

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## New Public Health Laws Taking Effect

Numerous public health related laws have been addressed recently. Vaccination requirements, purchasing age for tobacco, and breastfeeding laws will be taking effect in Washington State.

In light of recent multiple measles outbreaks in Washington State, new law states that children in school and

childcare centers will no longer be allowed to claim a personal or philosophical exemption from receiving the required doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Another law change will be related to employers with 15 or more employees, which will require the employer to provide reasonable break time to express milk for up to two years after the birth of a child, increasing from the federal requirement of only one year.

And as of January 1, 2020, House Bill 1074 will go into effect and the legal age to purchase tobacco will change from 18 to the age of 21.

There is a significant amount of evidence that raising the purchasing age of tobacco will decrease the amount of people who

use tobacco. Tobacco remains the number one cause of preventable death in Washington State. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 80% of all adult smokers started before the age of 21.

The most recent Healthy Youth Survey (2018) reveals tobacco use rates for Kittitas County 10th graders with 5% currently using spit tobacco, 8% of youth smoking cigarettes, and 26% using vapor products.



## Customer Feedback Process is Coming to KCPHD

The mission and vision of Kittitas County Public Health (KCPHD) is centered around the residents of our county being healthy and having healthy lives. With that mission, interacting with customers and providing quality service is important to KCPHD.

“Over the years, KCPHD has focused on providing quality customer service,” states Administrator Tristen Lamb. “Even when we do not provide a service, we make sure to refer customers, or when information can be difficult to navigate we work hard to walk a customer through any process

from food permitting to water mitigation.”

Until now, though, KCPHD did not have a formal survey process, but that will change very soon.

In August, the new customer survey feedback will be available online. The new survey ensures that customers can provide information about their experience and the customer service they received.

“Public Health believes in using data to inform decisions and customer service is no exception,” states Ms. Lamb.

Customer feedback results will be reviewed on a daily basis in order to adjust our services and respond to the needs of our customers.

The survey link will be available in all of KCPHD’s outgoing customer communications starting August 30th, 2019.



### Department Wide

New Grants /Fund Sources	1
Volunteer Hours	797.5
Health Data Requests	5
Quality Improvement Projects	2
Health Provider Releases	5
Media Contacts	5
Code/Policy Updates	1
Total Number of Clinic Appointments Provided	55

### Vital Records

Hospital Births Registered	74
Birth Certificates Issued	348
Deaths Registered	67
Death Certificates Issued	415

### Access to Baby and Child Dentistry

Outreach Contacts	1298
Referrals to Dentists	0

### Communicable Disease (CD)

CD Investigations	39
Confirmed CD Cases	13
STD's Reported	70
TB Tests	9
HIV Tests	0
Hepatitis C Tests	1
Syphilis Tests	0
Chlamydia/Gonorrhea Tests	0

### Harm Reduction Activities

Syringe Exchange Participants	347
Syringes Distributed	16040
Naloxone Kits Distributed	31
HIV Education Participants	0

## ACE training increases Trauma Awareness

In June the Kittitas County Resilience and ACEs Task Force (RATF) facilitated a two day workshop for community members interested in leading educational projects and presentations on the NEAR Sciences.

Neuroscience, epigenetics, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and resilience are the group science that shapes the understanding of the impacts of trauma.

RATF organizes this annual workshop as part of their mission to build individual and

community resilience. Ann Riley, Kittitas County Community Network Director and co-facilitator of the workshop, went through over a year of extensive training to bring this opportunity to Kittitas County.

“Trauma and traumatic stress have been found to be one of the most influential risk factors of negative health outcomes. Through workshops like this, we are working to create new leaders in our community to move forward efforts around preventing future trauma and mitigating the impacts of past

trauma on our citizens,” states Chelsey Loeffers, Health Promotion Specialist and co-facilitator of the workshop.

Attendees of the workshop included staff from the Ellensburg and Cle Elum Roslyn School Districts, Central Washington University, Kittitas County Public Health, and Kittitas Valley Healthcare. All attendees will participate in an ongoing learning cohort led through RATF to support their work in the community.

## Health Officer Informs WSAC of Air Quality Updates

Dr. Mark Larson, KCPHD Health Officer, recently provided information to the Washington State Association of Counties to update the Association on impending changes with air quality.

KCPHD, along with other health jurisdictions and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), have created numerous work groups to

examine wildfire air quality data, research on health effects, along with a toolkit for counties to provide messaging for substandard air.

For close to a decade, Kittitas County has been addressing issues around air quality specific to wildfires. During that time, DOH did not provide a recommendation on PM 2.5 levels and every county was

responding to substandard air conditions differently. With the recent work that has been accomplished, all Washington State Health Officers along with partner agencies and State DOH have agreed to uniform recommendations as to when PM 2.5 levels warrant closure or moving activities indoor to better air.

## KCPHD Supports School District Job Fair for Youth

“Do you like to work outside? Do you like to help people? Is health important to you?”

These were the questions KCPHD staff used to talk to Ellensburg High School students at their recent job fair.

On May 3, the Ellensburg School District hosted its youth job fair. “The turn out from local employers was really impressive,” states

Administrator Tristen Lamb. “The presence of numerous organizations and staff who gave local youth time to talk about future careers was really inspiring and sent a strong message that our county cares about our kids.”

KCPHD staff who attended had the chance to talk to students and explain what we do, what our office environment is like,

what the average income looks like, education requirements, and most importantly what we enjoy about our jobs.

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## KCPHD Staff Attend Conference in New Orleans

On June 12 and 13, three KCPHD staff had the opportunity to attend the annual Public Health Improvement Training (PHIT) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The financial ability for staff to attend was through the new Local Strategies for Physical Activity and Nutrition grant and also the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative grant.

PHIT is an opportunity for staff to learn about quality improvement, performance management, health assessment, et cetera.

“The idea is to use system thinking when doing our daily work,” states Health Promotion Specialist Chelsey Loeffers, “and to work with our partner organizations to approach population health using these kind of tools as

well. It’s incredibly valuable for our work both internally and externally.”

Conference topics also included cross sector collaboration, organization development, funding, evidence to action, and workforce training.



## It is Tick Season in Kittitas County

It is that time of year where we see people starting to bring ticks into the Kittitas County Public Health Department. Ticks are small parasites and considered to be “vectors.” Vectors are pests that can spread pathogens that can cause disease.

“Most of the time, we have people finding ticks on their dogs,” says Environmental Health Specialist II Melissa Schumaier.

According to the Washington State Department of Health, some ticks perch on the edge of low-lying vegetation and grab onto animals and people as they walk past. Other ticks are associated with rodents and their nests.

Safety measures can be used to

avoid ticks during outdoor activities like wearing long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, using tick repellent if necessary, and carefully checking for ticks after outdoor activities.

Washington has few tick-borne disease cases reported annually in comparison to the rest of the United States. However,

disease such as tick-borne relapsing fever, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Tick paralysis can be transmitted by a tick bite in Washington State.

If you would like to bring in a tick for testing to KCPHD, please contact the front desk at 509-962-7515.



<b>Environmental Health (EH)</b>	
EH Complaints	23
<b>Living Environment</b>	
School Inspections	13
Pool Facility Permits Issued	0
Pool Facility Inspections	19
Camp & Park Inspections	0
<b>Solid Waste</b>	
Permits Issued	0
Inspections	13
<b>On-Site Sewage</b>	
Installation Permits Issued	77
Finalized Permits	29
Site Evaluations	84
Inspections	41
<b>Food Safety</b>	
Permanent Food Establishment Applications	12
Temporary Food Establishment Applications	27
Food Handler’s Permits	843
Establishment Inspections	147
Temporary Event Inspections	22
<b>Drinking Water</b>	
Group A Water System Sanitary Surveys	3
Group B Water System Inspections	0
Individual Well Site Application Reviews	39
Adequate Water Supply Determination Applications	101
Well Delegation Inspections	13
Well Site Inspections	1

? **Did you know?** ?

- Public health uses isolation and quarantine to keep people from spreading disease.
- Isolation and quarantine restricts the movement of people to stop the disease from spreading to others.
- Quarantine is for people who might be sick and isolation is a term used for someone who is already confirmed ill.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), quarantine originated in Venice in the 14th century.
- Quarantine derives from Italian words quaranta giorni, which means 40 days. 40 days was the amount of time arriving ships were required to anchor before landing.
- Health Officers may request a voluntary or involuntary Isolation or Quarantine.
- Local examples of isolation and quarantine include preventing the spread or potential spread of tuberculosis or measles.



## Board of Health Receives Measles Quarantine Update

The Kittitas County Board of Health (BOH) received an update regarding the local incident of an individual who was quarantined for measles.

Washington State and the surrounding areas have experienced numerous outbreaks of measles. Most recently, Clark County

Washington responded to over 70 cases of measles.

The individual who was quarantined was believed to be exposed while traveling abroad. KCPHD and Central Washington University worked with the student during the quarantine period.

BOH was reminded that if Kittitas County were to experience an outbreak, our local capacity would be quickly overrun and we would need assistance, since measles is so highly contagious.

## BOHAC Discusses Future of Public Health

In April the Board of Health advisory Committee (BOHAC) met and in addition to regular updates, discussed 2020 and beyond for the public health department. Administrator Tristen Lamb informed the group that 2020 budgeting was underway and she relayed

information from the Kittitas County Board of Commissioners.

Budgeting and public health funding was a discussion that occurred during the March BOHAC meeting.

BOHAC members asked questions and discussed sources of public health funding such as the admission tax and county contribution.

## QI Forms Management Project

KCPHD quality improvement recently addressed the process of creating, maintaining, and updating public health forms. “The project came as a result of old or incorrect forms being out in the community, which posed significant issues especially when it came to fees or process requirements that might actually be outdated,”

states Assessment Coordinator Amy Fuller.

KCPHD now has a forms management policy and procedures, so that there is a universal template that will show uniform information such as the version number of the form, official adoption date, and the division manager

who approved the form for official use.

All KCPHD forms are now stored in a centralized location, so that information that goes out to the public is streamlined and a process is in place for the future.