

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
October 27, 2008
5:00 P.M.
ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PRESENT:

Paul F. Burroughs, Esq., Chair
Sant Ram, M.D.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Glass
Janet Vogt
Rich Knecht
Char Berringer

Doug Range
Pamela Brunner
David Bruce
Guest: Cyndie Zahner

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- I. Call To Order:** Chairman, Paul Burroughs, Esq., welcomed board and guests. It was noted that while 2 board members were present, 2 proxies were held by the Chair related to the proposed resolution.
- II. Public Comments:** Cyndie Zahner, City of Erie, Lead Program, spoke on the partnership between the City and the Health Department to rehabilitate (remove lead paint) homes which contain lead paint and including but not limited to homes where children under the age of 7 have known levels of lead in their system due to ingestion of lead paint.
- City of Erie received a 3-year, 3M grant from HUD for home rehabilitation of 206 homes with high levels of lead, usually built prior to 1978 and/or where lead levels in children age 6 years and younger have been recorded. To date 100 homes have been enrolled in the program. This grant also specifies that adults who are mostly house-bound, such as the elderly, may also be eligible for home rehabilitation if lead levels are within the specified ranges. Homes in the 16502 and 16503 zip code areas are noted to have the highest concentration of lead paint, as most of these homes were built before 1993. City of Erie received a \$50,000 grant from the US Convention of Mayors to provide landlords a \$1,000 stipend to off-set costs related to lead paint removal.
 - Erie County Dept. of Health receives funding for a Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Project (CLPPP) from the PA Dept. of Health. Source dollars are the CDC (90%), Medical Assistance (5%), and PA DOH (5%). The CLPPP provides lead testing of children, case management of lead poisoned children, environmental investigations for residences of lead poisoned children, and professional and community education. Guidelines provided by CDC and MA specify testing of children ages 9 months to 7 years of age. The partnership with the City of Erie has enabled the children who tested high for lead as identified by Health Dept. staff, to be referred to the City for their home to be rehabilitated by the City. This partnership has proved highly beneficial for the residents of Erie City.
- III. Director's Report:**
- County of Erie Budget Process – The Erie County Dept. of Health has realized six (6) position eliminations as a result of the imposed budgetary funding reduction. One (1) additional grant position was eliminated due to reallocation of grant funding from PDH. These position eliminations will create a hardship on the Department as well as the community.
 - Testimony before the PA House Insurance Committee – Andy Glass gave testimony before the PA House Insurance Committee regarding Medicaid and access to care. In the proposed HB2625 Medicaid benefits would be expanded to the un- and under-insured population of PA.
 - Health Equity Summit – The third County Executive sponsored Summit on Health Disparities, was held on September 27, 2008, at the Hirt Auditorium of Blasco Library. Various community partners including the Partnership for a Health Community, NW PA Area Health Education Center, ECDH and C.A.L.L. (Congregational Action to Lift Lives) presented information on health disparities in the Erie community. This program was one of many activities provided during Health and Wellness Week, Sept 21-28, 2008.

IV. Board Resolution:

- Resolution 2008-02, “Regarding the Health Impact of the Tires-to-Energy Plant in Erie County Pennsylvania of Erie Renewable Energy, LLC Tire Derived Fuel Power Generation Facility” passed on a motion from Sant Ram, M.D., seconded by Paul F. Burroughs, Esq., by a vote of 5 to 0. (*attached*) The Resolution concluded with the suggestion that an independent inhalation risk assessment be performed and that the work plan for the assessment as well as the raw data collected be shared with the community. Proxy votes from Dr. Ortoski, and Dr. Nassiri were received by P. Burroughs, via email. This Resolution was developed and adopted after discussions with experts in the field of air emissions and environmental quality gave insight into the importance of regulation of airborne particulate matter. Discussions were held with Freda Tarbell, NW-DEP; Jeanette Schnars, Ph.D., Regional Science Consortium; Anthony Vega, Ph.D., Clarion University; Prof. Sherry Mason, SUNY-Fredonia; several local physician specialists including cardiology, pulmonology, and orthopedics were also contacted. Additional area agencies are questioning the human and environmental effects that may result from allowing the Tire Plant to exist in the Erie area: Sons of Lake Erie; Erie County Medical Society; School District of the City of Erie; and Sierra Club. Lastly, a symposium by the developer of the Tire Plant, Greg Rubino, provided the opportunity for Erie community leaders and area experts to address air quality and environmental concerns. Mr. Rubino was agreeable to conducting on-going quality control and emissions testing.

V. New Business:

- Erie School District Public Hearing Regarding Proposed Tires-to-Energy Plant – The Board requested that Andy Glass speak on behalf of the Erie County Board of Health, at the Public Hearing on Thursday, October 30, 2008, addressing the adopted Resolution regarding the proposed Tires-to-Energy Plant.
- Green House Gas (GHG) Effects – The American Public Health Association, NACCHO, recognizes the impact that green house gas (GHG) has on climate change and human health. Carbon dioxide emissions are a significant contributor to GHG. An Erie County study group stated that information needs to be disseminated to get the public involved in GHG reduction. County of Erie has made application for grant funding to hire a consultant to introduce ideas on reducing GHG in county facilities, beginning in 2009. Andy Glass has agreed to Chair the committee.

VI. ECDH Lead Program – See Agenda item II. Public Comments, Erie County Dept. of Health, section.**VII. Board Updates:**

- A. Environmental Division:
Food Inspection Reports: Doug Range, Director of Environmental Services, stated that training will be provided by the software developer, Garrison Enterprises to the environmental staff on November 4 & 5. The public will now be able to view these reports online. The website will begin to have inspection reports displayed by mid November. Through the collaboration of the Environmental Supervisor, Karen Tobin, the Health Department IT staff, and Garrison Enterprises, this process has been realized. The technology being used is recommended and supported by the PA Department of Agriculture and is part of a statewide effort to standardize a reporting system.
- B. Community Health Services:
Flu Season 2008: Char Berringer, Director of Community Health Services, stated that the first case of Flu was reported in Erie on 10/15/08. This is the first case known statewide. No additional flu disease has been identified since that date.
- C. Health Education Division:
Lead Program: Janet Vogt, Director of Health Education Division, stated that staff in the Injury Prevention grant are working with the City of Erie Lead program to provide smoke alarms to families in the 16502 and 16503 zip code areas, as part of the City’s lead abatement and home rehabilitation program.

Clean Indoor Air Law: The Pennsylvania Clean Indoor Air Law became effective on September 11, 2008. Health Department Tobacco Grant staff have been assisting area businesses with filing of exemption paperwork to PDH. Tobacco staff will begin conducting site visits of facilities that have requested exceptions under the CIAA. Findings will be sent back to PDH for final determination of eligibility for exceptions. Complaints regarding non-compliance violations are filed directly to the PA Dept. of Health.

Walking and Bike Trails: Health Department plans to work with the Erie Port Authority to publish maps of walking and bike trails in the Erie Bayfront area.

VIII. Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela K. Brunner, Recording Secretary

The next Health Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, DECEMBER 15, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.