

June 2009

Connecting

A MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH

Point

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



Environmental Health

In March of 2009, the Environmental Health Division, under the direction of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, completed an internal audit of its Type II Water Well Program. This program consists of oversight and management of non-residential facilities that are using water from a well and serving that water to the public. Common examples are schools, churches, factories and restaurants. The current inventory of regulated “public” water wells is as follows:

County	Transient	Non-Transient	Total
Montcalm	166	32	198
Gratiot	82	10	92
Clinton	99	23	122

A transient supply is one that serves a mobile population (restaurant) whereas a non-transient supply serves a larger, fixed population (school). Results of the program audit demonstrated a high level of performance with required facility evaluations at 100% and a local “non-compliance” rate below the state average of 9%.

Pertussis Outbreak

In January of 2009, two cases of Pertussis were reported to MMDHD. The first case, reported on January 6th, involved a child attending elementary school in the Alma School District. Later, on January 15th, a second case was confirmed within the same school district, this individual being a staff person employed with a different elementary school. The two reported cases prompted the activation of the MMDHD Communicable Disease Response Team.

To help prevent further spread of pertussis throughout the community, a clinic was held on January 21st at the Alma Middle School to offer a booster vaccination. The clinic provided vaccinations to over 400 people.

Pertussis, also known as Whooping Cough, is a highly contagious infection characterized by a severe cough followed by a whooping sound as air is inhaled. The most serious cases are seen in children, especially those under the age of 6 months.

Children’s Special Health Care Service



The Children’s Special Health Care Service (CSHCS) is a program that provides support to children who have chronic health conditions. CSHCS covers more than 2,000 diagnoses, including; cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, cleft lip and palate, and insulin-dependent diabetes. There are a limited number of diagnoses that CSHCS will continue to cover into adulthood. Each office of MMDHD has nursing and clerical staff who coordinate care and provide assistance to CSHCS families.

The program can provide assistance with:

- Paying specialty medical bills
- Coordinating services from multiple providers
- Learning about specialty providers, including doctors, hospitals, and clinics
- Coordinating health insurance benefits
- Covering co-pays or deductibles
- Transportation costs

To be considered for this program, an individual must be referred by their specialty doctor to CSHCS at the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). The child’s medical condition, not income, will determine if he or she qualifies for the program.

For more information, contact:

Clinton Office: 989-227-3121

Gratiot Office: 989-875-1004

Montcalm Office: 989-831-3643

Radon Awareness

Each January, the Environmental Health (EH) Division promotes Radon Awareness Month. This is an annual, statewide event that promotes radon gas awareness and encourages the public to test their homes. In the 2nd quarter (January 1 through March 31, 2009), EH distributed 271 radon test kits to the public free of charge.

Radon gas is the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, causing an estimated 21,000 cases each year. It is estimated that one in eight Michigan homes have radon levels that exceed federal standards.

Environmental Health Services

The following primary Environmental Health services were completed during the months of January, February and March of 2009:

Well permits issued	67
Pre-drilling inspections	19
Well final inspections	111
Wells abandoned	39
Site evaluations	41
Sewage permits issued	31
Sewage final inspections	47
Nuisance complaints investigated	2
Fixed food establishment inspections, routine	266
Fixed food inspections, follow up	63
Temporary food inspections	18
New or remodel construction—plans approved	4

Talk Early & Talk Often



The Talk Early & Talk Often (TETO) program, developed by the Michigan Department of Community Health, offers training sessions to enhance parents' ability to talk with their children about sensitive topics. The program is based on the research that parents are the primary educators of their children, and when given the information and tools, can be instrumental in providing critical messages to their children. The children can then make more positive choices and decrease risky behaviors such as the use of substances or the initiation of sexual activity.

The role of the local health department is to promote and coordinate the program in our community. This past quarter, MMDHD staff met with middle-school principals and counselors in all three counties to provide information on TETO. Three programs were scheduled in Montcalm County. MMDHD staff will continue to work with the schools to promote the program district-wide.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Chronic Respiratory Disease



Each Connecting Point issue features one of the ten leading causes of death within the district. According to the Michigan Department of Community Health, the fourth leading cause of death in the State is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which caused 5.2% of all deaths in 2006. In all three counties of the MMDHD, the percentage of deaths from COPD exceeded the state rate, 6.1% in Clinton County, 5.6% in Gratiot County and 7.1% in Montcalm County.

COPD is defined as lung disease in which airways are blocked. Both chronic bronchitis and emphysema are examples of COPD. In emphysema, tiny air sacs in which oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged become damaged, leading to shortness of breath. In chronic bronchitis, airways become inflamed and thickened. As a result, mucus producing cells increase activity, leading to cough and an inability to move air in and out of the lungs. Unfortunately, there is no cure for COPD and the damage done to the lungs cannot be reversed.

COPD is caused primarily by smoking. Exposure to air pollution, dust or chemicals can also contribute to the disease. Symptoms normally begin during middle age and include cough, sputum production, shortness of breath, wheezing and chest tightness. According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, quitting smoking is the single most important thing one can do to reduce the risk of developing COPD and slow the progression of the disease. For assistance in quitting smoking, call the Michigan Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-480-7848.

Visit www.mmdhd.org for additional information on programs, services and health issues, including:

- H1N1 Flu Information
- Tobacco Quitline
- Clinic Schedules



For more information about these and other Health Department programs, contact:

Kimberly Singh, Health Officer
Mid-Michigan District Health
Department

615 N. State Road, Suite 2
Stanton, MI 48888
(989) 831-5237, ext. 3614

