

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
August 25, 2008
5:00 P.M.
ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PRESENT:

Paul F. Burroughs, Esq., Chair
Reza Nassiri, D. Sc.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Glass
Janet Vogt
Rich Knecht

Doug Range
Pamela Brunner
David Bruce

I. Call To Order: Chairman, Paul Burroughs, Esq., welcomed board and guests. Minutes for June 23, 2008 were not approved due a lack of quorum.

II. Public Comments: None

III. Director's Report:

- Disclosure of Findings of Public Health Import – Under the advisement of the PADOH legal department, information was not disclosed regarding one particular case. ECDH has in the past, and will continue to, work with the media to disclose information to the public on disease outbreaks and restaurant inspections, being mindful of HIPPA regulations.
- GC Initiative – Erie County has seen an increase in gonorrhea and Chlamydia cases over the past 3 years. ECDH nursing staff is investigating additional ways to increase testing of individuals, including the newly developed urine test. Statistics on areas of disease increase and population are also being reviewed.
- Rabies Flyer – ECDH updated this informational flyer to increase public awareness about animals that carry rabies and what to do in case of human contact. Flyers will be distributed throughout Erie County. Currently there is a shortage of the rabies vaccine.
- Testimony on HB2625 – Andy Glass gave testimony before the PA House Insurance Committee on 8/26/08 in support of health care reform under the proposed HB by Representative Pallone entitled, “Access to Community-Based Care and Extended Safety-Net Services Program.” This bill will expand Medicaid benefits to the un- and under-insured population of Pennsylvania.
- Tri-County Health Department – At the request of County Executive Mark DiVecchio, discussion has been held with leadership in Crawford and Warren counties regarding the prospect of a Tri-County Health Department, to include Erie, Crawford, and Warren. Further developments in the process will be shared.
- County Energy Committee – Andy Glass, Chairman of the County Energy Committee is working with county staff and the public sector to suggest ways to provide energy conservation in relation to the consumption natural gas, electricity and fuel. Energy reduction proposals will suggest ideas on how to reduce energy costs in County buildings and will provide suggestions for the public on energy conservation.
- Health Equity Planning – As a follow-up to the County Executive sponsored Summit(s) on Health Disparities, the Partnership for a Health Community, NW PA Area Health Education Center, ECDH and C.A.L.L. (Congregational Action to Lift Lives) will be in partnership to present a health equity program on September 27, 2008, at the Hirt Auditorium of Blasco Library. This program is one of many activities provided during Health and Wellness Week, Sept 21-28, 2008. Additional details to follow.

IV. New Business:

- Board of Health Resolution – Air Quality Permit Request of Erie Renewable Energy, LLC Tire Derived Fuel Power Generation Facility: A draft of Resolution 2008-02 was discussed and recommendations were made to add additional specifications in regard to air emissions. The revised Resolution will be distributed to Board of Health members for review and comment. The final Resolution will be presented at the October 27th Board Meeting for adoption and action.

V. Board Updates:

A. Health Education Division:

PA Clean Indoor Air Law: Janet Vogt, Manager of Health Education, presented an overview of the PA Clean Indoor Air Law which becomes effective on September 11, 2008. A regional press conference will be held on September 10, 2008. PADOH is the primary enforcement agent for the Law; enforcement will be complaint driven directly to PADOH. ECDH is currently studying their role in enforcement of the Law. ECDH Tobacco staff is providing education and assistance to businesses. FAQ's and the complete law are on the PADOH website, www.health.state.pa.us PADOH also established a helpline to provide information, allow for questions, and to report violations at 1-877-835-9535.

B. Environmental Division:

- Presque Isle Swimming Season: Doug Range, Director of Environmental Services, stated that 41 swimming advisories and 2 swimming restrictions have occurred to date at Presque Isle. These figures equate to 43 action days or 3.9 percent of the total swimming season as of 8/25/08. Beaches 1, 1-West and 1- West Extension are where the highest percentage of advisories/restrictions occur. Percentage for 2007 advisories/restrictions totaled 2.2 percent. National average for beach closures is 5 percent. Updated Presque Isle beach closures are viewable at the ECDH website, www.ecdh.org

C. Public Health Preparedness:

Great Lakes Border Health Initiative (GLBHI): Rich Knecht, Director of Public Health Preparedness, stated that Erie County is the lead agency due to its 45 miles of water border. Great Lakes bordering states have developed communication techniques for disease outbreak control.

Contaminated Kerosene: Amish community was an area of concern due to their use of Kerosene. Bishops within the Amish community were made aware of the issue for dissemination of the information.

VI. Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela K. Brunner, Recording Secretary

The next Health Board meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.