



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (DEH) Report for January, 2008

COMMUNITY HEALTH & DECISION SUPPORT (CHDS)

New Activities

- Environmental Quality (EQ) Division Support: The Decision Support Group (DSG) staff will begin project scoping for a handheld solution for field data collection to be used in the facility compliance program.

Update on Key Issues

- DSG:
 - Environmental Management System (EMS) Program Update: DSG is currently in the process of setting up and configuring the new EMS program server for the EQ Division. This will be presented via the intranet as a SharePoint site.
 - Bonus Plan: The 2008 Bonus Plan was modified slightly to adjust for changes (approved by BMO) to licensing goals and performance metrics for the Animal Care & Control Division, as those goals and metrics relate to the overall department's performance measures. Additionally, the bonus plan monitoring site is up and ready to accept documentation to demonstrate progress on our goals.
- Mayor's Office of HIV Resources (MOHR):
 - Grant Reviews: The independent Grant Application Review Committee (GARC) concluded its work and forwarded their recommendations for the Part A program to Mayor Hickenlooper for final approval. Following his approval, letters of intent to award were sent to all service providers identified for funding, as well as no award notices to applicants who were unsuccessful.
 - Provider Training: MOHR conducted multi-culturalism training for direct service providers. The 38 attendees included at least one person from every Part A funded provider in the Denver area.
 - Standards of Care: MOHR is working with the Denver HIV Resources Planning Council to update the standards of care for each funded service. The goal is to ensure that the standards are in line with the Quality Indicators for each service.

- Denver Healthy People:
 - Park Hill Thriving Communities: In January, the Stakeholder Meeting engaged community partners and local experts in a dialogue surrounding increasing access to healthy affordable foods in the Northeast Park Hill neighborhood, which is currently identified as a "food desert."
 - Safe Routes to School: In partnership with Department of Public Works and Denver Public Health, Denver Healthy People held the second Denver Safe Routes to School Coalition meeting, at which 35 community partners gathered to review progress in the development of a citywide action plan that includes the following three components: engineering, enforcement and education. Committees addressing each of these focus areas meet separately from the Coalition. Coalition meetings will be held quarterly through October 2008.

OFFICE OF MEDICAL EXAMINER (OME)

New Activities

- Mortuary Practices Subcommittee: After a six-month hiatus, the Mortuary Practices Subcommittee met at the request of John Horan, of Horan and McConaty Funeral Homes, to discuss, among other matters, handling of human remains in the event of radiological contamination and the Fatality Annex to the State Mass Fatality Plan.
- Case Reporting: OME conducted an in-service regarding death reporting at St. Anthony Central Hospital for the chaplains. The chaplains are responsible for reporting deaths to the OME. A recommendation was made to the chaplains to consider creating a decedent affairs position to handle death reporting, similar to what other area hospitals have done with great success.

Update on Key Issues

- Forensic Pathologist: Dr. Carver will be performing autopsies under contract for one weekend during February, and will be joining OME as a full-time employee no later than March 24, 2008.
- Forensic Pathology Fellowship: The application was completed and sent to the ACGME in late January. OME has received confirmation that the application will be reviewed at the ACGME April meeting.
- North Central Region Fatality Management Committee: Planning for the Democratic National Convention (DNC) is beginning to require information from agencies, including area partners, as to resource commitment. Many, if not most, City departments have frozen employee leave during the DNC. OME has requested area partners to provide information regarding personnel and resources that will be available to Denver OME during this time.
- Workload: For the month of January, OME performed 62 autopsies and 24 externals.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION DIVISION (PHI)

New Activities

- Retail Food:
 - A small outbreak was reported to PHI in January. The investigation revealed some procedural problems at a retail food establishment that may be linked to the illnesses. A sample of the implicated food product was submitted to the State lab and tested positive for Clostridium Perfringens bacteria. The symptoms exhibited by those who reported being ill were consistent with that agent. Re-inspections of the retail food establishment will be conducted by PHI staff to assure corrective action.
 - PHI received numerous media inquiries in January regarding the food safety program. Information and interviews were conducted with members of the Denver Post, Rocky Mountain News, and the Denver Business Journal. The articles were favorable and focused on inspection statistics and necessary resources to complete the inspections.
- Residential Health: The Residential Health section will be issuing a summons to a resident who failed to comply with orders to discontinue renting a property that was without adequate heat and proper electricity. The responsible party allowed a renter to occupy the property and provided space heaters in lieu of correcting the violations which resulted in a fire. Residential Health will be working in cooperation with Denver Fire to proceed with enforcement.
- Swimming Pools: PHI met with a local pool contractor, as well as a member of Community Planning and Development, to review plans for a non-conforming pool design. The contractor is revising the plans based on recommendations made by PHI, and plans to submit a request to have the alternative design reviewed by the Board of Environmental Health in February. Construction is scheduled to begin within the next few months.

Update on Key Issues

- Retail Food: PHI supervisors will be attending a DNC Permitting Committee discussion on to outline the procedures and timelines for processing various types of applications submitted in preparation for the event.
- Residential Health: The petitioner who submitted a request for a variance of Chapter 27 in October of 2007 is planning to attend the Board of Environmental Health meeting in February. The request is related to a regulation requiring restrooms on each floor of a multi-unit dwelling. The dwelling was previously a single unit dwelling but was modified to accommodate numerous renters and does not meet the requirements for location and number of restrooms.

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL DIVISION (ACC)

New Activities

- 2007 Statistics: Although ACC experienced a 1.5% increase in impoundments, overall adoptions were up 19% for all animals impounded. Adoptions of dogs in 2007 were up 22%, and cat adoptions were up 20.5%.
- Pit Bulls: Impoundment of pit bulls was down 52% in 2007. Euthanasia of pit bulls was down 71%. Repeat offenders of the pit bull ordinance were down 93% compared to 2006.

- Retirements: Two long-time ACC employees retired on January 31, 2008: the Director of Operations, Dolores Bachand, and the Field Services Manager, Juan Zalaras.
- National Western Stock Show: A video tape by a rodeo watchdog group showed a battery-powered handheld prod being used on horses during the bronc-riding event to get the horses out of the chute. A meeting to determine whether animal cruelty charges should be brought was held between a Deputy District Attorney (DA), a DA investigator, the State veterinarian, and ACC Division Director, all of whom reviewed the evidence and information and determined that the horses experienced no injury or suffering and that no provable criminal charges could be filed.

Update on Key Issues

- Federal Pit Bull Litigation: Depositions of the ACC Division Director and the Field Services Manager were conducted by the plaintiff's attorneys in January.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION

New Activities

- 5281 Awards: Three EQ employees have been chosen as recipients of the prestigious 5281 Award. Gregg Thomas receives the award for his ongoing efforts in promoting sustainability through air quality initiatives and his work on the City's Climate Action Plan. Ali Sogue and Lisa Farrell have earned the award in recognition of their work as the DEH members of the Denver Radium Streets Team that successfully completed the environmental cleanup of Denver streets.