenza season started about a month earlier than usual and was a longer than average season.

This year's flu season was moderately severe. People sixty five and older



accounted for fifty percent of all reported hospitalizations and 110 pediatric deaths have been attributed to influenza.

In January, a hospital in Pennsylvania set up an alternate care facility to address the overwhelming rush of influenza vaccine requests and Boston, Massachusetts declared an emergency when they were overwhelmed with 1,500 emergency room visits with flu like symptoms.

On January 11, 2013, Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) issued a health order for Kittitas Valley Healthcare (KVH) to enact their influenza control plan, which mitigates influenza exposure at their facilities. The plan requires all employees to be

vaccinated or wear a mask.

The most common circulating flu strains were Influenza A (H3N2) and Influenza B. Vaccination reduced the risk of influenza related medical visits by approximately sixty two percent.

Flu illness can be mild to severe, but is especially dangerous for young children who have certain health conditions including asthma, neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions, chronic lung disease, heart disease, blood disorders, endocrine disorders (such as diabetes), kidney, liver, and metabolic disorders, and weakened immune system due to disease or medication.

Board of County Commissioners Appoints Interim Public Health Administrator

It is the pleasure of KCPHD staff to introduce Robin Read as the Interim Administrator as of February 26, 2013. Ms. Read has a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Washington State University and a Masters in Public Health (MPH) from the University of Washington and has worked for KCPHD for over six years. She is a long time resident of Ellensburg and cares deeply for the residents of Kittitas County.

Ms. Read is fluent in Spanish and became interested in public health when she volunteered with medical

providers who traveled to a remote village outside of Ensenada, Mexico to provide basic health care services to residents. After that experience, she volunteered at the Kittitas County Public Health Department, the Ellensburg Free Clinic, and worked for the Ellensburg School District working with migrant farm worker families. These experiences led her to getting her MPH.

Ms. Read's current priorities for the department include stability and determining future direction for the department. This includes deciphering

our role with health care reform, addressing community health improvement, determining county priorities, and funding.



Addressing Water Resources in Kittitas County



The supreme court issued an order stating that Kittitas County is responsible for protecting water resources. As a result, the county has continued to partner with the Department of Ecology to discuss groundwater issues. KCPHD staff have been meeting with Department of Ecology and representatives from Yakima and Benton County. “Yakima and Benton counties share the same water source, and are in the same drainage basin, so it makes sense to include those counties now, so that every one is on the same page,” said James Rivard, Environmental Health Supervisor. The goal of the collaboration is to address future water needs, and how to establish a strategy to manage and protect the water in our counties. Currently a memorandum of understanding (MOA) has been drafted and is being reviewed by the three counties.

Water resource protection has been an ongoing issue between

state and local governments.

Protecting the county’s water resources means maintaining an adequate groundwater supply. Without proper management of groundwater, wells may eventually go dry. Many residents in Kittitas rely on wells to provide domestic water to their homes.

“When people lose their water, lawsuits result,” stated Mr. Rivard. People have rights to water, especially senior water rights holders. The Yakima Nation has the most senior

rights in our basin. Impeding on water rights of senior water rights holders, can result in lawsuits.

Contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department for more information.

Synar Compliance Check Rates for 2012 Released

Statewide, there was a significant increase of retailers illegally selling tobacco to minors with the rate at sixteen percent, up from eleven percent in 2012. Synar compliance checks, named for its sponsor Congressman Mike Synar of Oklahoma, requires the state to complete tobacco compliance checks at randomly chosen tobacco retailer locations. Sixteen percent is the highest state rate of illegal sales to minors in more than a decade.

If Washington State exceeds

twenty percent, the state could lose almost fourteen million dollars in federal funding for drug, alcohol, and tobacco prevention and treatment.

Locally, Kittitas County had a Synar compliance check rate of seven percent, which means seven percent of local retailers sold to a minor. Our current youth tobacco funding is used to provide tools and technical assistance for retailers such as year to date signs to ensure licensed businesses

can determine if a customer is a legal age.



To purchase
TOBACCO
A person must be
18 years of age,
born on or before
today's date in
1995

AAP 5 Rev. 11/12

This date applies to period of Jan. 2013 through Dec. 2013

Department-Wide

Financial

New Grants Awarded	1
Other New Fund Sources	2
Grant Applications Submitted	2

Staff

FTEs Funded	17.55
Actual FTEs	13.55
Current Active Volunteers	7

Assessment

Health Data Requests	0
Quality Improvement Projects	0

Communications

Media Contacts	35
Health Care Provider Releases	7

Other

Community Mtgs & Presentations	127
Updates to Codes and Policies	1

Vital Records

Births	95
Birth Certificates Issued	257
Deaths Registered	70
Certified Copies of Deaths	285
Fetal Deaths	0
Child Deaths	1

Tobacco Prevention and Control

Smoking in Public Places Complaints	2
Educational Contacts with Tobacco Retailers	82

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

New Enrollees	34
Referrals Received	62

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

A New Focus for the Maternal and Child Health Grant

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) grant addresses the health of mothers and children up to the age of eighteen. The health department receives about \$40,000 for the MCH grant, and passes on about \$14,000 to Community Health of Central Washington in Ellensburg to provide services for children with special health care needs.

This year, there has been a change in focus with the MCH work. KCPHD must perform a needs assessment and prioritize various performance measures in our county, in addition to focusing on universal developmental screening of children. On a local level, we have decided to focus attention on children immunization rates

and children's health care coverage rates.

Community Health Services staff looked at data such as teen birth rates, breastfeeding rates, low birth rate, etcetera from various sources of data sent by Washington State Department of Health.

Kittitas County has a significantly lower rate of children's immunizations, meaning our children are more at risk of vaccine preventable diseases.

Locally, we also have a lower rate of children covered by health insurance. Specifically, school aged children have a lower rate of coverage in our county.

The MCH work will assess what is currently occurring in our county to account for the lower rates compared to the state. Liz Whitaker, Community Health Services Supervisor, states "when we have a good idea of what is going on and why we have lower rates, then we will move forward with direct work in our community to improve those rates and the health of our children."



KCPHD Provides Travel Consultation for Seventeen

KCPHD public health nurses completed a group overseas travel consultation for a group of seventeen people traveling to Sierra Leone, West Africa. Thanks to a great degree of planning and organizational foresight as well as cooperation with the front desk staff, staff was able to

complete all the education and immunizations for this group smoothly and efficiently.

By splitting up the travelers into small groups, KCPHD staff could complete all the necessary components of a travel consultation in a timely manner. Community Health

Services staff created a PowerPoint presentation to provide travel health and safety education and gave the group time to have their questions answered. In the clinic, staff completed a personal health assessment for each traveler and then administered recommended vaccinations.

KCPHD staff provided education on insect precautions including mosquito borne illnesses like malaria, dengue fever, and yellow fever. In addition, the nurses addressed tuberculosis, HIV, rabies, schistosomiasis, and African Sleeping Sickness, as well as basic first aid and travel safety.



Communicable Disease (CD) & Tuberculosis (TB)

Active TB Confirmed Cases	0
Suspect TB Investigations	0
CD Confirmed Cases	12
Other CD Investigations	23
STDs Reported	48
Food Illness Complaints	4
Tuberculosis Tests	21
Latent TB Infection Referrals	0

Immunization

Total Vaccinations	136
Adults Receiving Vaccinations	78
Children Receiving Vaccinations	25
Flu Vaccinations	28

Overseas Travel

Travel Consultations	17
Specialty Travel Vaccinations	43



HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Testing

HIV Tests	9
Hepatitis C Tests	16

Syringe Exchange

Syringe Exchange Participants	46
Syringes Exchanged	565

Education

High Risk Presentations	4
People in Attendance at High Risk Presentations	46
Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	0
People in Attendance at BBP & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	0

Breast, Cervical, and Colon Health

New Clients Enrolled	5
Total Clients Screened	15



Erin Moore—Environmental Health Permit Technician

If you have ever had a question about an environmental health issue, chances are that you have met Erin Moore.

Ms. Moore has worked with the department since May 2008 as a Public Health Clerk, but recently moved to the Permit Technician position.

She is currently working with Environmental Health billing,

the unsecured loads project, setting up solid waste surveillance equipment.

Her favorite part of the job is using the computer programs, but is careful to keep the various programs straight. Ms. Moore works hard to provide excellent and personable customer service!



KCPHD Has Certified Community Health Workers

KCPHD employees Amy Fuller and Alisa Spieckerman recently received certifications in the area of Community Health Worker core competencies. This training was sponsored by the State of Washington as a part of the movement in modern health care to clarify and enhance the role of the Community Health Worker. The certification program covered seven areas of competency: The role of the Community Health Worker, communication skills, cultural

competency, organization skills, documentation skills, assessment skills, and service coordination skills. In their respective roles of Health Educator and Public Health Associate, Ms. Fuller and Ms. Spieckerman look forward to applying these skills to their positions as well as their work with the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry program, the Food Access Coalition and the Community Transformation Grant.



KCPHD Provides Education to Stop the Spread of Disease

KCPHD has partnered with Alcohol Drug Dependency Services (ADDS) to provide ongoing education. Every six weeks, Community Outreach Worker Julia Karns, teaches a morning and evening session to provide education about HIV and hepatitis C, and to promote health department services.

Every time Ms. Karns provides education on preventing the spread of a communicable disease like

HIV or hepatitis C, it is considered a “high risk presentation,” whether it is in a group setting or one-on-one during syringe exchange.

It is considered high risk, because some activities increase the risk of transmitting disease like hepatitis C like intravenous drug use, unprotected sex, and even tattoos and body piercings.

“We know people don’t intentionally spread disease,” said Ms. Karns. My job is to educate people, so they do not accidentally spread disease.



Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment

Part of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is identifying the most likely risks in Kittitas County. The Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment (HIVA) identifies and gives general information about hazards in our county that may threaten life and property.

The HIVA was last updated in 2012. It identifies fourteen hazards including abandoned mines, civil disturbance, dam failure, drought, earthquake, flood, hazardous materials, severe storms, slides, terrorism, urban fire, utility outages, volcano, and wildland fire. The document has interesting information, for example, coalminers dug about twelve hundred miles of shafts in Cle

Elum, Ellensburg is a down stream community for dams in the area, and that flooding is one of the most common naturally occurring hazards in the county.

Each hazard identified covers general background information, effects of the potential incident, historical information, specific hazard areas, and a conclusion with recommendations for mitigation.

If you are interested in reading more about the county's HIVA or emergency management plans visit www.co.kittitas.wa.us/sheriff/emergency.aspx. In addition, the state has emergency management information as well, including a HIVA from

2009. The statewide HIVA is available at www.emd.wa.gov/plans/plans_index.shtml and covers nineteen hazards with information that also includes the preparation process.



Zoonotics and Vector

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

Living Environment

Schools

Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	12
Playground Inspections	8
Complaints	1

Public Pools & Spas

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

Camps & Parks

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

Online Food Handler Class Going Strong

As of January, people wishing to get their food worker card could do so online, at home, or anywhere internet access was available.

Candi Blackford, Administrative Assistant, says “people are still coming to the health department to take the



test. It’s a big change and people are not quite used to it.”

Jeff Seapulski, Food Inspector, hears employers praise the new online system.

Anyone who needs a food worker card can visit www.foodworkercard.wa.gov/ to complete the training and test.

Community Health Improvement Plan Progress

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Kittitas County has made significant strides forward in its first few months of implementation.

Since first meeting in January of this year, they have adopted a charter, mission statement, and a name for the group. The group will now be known as CHAIN: Community Health Action and Innovation Network. CHAIN’s Community Health Vision: Kittitas County is a compassionate and safe

community where essential needs are met and we are empowered with tools to lead a purposeful life.

CHAIN’s Mission Statement: To promote community health improvement by connecting people, ideas, and resources. The group is currently in the process of creating subcommittees to implement the plan. Next steps for CHAIN will be local promotion of the project and recruitment of additional committee members. If you would like to be involved with CHAIN, please contact

Kittitas County Public Health
(509)962-7515.



Community Transformation Grant Works With F.I.S.H. Food Bank

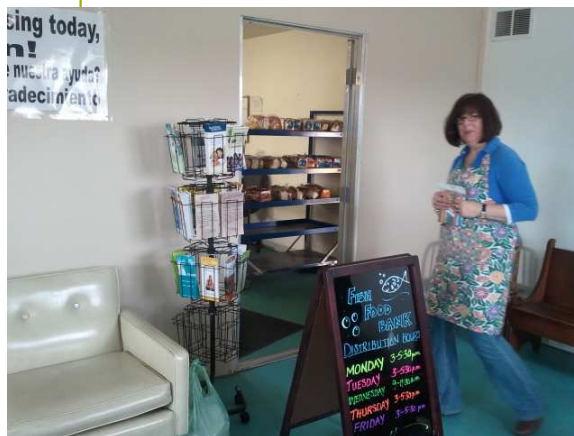
With \$25,000 in Community Transformation Grant (CTG) funds, the KCPHD Health Promotion staff has been working towards reducing

exposure to tobacco at outdoor events, promoting physical activities at the worksite, promoting healthy food options in school, increasing

increased healthy food donations.

The latest project was to create an educational area in the lobby at F.I.S.H. with My Plate food groups information, a new brochure rack, and healthy living messaging tools.

Look for healthy food messages at F.I.S.H. food bank’s lobby!



breastfeeding support, and increasing healthy eating at emergency food banks.

KCPHD has been working with F.I.S.H. food bank around adopting a policy, training, and promoting

Solid Waste

New Facility Applications	0
New Exempt Facility Applications	0
Permit Renewals	1
Permitted Facility Inspections	7
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	14
Incidents	0

On-Site Sewage (OSS)

Records Requests	34
Complaints	0

Permits & Inspections

New Installation Permits	22
Repair Installation Permits	8
Renewal Installation	1
Site Evaluations	23
Final Inspections	8
Final Permits	11

Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	5
Soil Logs	1

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

KCPHD Retreat Brings All Public Health Teams Together

One day, every year, KCPHD breaks down the walls of the department (not literally). “Department” is sometime synonymous with silos or boxes and we each specialize in our own areas, whether that is environmental, administrative, communicable disease, or health promotion. On March 6, 2013, we took valuable time to spend the day as a united public health team.

Team building activities occur, of course, but so do required activities and important all staff information.

We addressed strategic plan updates and department wide priorities using the SWOT model—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and challenges.



Highlights and division accomplishments from 2012 were shared with the group.

Staff also participated in small group work with specific incident based scenarios where they answered questions about KCPHD staff roles and potential partners needed to

respond to emergencies. The day was capped with an acclaimed documentary, Unnatural Causes, that recognizes the socio-economic inequities in health.

Staff Training in Geographic Information System (GIS) for Staff

Visual data is sweet and we are not just talking pie graphs. KCPHD is working to represent our data by location. Numbers have no real meaning unless they are tied to something tangible. Studies show it is easier to remember fifteen apples than the number fifteen. Why? Because the number is connected to a picture in our brain. If KCPHD is able to connect certain information to locations people are familiar with, then our questions and data could be easily understood.

GIS is a program with limitless data representation abilities on different base maps. Base maps can be Google earth satellite images, road maps, elevation maps etc. After putting points, lines, or shapes on a map and

attributing them with certain information, we can compare and correlate data visually by location. KCPHD can put all sorts of information onto the maps: obesity rates, water availability, septic system locations, food establishments, well systems and more. We can compare this data and see what impacts what or what areas of trouble need most attention.

The most important aspects of this system is our ability to collect accurate information and how much importance we put on each piece of data when we associate it on our maps. The addition of this software into our programs will lay a foundation for the future. We will be able to better inform the public on critical actions that

impact our health and we will be able to visually display it by location. As the years go by, we will have enough data to track trends and respond before something unwanted happens.



Food Safety

Permits

New Food Establishment Applications	8
Renewal Food Establishment Applications	2
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	4
Food Handler's Permits Online	450
Food Handler's Permits Office	134

Inspections

Pre-Opening Inspections	1
Routine Inspections	138
Re-inspections	0
Temporary Event Inspections	4

Contractual Inspections

CWU Quarterly	1
Jail Quarterly	1
School Kitchens	0

Enforcement Activities

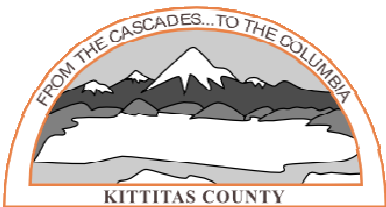
Red Item Violation >35 pts	1
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0
Operating without a Permit	0
Temporary Closures	0
Complaints	10

Drinking Water

Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	0
Group B Water System Inspections	2
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	19
Well Site Inspections	0
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	56
Well Delegation Inspections	6
Group B Paperwork Received	1
Group B Systems Approved	2
Complaints	1

? **Did you know** ?

- It has been twenty years since the famous Jack in the Box E. coli outbreak in 1993.
- Riley Detwiler, a seventeen month old, who never ate at Jack in the Box, died from the infection.
- Four children died as a result of the outbreak.
- The E. coli strain 0157:H7 made 623 people in the United States sick, most from Washington State.
- E. coli is a food borne illness, but can also be transmitted from person to person.
- E. coli was considered an “adulterant” in ground beef. Adulterant means E. coli in ground beef is considered illegal by USDA standards.
- Darin Detwiler, father to Riley Detwiler, continues to advocate for food safety.
- Since 2001, E. coli 0157:H7 in U.S. Beef has declined by about eighty percent.



Board of Health Has a New Member



Board of Health (BOH) welcomes a new member, Commissioner Gary Berndt.

Gary Berndt represents District Two and has held previous political positions including Kittitas County Hospital District Number Two Board of Directors, Cle Elum City

Council Member, and was the Mayor of Cle Elum for sixteen years.

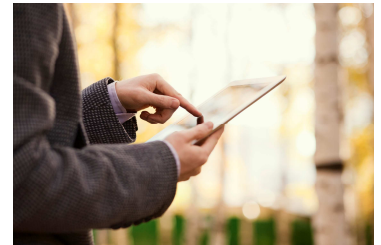
Each new member of BOH receives an orientation, which includes departmental information, BOH method of operations, and primary statutes that govern KCPHD.

Board of Health Advisory Committee Eyes Future

The Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) continues with an eye on the future and the possibility of changing the structure of the group. Discussion continues about the future directions of the group and possible mission and name changes.

The group has also addressed some bylaw issues around quorums and is now meeting the second Monday of every month instead of every two months.

BOHAC is a 501c3 or a tax-exempt, non profit organization.



Environmental Health Quality Improvement Update

The environmental health quality improvement project in progress is streamlining the data process, including collection, entry, and responding to requests for information.



The project is using the assess, define, analyze, change, and evaluate method. The project group has assessed current goals, performance, and the problems to tackle.

Currently, the group is collecting baseline data and created a process flow chart.

The next steps, to be completed by July of 2013,

will be the change and evaluate process, where solution options will be considered, tested, and implemented.