



# A Day in the Life of a Public Health employee

Each April communities around the country join together to celebrate the many contributions of our local public health departments. Public health is a part of our everyday lives, from the water we drink and the air we breathe to the vaccines that help us stay healthy. Here is a glimpse of a Day in the Life of one dedicated Mid-Michigan District Health Department employee who proudly serves the residents of Gratiot County each and every day.

## Meet Greg

**Name:** Greg Price, Registered Sanitarian

**Occupation:** Environmental Health Specialist

**Employer:** Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Ithaca Office



First of all, what is a Registered Sanitarian?

Registered sanitarians (RS) are skilled professionals practicing environmental health as it relates to public health protection and safety. They are required to have a Bachelor of Science degree and have successfully completed a comprehensive State administered exam. Registered sanitarians must renew their registration bi-annually and provide proof of completed continuing educational credits.

This morning I spent three hours in the field consulting with an individual who was seeking licensure for a special transitory food unit. I then conducted a plan review of the unit to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Upon completing the plan review, I informed the individual that their plans were approved and a license would be issued.

Upon returning to the office, I made a variety of phone calls relating to an upcoming food safety class, free radon test kits, remodeling of an existing food service establishment, licensing requirements for a new body art (tattoo) facility and conversing with a toxicologist from the Michigan Department of Community Health about a recent mercury release in a household.

Before leaving to conduct a routine restaurant inspection, I reviewed the restaurant's inspection history and packed my laptop and printer. After the inspection I was notified that a small mercury spill (broken thermometer) had just occurred. To avoid client exposure of harmful vapors, which are known to cause chronic neurological effects, I immediately commenced clean up of the spill using a State approved mercury spill clean up kit.

I ended my day by writing a report on the mercury spill and forwarding copies to the Michigan Department of Community Health as well as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.