



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Denver Environmental Health Department

Nancy J. Severson, Manager

201 W. Colfax, Dept. 1009

Denver, CO 80202

PHONE: 720-865-5365

FAX: 720-865-5531

www.denvergov.org/health-environment

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (DEH) Report for February, 2009

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL (ACC)

New Activities

- 2008 Statistics: ACC posted 2008 statistics for the Denver Municipal Animal Shelter on its web site at www.denvergov.org/animalcare under "DMAS Statistics." The live release rate (the total number of impounded dogs and cats that were redeemed, adopted, or transferred) for dogs and cats was 67%, which is a 14% increase from 2007. The live release rate for dogs was 74%, an increase of 9% from 2007, and 50% for cats, an increase of 16%.
- Training: ACC staff participated in the following training:
 - Dog socialization and behavior (volunteers also attended);
 - Food Aggression in Dogs seminar; and
 - 3-1-1 / Chameleon Integration and Chameleon software including animal entry was completed during February.
- Coyotes: ACC worked with Parks and Recreation to address concerns and issues surrounding a coyote bite to a person near Bible Park. ACC has developed a process for reviewing applications for an exemption to the State law banning the use of snares, kill traps, and poisoning for use on wildlife. Applications must be approved by the Manager of DEH or her designee. Only where there is a substantial human health and/or safety concern in Denver will trapping be authorized.
- Expanded ACC Volunteer Recruitment Efforts: In February, ACC staff began offering and advertising additional volunteer sessions. As a result, volunteer interest has increased.

Update on Key Issues

- New Shelter: The first schematics of the footprint and interior of the new shelter were produced by the architect and reviewed by staff, volunteers, and other experts. Based on comments provided to the architect, the architect will revise the schematics for final review in March.
- Humane Society Report: DEH received the final report from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). The report included 200 pages, approximately 500 recommendations. Immediately following the receipt of the report, a task force comprised of the majority of Animal Care & Control Advisory Members was created to help prioritize the recommendations.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DECISION SUPPORT (CHDS)

New Activities

- Denver Healthy People (DHP): Began working with Councilperson Johnson about potential benefits of conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Westerly Creek urban drainage



system and funding mechanisms for a greenway linking the heavily urbanized areas along the Denver-Aurora border.

Update on Key Issues

- Decision Support Group (DSG)
 - Public Health Inspection (PHI) HI Activity Database and Mobile Solution Update: The activity database for PHI is being modified to allow users to document their time and effort more readily and to allow adding new facilities to the database. Progress is being temporarily suspended on the PHI Food Program's mobile solution system until the Activity Database issues and improvements have been completed.
 - Office of the Medical Examiner (OME) Technology Update: OME's transition to the GOV domain was completed in February. The transition required dedicated IT support at the OME offices to create new profiles for all the users and to reconfigure database connections to the OME server. As expected, smaller issues arise and continue to require solutions.
 - Kronos Update: DEH will begin implementing and will "Go Live" on the City's timekeeping system, Kronos, on March 15th. DEH staff will complete Kronos training in early March.
 - Administrative Citations Update: Staff is making headway towards finalizing proposed changes to fees and fines/penalties at ACC and will present the ordinance to Council's Greenprint Committee on March 3rd.
- Mayor's Office of HIV Resources (MOHR): MOHR is awaiting notice of the Ryan White Part A grant award from HRSA, and has the ordinance and contract process ready to move forward upon grant award.
- Denver Healthy People (DHP)
 - Live Well Colorado Update: DHP received Year 4 grant from Live Well and met with the Live Well Project Coordinator to discuss expectations and data requirements. Park Hill Thriving Communities staff has been invited to present "Photo Voice: From Image to Action" at the LiveWell/Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) skills building conference in March.
 - Healthy Grocers in Park Hill: Staff has been working on bringing a healthy food retail option for Park Hill residents under the Park Hill Communities program and has succeeded in encouraging Sunflower Market to locate a grocery store in the community. A highly positive article ran in the [March 9 edition of the Denver Post](#), noting the efforts of PHTC.
 - City of Axum Renovation Update: Staff conducted two community meetings for the City of Axum Park renovation project. Over 25 residents participated in the first meeting held on February 10th. Collaborated on construction signs with Parks and Recreation and Creative Media Solutions. Interfaced communications between Volunteers for Colorado, Parks and Recreation, and Park Hill Thriving Communities staff.
 - Bike Depot Update: Staff assisted with negotiating an agreement between Myriad Interactive and Creative Media Solutions for database conversion that will allow the Bike Depot to better use participant data information. Staff continues to provide overall management support to Depot staff, Officers, Executive Committee, and Committee Chairs. Facilitated grant proposal written by Depot Policy Committee Chair to reduce health disparities of women in Park Hill.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

New Activities

- Lowry Landfill/Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site
 - Xcel Solar Request for Proposals: EQ is collaborating with potential partners to evaluate locations for a 180-acre, 30MW solar farm, for submission within Xcel alternative energy Request for Proposals.
 - 5281 Award: The EQ and City Attorneys who were responsible for developing and opening the landfill gas to energy plant at the Denver Arapahoe Disposal Site received a 5281 Sustainability Award for the project and were recognized at the awards ceremony.
- Environmental Management System (EMS)
 - Denver Water: EMS staff met with Denver Water to discuss earlier implementation of the EMS for this agency this year.
 - 5281 Award: EQ's EMS team and the teams from the city agencies which implemented an EMS and became ISO 14001 certified in 2008 were honored with a 5281 Sustainability Award.
- Best Workplace for Commuters: The City attained Best Workplace for Commuters designation, through collaboration with Public Works, Career Service Authority, and Greenprint Denver.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER (OME)

New Activities

- Education
 - Forensic Pathology Fellowship: Dr. Joseph White, a third year resident in pathology at Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs, elected to do a two week rotation in Forensic Pathology at OME. He is also a viable candidate for the 2010 fellowship slot, and will be interviewing for that position in early March.
 - National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME): Dr. Martin and Dr. Carver were co-chairs for the Interim Meeting of NAME held in Denver in February. The two put together a roster of speakers that included a presentation on avalanche physiology and deaths, snake bites, deaths following the 2006-2007 Denver blizzards (this presentation was given by one of OME's investigative interns, Derek Dehne, and co-authored by Dr. Martin), jurisdictional and cultural issues related to deaths on a Wyoming Indian reservation, and Indian history as told by changing of the Western cartography. Feedback from the NAME Education Committee is that it was the best interim program in years. There was high praise for the meeting accommodations at the Hyatt Regency, Colorado Convention Center, and the City/County of Denver as well. NAME has suggested Denver as host for a future full meeting.
 - Denver Police Department: OME gave another in-service to the Denver Police Department Police recruits.
 - Denver Health: Dr. Martin gave a lecture on gunshot wound deaths to the residents and staff physicians of the Denver Health Psychiatry Department at their request due to an increase in the

number of self inflicted gunshot wounds they have seen in recent months. There are plans to reciprocate and offer an in-service to the OME staff on a topic of interest by the Psychiatry Department.

➤ Other Community Outreach:

- Students from Westwood College in Denver came to OME for a tour and talk on a career in medicolegal death investigation.
- OME went to the Cherry Creek Hope Learning Center (a Denver Charter school housed for at-risk students 5th grade to 12th grade) for their Career Fair.
- OME went to Montebello High School for their Career Fair.

• Research:

- Forensic Anthropology: Graduate students from the Department of Anthropology, Mercyhurst College, PA, came to OME as part of a National Institute of Justice grant funded research project to create a digital radiographic database from ethnically diverse populations of individuals up to 20 years of age. The team is scanning radiographs and collecting de-identified demographic data from medical examiner/coroner offices around the country, including OME. This data will be used to assist forensic anthropologists in the examination of modern skeletal remains. Current data for modern skeletal remains is lacking.
- Case Study: Dr. Martin teamed with Dr. Meredith Lann, 4th year resident in pathology at the University of Colorado, in putting together a case report of an unusual death in a sensory deprivation tank for the poster presentation portion of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, also held in Denver this month at the Colorado Convention Center. This report will also be submitted for publication in the Journal of Forensic Sciences.

Update on Key Issues

- Workload: For the month of February, OME performed 63 autopsies and 16 externals.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION (PHI)

New Activities

- Infectious Disease: Members of PHI that specialize in food borne illness and outbreak investigations met with the Infectious Disease Control staff at Denver Public Health (DPH) to discuss our interactions as a team, and to explore new opportunities for increased collaboration and communication. PHI's Child Care section attended the meeting, and two members from that section will now join the PHI outbreak investigation team to expand our expertise as it applies to disease control and outbreak investigations in child care facilities.
- Variances for Kiosks and Carts: The interim Director of PHI met with the Chief Plumbing Inspector within Community Planning and Development to discuss the criterion that necessitates a variance for retail food carts and kiosks that are not directly connected to municipal water and waste water lines. It was agreed that these types of operations that are within the building that will serve as the commissary for water and waste water disposal do not need to apply for a variance. This will reduce the number of necessary variance requests that are submitted to the Board of Environmental Health.
- Open Record Requests: A meeting was held with a member of the City Attorney's Office (CAO) to discuss PHI's current policy for processing open records requests. This was the result of a recent records request received by PHI involving sensitive information related to a Residential Health complaint being investigated by PHI. After receiving input from the CAO, PHI will be revising its

policy regarding open records requests, and will no longer be withholding the complainant's name from the petitioner unless the request is specific to records involving child care facilities.

Update on Key Issues

- Colorado Restaurant Association: The interim Director of PHI will be meeting with the President of the Colorado Restaurant Association to continue discussing possibilities for increased communication between PHI and the hospitality industry specific to the department's authority to assess civil penalties, and the parameters used for determining when a fine is warranted.
- Ongoing Outbreak Investigation at the Department of Labor (DOL): A member of PHI is continuing to work with members of DPH to address concerns from employees of DOL regarding an unidentified agent which is causing skin rashes on a limited number of employees. A contractor is scheduled to conduct sampling within the DOL office to determine the source of the irritant. A reporter from the Denver Post recently contacted DEH for an update on the investigation, and was referred to DPH as the lead agency on this case.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA/OUTREACH UPDATE

Animal Care & Control

- Humane Society Report: DEH Staff provided Animal Care & Control staff with a final report on the Humane Society findings, and an overview of the proposed civil penalties and administrative fees ordinance. Additional media stories ran on the final HSUS report, including a [March 2 article in the Denver Post](#), and March 3 and 4 stories on Channel 7.
- Animal Care & Control Fees & Fines: On Feb. 12, the *Rocky Mountain News* ran a story on the proposed increases in Animal Care & Control service fees. An additional story with a focus on civil penalties, specifically leash law violations, ran on [March 3 in the Denver Post](#) and on Channel 7.
- Breed Bans: On [March 3, Denver Daily News](#) contacted DEH staff to comment on a story regarding a recent seminar presented by the Coalition for Living Safely with Dogs on the effectiveness of Breed Bans.
- Outreach Efforts: ACC volunteers staffed an adoption event at Rude Recreation Center on Feb. 21. ACC staff and volunteers held a highly successful adoption event at the Webb Building on Feb. 27. Five dogs, two cats, and two ginny pigs were adopted as a result.

Community Health & Decision Support

- Public Health Week at the Capitol: DEH staff attended and manned a table at Public Health Week at the Capitol.

Environmental Quality

- EMS Press Conference: DEH staff joined staff from the various EMS-certified departments and facilities, at a joint press conference with Mayor Hickenlooper, and Craig Piper, CEO of the Denver Zoo. More than 10 media outlets covered the event, including the [Denver Post](#), and [KCNC Channel 4](#).