



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (DEH)

Report for March 2008

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DECISION SUPPORT

New Activities

- Mayor's Office of HIV Resources (MOHR). MOHR submitted a proposal to the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for funding to expand pre-treatment services for those at risk of HIV infection working with existing HIV service providers funded through the Ryan White CARE Act. The grant proposal is for \$350,000 per year for five years.

Update on Key Issues

- 311/CRM Implementation. The Decision Support Group conducted the kickoff meetings with divisions for integrating EQ, CHDS and OME in the 311/CRM.
- Denver Healthy People (DHP) 2010:
 - Park Hill Thriving Communities. The Park Hill Thriving Communities Project hosted a Year 2 Community Celebration recognizing its Live Well Colorado grant accomplishments to promote equal access to healthy eating and active living. This celebration, attended by over 40 Park Hill stakeholders, demonstrated the success in reaching those populations experiencing health disparities and influence active living and healthy eating through programs, environmental changes and policy changes.
 - Health Promotion Joint Meetings. DHP 2010 and Denver Public Health held their third Strategic Planning Session with the goal to establish collaborative strategies for public health promotion in Denver. This meeting reviewed all health promotion activities occurring within the two public health organizations in Denver and identified opportunities to realize efficiencies of scale.
- Legislative Issues. DEH responded to ten formal requests to review proposed legislation that has an impact on health and the environment. Implemented a new tracking sheet to simplify how issues are tracked while using the criteria developed by DHP 2010 to determine priority. One such proposed legislation is the Public Health Revitalization bill (SB-194), which was introduced in the State Senate's Health, Environment, Welfare, and Institutions Committee. If passed, the proposed legislation will make significant changes and improvements to the state's public health laws. Two amendments were introduced and committee members voted to pass the bill and forward to the Appropriations Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION (EQD)

New Activities

- Alamosa Emergency Response. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requested assistance from DEH in support of the emergency response activities related to the salmonella outbreak in Alamosa, Colorado. DEH activated its Emergency Operations Center on March 21, 2008 and deployed three emergency response field teams in support of the Alamosa Salmonella outbreak over a three week period. The field teams primarily consisted of inspectors from PHI who assisted with consumer protection inspections and public information support. In addition, the Decision Support Group provided support to the field teams by developing GIS maps to aid the field team in their efforts to educate business owners how to ensure their water is safe to use.
- Green Cleaning: Announced a project to provide personal service to employees with the environmental benefit of reduced vehicle trips. The program provides a “green” (cleaning without use of perchloroethylene.) dry cleaning service by which Revolution Cleaners will provide pick-up on site at the Webb building.

Update on Key Issues

- Noise Ordinance: Final revisions to the noise ordinance were presented to Neighborhood, Community & Business Revitalization (NCBR) City Council Committee. Follow up was conducted with Public Works and Councilwoman Faatz to synchronize snow emergency rules and noise exemptions for snow removal. Final recommendations are moving forward to Council in April.
- Water Quality: Held a community meeting to discuss additional water quality signage along the South Platte River.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER

New Activities

- Community Outreach
 - Board of Environmental Health. Dr. Martin presented an update on OME activities to the Board of Environmental Health in March. The update addressed 2007 statistics and the challenges and direction for the future of OME.
 - Academy of Pathologists. On March 3, Dr. Martin, along with Drs. Mike Dobersen and Kelly Lear-Kaul from Arapahoe County Coroner’s Office, presented at the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathologists, about deaths due to medical complications.
 - Probation Conference: OME staff member, Harris Neil, presented at the Probation Conference to provide training to new and current probation officers.
 - Donor Alliance Coroner Resource: On March 25, Dr. Martin attended the Donor Alliance Coroner Resource meeting, at which the Donor Alliance presented statewide statistics for the 2007 year. The Donor Alliance expressed appreciation for the cooperation of the coroners in facilitating organ and tissue recovery.
 - Denver Metro Area Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee: On March 28, Dr. Martin attended a strategic planning meeting for the Denver Metro Area Domestic Violence Fatality

Review Committee. The discussion focused on possible loss of funding and sponsorship, and the future of fatality review.

Update on Key Issues

- Forensic Pathologist: Dr. Carver started at OME on March 24
- Workload: For the month of February, OME performed 63 autopsies and 28 externals.
- Emergency Preparedness: OME staff participated in a Table Top Exercise for ESF8 at the Rita Bass Trauma Center, and attended a national training for Denver Mortuary Operations Response Team (DMORT). This training provided updated information and experience in national response to a mass casualty disaster. OME staff member, Karen Jazowski, volunteered to be on a DMORT response team and was previously deployed during the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION DIVISION (PHI)

New Activities

- Residential Health The defendant who had been in violation of the residential housing code for two years was sentenced to 30 days in jail and has since been released. PHI staff continue to monitor the house. Police have responded to the house within the last 30 days on other suspected illegal activity, but the home owner has not been found back on the premises since his release from jail. No additional complaints have been called in to Residential Health by the neighbors at this time.

Update on Key Issues

- Retail Food
 - Food and Food Handler Ordinance: The City Attorney's Office continues to review Chapter 23 (Food and Food Handlers) to determine whether changes to the code or the regulations promulgated pursuant to the code are needed to clarify that the regulations also apply to wholesale food service operations. This question was raised by a licensee of a wholesale operation when he was instructed during a routine inspection to comply with that portion of the regulations that prohibit bare hand contact with ready to eat foods.
 - Audit: The Auditor's Office is in the final stages of their audit of the Retail Food program. At this point, the audit staff are working with PHI support staff to reconcile discrepancies in licensing information between the PHI and Excise and License databases.
 - Standardization: Two Retail Food staff members are currently being standardized in accordance with the procedures set forth by CDPHE.