

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

Secretary of Health, Dr. John Wiesman, Visits Kittitas County

On August 22, Kittitas County hosted Washington State Secretary of Health, Dr. John Wiesman, and two of his staff members, Martin Mueller and Marie Flake. The visit started with staff introductions and a tour of the Kittitas



County Public Health Department (KCPHD). Everyone at the department had an opportunity to shake hands with the Secretary and talk a little bit about their programs and experience.

The day also included a community gathering with partners from local agencies to share the role of their organization in the community, the vision of the community, and what some of the biggest challenges are in achieving those visions.

The visit concluded with a small lunch with the Kittitas County Commissioners and a tour of the

county. The tour included stops showcasing local public health work such as a healthy retail site and the Ellensburg Community Garden.



A Note from the Health Officer: Jury Still Out on E-Cigarettes

E-cigarette use is on the rise and there is no strong data about its safety and long-term effects. Although some e-cigarettes have been marketed as smoking cessation aids, there is no conclusive scientific evidence that e-cigarettes promote successful long-term quitting.

Here is what we do know:

Marketing of e-cigarettes is mimicking the marketing of cigarettes from the past. E-cigarette makers claim they don't market to kids, but they're using the same themes tobacco companies have long used to market regular cigarettes to kids. Cool, rugged, masculine males such as actor Stephen Dorff and TV personality Jenny McCarthy as the sexy, adventurous nightlife-loving female should not be role models for our teenagers. Fruit

flavored additives have been banned in cigarette advertising for decades while e-cigarettes are sold in an assortment of sweet, kid-friendly flavors, such as "vivid vanilla," "fruit loops" and "gummi bear." Joe Cool has been replaced by e-juice Monkeys.

The percentage of U.S. middle and high school students who use electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, more than doubled from 2011 to 2012, according to data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings from the National Youth Tobacco Survey show that the percentage of high school students who reported ever using an e-cigarette rose from 4.7 percent in 2011 to 10.0 percent in 2012. In the same time period, high school students using e-cigarettes within the past 30 days rose from 1.5 percent to 2.8 percent. Use

also doubled among middle school students. Altogether, in 2012 more than 1.78 million middle and high school students nationwide had tried e-cigarettes. 75% of students who use e-cigarettes also have used regular tobacco products.

Although the jury is still out, there needs to be effective regulation by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the states to minimize the potential harms of e-cigarettes. Until there is more data available, effective regulation being considered on the federal and state level needs to be enacted soon. If e-cigarette manufacturers want to be part of the solution to the tobacco problem, they should support regulation that protects public health and stops irresponsible marketing. -Dr. Mark Larson

Department-Wide

Financial

Existing Fund Sources	
New Grants Awarded	1
New Fund Sources--Other	0
Grant Applications	1

Staff

Current FTEs	17
Current Active Volunteers	5

Assessment

Health Data Requests	2
Quality Improvement Projects	0

Communications

Media Contacts	38
Health Care Provider Releases	0

Other

Community Mtgs & Presentations	128
Updates to Codes and Policies	0

Vital Records

Births	87
Birth Certificates Issued	245
Deaths Registered	72
Certified Copies of Deaths	289
Fetal Deaths Reported	1
Child Deaths Reported	0

Tobacco Prevention and Control

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

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

New Enrollees	9
Referrals Received	9

Re-New Environmental Health Supervisor

Holly Myers returned to the Kittitas County Public Health Department as the Environmental Health Supervisor on September 23. Ms. Myers previously worked for KCPHD, but was laid off in 2008, due to the economic downturn. "I wanted to work here, because I liked the staff I managed five years ago and I am proud of they do to keep the community safe."

Ms. Myers grew up in Ellensburg and attended Central Washington University, graduating with a biology major and a chemistry minor. Her previous work experience includes work in an environmental testing lab, Department of Ecology's Air

Quality Program, and most recently work at City of Yakima's Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Ms. Myers is zealous about keeping communities safe and spoke of her previous work experience at a wastewater treatment plant. She experienced a new process to turn waste to resources and talked about the treatment plant using processes that took in waste to discharge water that was so clean there was salmon spawning right below the plant outfall. "The idea that waste can be treated and processed to a point that can be sold as fertilizer safe for public use is amazing to me," stated Ms. Myers.

Being a part of improving the environment in some way has always been a part of Ms. Myer's career and she looks forward to working in Kittitas County again.



New Public Health Clerk Joins KCPHD Team

Hollie Casey joined the administrative staff on July 15 as a new Public Health Clerk I.



Ms. Casey moved to Ellensburg from Wenatchee. She has previously worked in the equipment finance industry, but prior to working at KCPHD was working at a collections agency. She chose to apply for the position, so that she could live in and be a part of Kittitas County.

During her time here, Ms. Casey has already learned a great deal about what public health does in the community. The Public Health Clerk position fields questions from the community on a variety of

topics, issues birth and death certificates, and has to be well informed about topics ranging from water availability for property owners to vaccination information.

"I love the positive environment here, my co-workers are incredible, and there is such a variety of daily tasks," states Ms. Casey.

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

KCPHD Staff Person Accepts Assessment Coordinator Position

The health department has a new Assessment Coordinator. Amy Fuller, previously a Health Educator, moved into the role on September 1st.

Over the past year, Ms. Fuller has done outreach and education for programs such as Access to Child and Baby Dentistry (ABCD), food handler's certification and blood borne pathogen and HIV awareness. She has also worked on several Community Transformation Grant projects including increasing workplace wellness and breastfeeding support in the county through policies. She continues her work now with the Community Health Improvement Plan

Implementation group, CHAIN: Community Health Action & Innovation Network. Ms. Fuller is excited to be in her new position. She enjoys collecting and deciphering data in order to tell a story about the health of our community.

As the new Assessment Coordinator, Ms. Fuller hopes to work closely with community partners. She hopes to identify areas or pockets in our community that are underserved and assist them by providing needs assessments of those groups. The ultimate goal is to create effectual plans of action based on the data.

Ms. Fuller believes “the critical thinking and effective problem solving action of a few people can help many.”



Electronic Death Registry System Starts

On August 14, the Electronic Death Registry System (EDRS) started at KCPHD. EDRS is a web based application for completing death records in Washington State. The system reduces the time that it takes to receive death certificates. The State Department of Health is now getting death certificates faster and the information related to the cause of death is more accurate. Prior to the electronic system, it would take up to ninety days for the state to receive information and with EDRS that time could be reduced to five days.

Death certificates are required in order for a burial permit. In addition, death certificates are often required in order for people to close estates.

KCPHD administrative staff are now comfortable with EDRS.

Staff check and approve death certificates two times a day. Only death certificates originating in Kittitas County are able to be approved by Kittitas County. However, there is limited access to other counties within Washington State for death certificates.

Funeral homes receive electronic burial permits once KCPHD staff approve the death certificate online, but funeral home staff still visit the health department to get paper copies of the death certificates.

Candi Blackford, Administrative Assistant notes that, “electronic systems are often more efficient, but we

lose contact with the staff. We are happy to continue interacting with our local funeral home staff.”

Death certificates (for deaths in Kittitas County and within thirty days from the date of death) are available by calling the health department or by requesting online at <http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/programs/vital-records.aspx?action=death>.



Communicable Disease (CD) & Tuberculosis (TB)

Active TB Confirmed Cases	0
Suspect TB Investigations	0
CD Confirmed Cases	23
Other CD Investigations	19
STDs Reported	42
Food Illness Complaints	1
TB Skin Tests (PPD and/or QFG)*	31
Latent TB Infection Referrals	0

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

Immunization

Total Vaccinations	117
Adults Receiving Vaccinations	39
Children Receiving Vaccinations	19
Flu Vaccinations	18

Overseas Travel

Travel Consultations	12
Specialty Travel Vaccinations	8



HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C

Testing

HIV Tests	4
Hepatitis C Tests	0

Syringe Exchange

Syringe Exchange Participants	4
Syringes Exchanged (KCPHD)	40

Education

High Risk Presentations	5
People in Attendance at High Risk Presentations	37
Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	1
People in Attendance at BBP & HIV/AIDS Awareness Classes	17

In Person Assisters, Trained

KCPHD has two trained and certified In Person Assisters to help residents sign up for benefits through the Washington Healthplanfinder.

In September, Julia Karns and Kasey Knutson completed a two week training. The training included information about the Affordable Health Care Act, the new Health Benefit Exchange, basics of

health insurance, Medicaid and eligibility, qualified health plans, and system training.

In Person Assisters are trained to help individuals make informed decisions about health insurance.

“Many of the people who will come to us for enrollment will be accessing health insurance for the first time in their lives,”

commented Ms. Karns.

Ms. Karns and Ms. Knutson are looking forward to providing fair and impartial customer assistance for people to get access to health care coverage.



Staff Responds to Colockum Tarps Fire

On July 27, the Colockum Tarps fire started near Colockum Road and Tarpiscan Road.

KCPHD participated in the county’s Emergency Operation Center (EOC) meetings to evaluate the activation level and mission objectives.

Wildfires create air quality issues for residents and the health department provides assistance with information and recommendations based on the air quality.

Using Washington Air Quality Advisory through the Washington State Department of Ecology, KCPHD staff informed the EOC about possible health risks related to air quality.

Air quality ranged from good to moderate to unhealthy for sensitive groups. Press release information was sent to the EOC and KCPHD had N-95 masks on hand upon request.

Adverse symptoms related to poor air quality include

dizziness, headache, difficulty breathing, coughing, and nausea.

Unlike last year’s wildfires, air quality resulting from Colockum Tarps Fire, did not result in extended periods of time in very unhealthy and hazardous air conditions.

Breastfeeding Coalition Has Presence at Fair

The Kittitas County Breastfeeding Coalition provided a breast feeding station at this year’s fair. In an effort to create more breast feeding friendly spaces within the community, the coalition approached the Kittitas County Fair Board.

One of the goals of the coalition is to protect and promote a public environment supportive and accepting of breastfeeding.

The baby feeding station was a screened off tent space that included seating, fans, and bottled water for anyone visiting the fair.

“The space was appreciated by quite a few parents and babies,” said Public Health Nurse Tiffany Beardsley. One mother even wrote to the Fair Board to let them know how thankful she was to have the space.



PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

Septic Moratorium Lifted

On August 21, the Board of Health held a public hearing at the Upper County District Court to consider lifting the Pine Loch Sun III septic moratorium.

The moratorium, which prevented the development of new septic systems in Pine Loch Sun III, was established in 1991. The moratorium was a result of septic systems within the development failing and having to be replaced because of shallow and less than ideal soils. Since 1991, many improvements in septic system technology have been made that allow for systems to be safely

permitted in shallow and less than ideal soils.

During the public hearing ten individuals gave public testimony regarding the moratorium. Nine of the ten were in favor of lifting the moratorium, while one questioned why the development would not be able to hook up to city sewer. The moratorium has prevented some landowners from developing their property, and at least five of the individuals who testified would like the moratorium lifted in order to develop their property.

The motion to approve the resolution, which removed the existing moratorium, was approved.

The site evaluation process will determine whether or not a lot can have a septic system based on soil types and location of a reserve drain field area. A site evaluation will be completed on each lot and some will not be adequate for a septic system.



Health Promotion is Moving and Hours are Expanding

Health Promotion staff will be moving. What was formerly the division with community outreach workers and health educators, will now be moved under the Community Health division. Several positions will be reclassified as Community Health Specialists. The

department will consist of the administration division, environmental health, and community health services.

As of August 1, clinic hours expanded. Previously, hours were Tuesday and Thursday from one pm to five pm. Hours have been expanded to

Tuesdays and Thursdays nine am to five pm, with an hour break from noon to one pm. Wednesday also has hours available from one pm to five pm.

Abstract Accepted at Joint Conference for Health



Alisa Spieckerman, CDC Public Health Associate, was selected by the 2013 Joint Conference on Health to present her poster on the Kittitas County Community Food Assessment. The Joint Conference on Health gathers statewide public health professionals to share ideas, develop professionally, and address health challenges. The Kittitas

County Community Food Assessment aims to create awareness around food security, healthy eating behaviors, food safety, and local food economies. The assessment can be found online on the county's public health webpage.

Zoonotics and Vector

Animal Quarantine Required	1
Animals Tested for Rabies	4
Dead Bird Phone Calls	1
Dead Birds Collected	0
Mosquito Clusters Collected	16

Living Environment

Schools

Plans Reviewed	0
Building Inspections	0
Playground Inspections	0
Complaints	1

Public Pools & Spas

New Permits	2
Renewal Permits	6
Routine Inspections	13
Re-inspections	5
Complaints	0

Camps & Parks

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

Solid Waste

New Facility Applications	0
New Exempt Facility Applications	0
Permit Renewals	8
Permitted Facility Inspections	7
Exempt Facility Inspections	0
Complaints	5
Incidents	0

On-Site Sewage (OSS)

Records Requests	20
Complaints	5

Permits & Inspections

New Installation Permits	35
Repair Installation Permits	4
Renewal Installation Permits	3
Site Evaluations	59
Final Inspections	49
Final Permits	11

Short and Long Plats

Plat Applications	2
Soil Logs	3

Ride Along to Liberty Mountain Association

On August 9, Environmental Health Specialist II Joe Gilbert, hosted a ride along with Kasey Knutson, Health Educator. Ms. Knutson had the opportunity to experience a septic site evaluation at the Liberty Mountain Association.

Property owners in Liberty Mountain, who wish to construct a home or cabin with plumbing, but not able to hook up to a municipal sewer system

are required to have a site evaluation. The site evaluation takes into account soil and site characteristics. The evaluation determines the type of system, whether it is gravity, pressure distribution, or alternative system.

Test holes are dug in the area of the proposed drain field, so that soil, groundwater conditions, slope, and physical features can all be taken into account.

Site evaluations are part of the process to prevent improper sewage disposal.



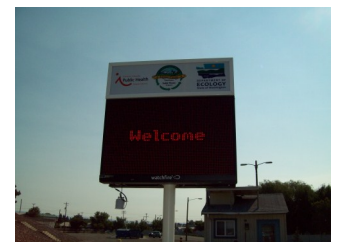
New Electronic Sign at Kittitas County Solid Waste

Kittitas County Solid Waste and Public Health have a new electronic reader board sign. The health department used funds from the Coordinated Prevention Grant (CPG) and will use the sign to continue to educate the public about properly securing loads.

The sign is located at the Ellensburg Transfer Station located at 1001 Industrial Way. The sign is next to the tipping fee station, so transfer station customers can read updated messages as they wait.

In fact, in one week's time, as many as 700 customers may

view messaging on the solid waste sign.



Info Sharing at the Washington Food Coalition Conference

Alisa Spieckerman, Public Health Associate, attended the Washington Food Coalition Conference in Wenatchee. Ms.



Spieckerman attended sessions regarding changes to the Washington State food safety codes, emergency preparedness, cultural issues, conflict management, and successful partnerships. The Washington Food Coalition is a unique conference that brings together folks that fight hunger on the front lines such as food banks. Attendees have the opportunity to develop new collaborations, share

information about tools and resources, hear about new and innovative programs and services, and network with others who share in their commitment to alleviate hunger.

In Case You Missed It

This quarter's health watch articles in the Daily Record were about public health statistics, rabies, and oral health.

In July, the Assessment Coordinator wrote an article about data sources and the importance of using trusted and accountable sources. KCPHD uses information from sources



such as the US Census, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey.

In August, Public Health Nurse Tiffany Beardsley, submitted an article about preventing bats from entering your home, in order to prevent possible exposure to rabies.

In September, Health Educator Amy Fuller, wrote about the issue of childhood dental caries. Ms. Fuller explained, surprisingly, that the most harmful chronic health condition affecting children is dental caries. She then detailed



the importance of baby teeth and how dental caries are caused by bacteria found in the saliva.

Monthly, The Daily Record News partners with KCPHD to print a health watch story. Stories range from information about communicable disease to environmental health issues.



Rabid Bat Identified in Kittitas County

KCPHD received a bat for testing in July and the bat tested positive for rabies.

A resident in rural Kittitas County discovered a dead bat inside the home. The bat was sent to the state laboratory and turned out to be positive, which is the first bat identified as having rabies since 2010 in Kittitas County.

Rabies is a severe viral disease that affects the central nervous system. All mammals can get rabies, but in the US, bats are the primary animal for carrying the disease.

The individual that discovered the bat was treated.

The individual also had unvaccinated pets in the home. For pets who have been exposed or possibly been exposed, the requirement is to vaccinate and quarantine for six months. The alternative is to euthanize the pets immediately.

Rabies in the United States has changed. Prior to 1960, most of the animal cases reported were in domestic animals. Now, more than ninety percent of all animal cases reported to the Centers for Disease Control occur in wildlife.

Animals that typically transmit rabies are raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes. It is best to

never feed or approach a wild animal and to be careful of pets that you do not know.



Food Safety

Permits

New Food Establishment Applications	7
Renewal Food Establishment Applications	97
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	47
Food Handler's Permits (Including off site classes and	732

Inspections

Pre-Opening Inspections	6
Routine Inspections	118
Re-inspections	2
Temporary Event Inspections	151

Contractual Inspections

CWU Quarterly	0
Jail Quarterly	0
School Kitchens	0

Enforcement Activities

Red Item Violation >35 pts	4
Red Item Violation >70 pts	0
Operating without a Permit	5
Temporary Closures	0
Complaints	1

Drinking Water

Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	7
Group B Water System Inspections	2
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	17
Well Site Inspections	2
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	105
Well Delegation Inspections	9
Group B Paperwork Received	0
Group B Systems Approved	0
Complaints	1

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July – September 2013

? **Did you know?** ?

MRSA

- MRSA stands for methicillin-resistant Staphyococcus aureus (MRSA) infection.
- According to the Health Education Resource Exchange (HERE) from Washington State Department of Health, information about MRSA is one of the most accessed informational document through the exchange.
- MRSA is a type of bacteria that cannot be killed by common antibiotics.
- People have bacteria on their skin that doesn't cause any harm, but sometimes these bacteria can get inside the body through a break in the skin.
- Call your doctor if you have signs of a skin infection, since not all infections from MRSA look the same.
- Prevent the spread by covering infections with bandages and do not attend work, school, child care, gyms, pools, or spas until the MRSA infection has healed.



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

Board of Health

The Kittitas County Board of Health (Pictured from left to right: Commissioner O'Brien, Dr. Asriel, Commissioner Berndt, Commissioner Jewell, and Rich Elliott) were busy this quarter reviewing and approving contracts and interagency agreements.

Every statement of work or change in funding, must be reviewed and approved by the Board.



Board of Health Advisory Committee

The Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) nominated new members and approved a new mission.

On July 8, BOHAC motioned to approve the nomination of Rebecca Pearson, MPH, PhD. Dr. Pearson is an Associate Professor and Program

Director at Central Washington University in Physical Education School and Public Health.

On September 9, the mission "to provide feedback, formal recommendations, and public participation in public health activities, policies, funding,

initiatives, and emergent needs for the Kittitas County Board of Health and the Kittitas County Public Health Department" was adopted.

Future updates will address the current by-laws for the group.

Robin Read Accepts

On September 16, Robin Read accepted the position of Administrator of the Public Health Department.

After serving as the interim Director for the department since February, the staff at KCPHD are excited to continue working with Ms. Read as their supervisor. "Ms. Read will bring consistency, sustainability, and a love of

Kittitas County to this department," affirmed Mark Larson, Health Officer.

Ms. Read's current priorities include water metering programs, 2014 budget, health care reform, insurance billing, funding opportunities, and performance management systems.



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