



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (DEH) Report for November, 2007

### OFFICE OF MEDICAL EXAMINER (OME)

#### New Activities

- Forensic Pathologist: The process of hiring a new forensic pathologist is underway. The job was posted on the National Association of Medical Examiner site in early November, and OME has received nine applications to date. We have completed an initial interview with two candidates, with two more candidates scheduled to be interviewed. One applicant cancelled her interview as she took a position elsewhere.
- Education: Three OME investigators and one investigative intern attended the Colorado Homicide Investigators Association meeting. OME investigators are eligible for membership in this association and have expressed an interest in joining to help further connections in the community and promote networking in the field.

#### Update on Key Issues

- Caseload: OME conducted 48 autopsies and 31 external examinations during November, 2007.
- Chief Medical Examiner (CME): The final steps for Dr. Martin's appointment as the new CME are underway. Dr. Whitmore has almost completed all of his autopsy reports in preparation for his departure from the City. Dr. Whitmore has accepted a new position in Alaska starting in December.
- Forensic Pathology Fellowship: The final stages of the forensic pathology fellowship application have been entered. Dr. Martin raised issues with provisions in the Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the University of Colorado School of Medicine (UCSOM) that are not applicable to OME's office. LOAs between OME, Denver Police Department, VAMC, and UCSOM need to be submitted with the application. It was mutually decided with Barry Kamen at UCSOM to address these issues in a separate Memorandum of Understanding.
- Democratic National Convention (DNC): The OME continues to participate in planning for the upcoming DNC. Plans for VIP and mass casualty responses are ongoing.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION DIVISION (PHI)**

### **New Activities**

- Retail Food:
  - E. Coli: A confirmed E. coli case was reported to PHI from Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment involving a small group of Jefferson county citizens who consumed sushi at a local Denver establishment early in November. PHI will be working with Jefferson County and Denver Health Medical Center staff on the investigation.
  - Vector Control: After inquiries from Councilwoman Judy Montero (District 9) regarding rat problems in lower downtown Denver, PHI has worked with Animal Care & Control's Vector Control to communicate and address harborage issues under city jurisdiction. PHI has worked to ensure that any restaurants that may be contributing food sources or harborage areas have been issued orders for correction and are in compliance.

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Retail Food:
  - DNC: PHI continues to work with state and federal employees in preparation for the DNC with respect to food safety issues. PHI staff have begun to coordinate activities with member of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
  - State Audit: CDPHE conducted an audit of the food safety program and is in the process of drafting a final audit report.

## **ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL DIVISION (ACC)**

### **New Activities**

- New Animal Shelter: Infrastructure Bond Project 1-B, Health and Human Services, was approved by the voters, providing funding for a new Denver municipal animal shelter. The new shelter, tentatively planned to be built on property to be vacated by the General Chemical Corporation, will provide state-of-the art animal care and sheltering facilities, including a centralized lost and found facility where individuals can go to be reunited with lost pets. The shelter will also have an adoption center.
- Humane Society Evaluation: With the assistance of a review committee made up of external partners, staff, and volunteers, proposals for an animal services evaluation of ACC were reviewed. The review committee unanimously selected the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to provide the evaluation services. A contract with HSUS is anticipated to be completed in 2007, with the on-site evaluation scheduled in early 2008.
- Animal Assistance Foundation Grant: The Animal Assistance Foundation has generously awarded ACC a \$10,000 grant for the purpose of partially funding the HSUS evaluation.

- Maddie's Fund Grant: Maddie's Fund, which is an animal care and control organization located in California, awarded ACC a \$20,000 grant. The grant will be used to support the "collection and publication of animal shelter statistics and other activities on behalf of lost, stray, or homeless dogs and cats."

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Federal Pit Bull Litigation: The discovery phase of the federal litigation regarding Denver's pit bull ordinance continues, with the second round of interrogatories and document requests. Deposition of key City officials and potential City witnesses is expected to commence in January 2008.
- Animal Cruelty Case: Gustavo Castanon, a former ACC volunteer discovered having improper and illegal sexual contact with a shelter dog, was sentenced to 24 month's probation, must attend an anger management/psychosexual evaluation, is precluded from owning or having contact with animals, and will be subject to random, unannounced visits by probation.

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH & DECISION SUPPORT (CHDS)**

### **New Activities**

- Health Promotion Pilot Project: For the first time in ten years, health promotion staff from Denver Public Health (DPH) and Denver Environmental Health (DEH) gathered in November to discuss opportunities for greater collaboration, assess what is currently taking place in the community, identify gaps based on health data from both entities, and propose recommendations that can be incorporated into a comprehensive health promotion plan for the City & County of Denver. The first phase includes community mapping with GIS technology to identify assets in the community and begin looking at how these assets can be better utilized by reducing duplication of effort, expanding current efforts, or accessing other resources that yield desired outcomes.

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Decision Support Group (DSG):
  - Chameleon/311 Integration: DSG staff continues meeting with Technology Services' ERS – CRM Team and ACC management to finalize the scope of work to integrate ACC's Chameleon system with the 311/CRM (PeopleSoft) system.
  - IT Support: Collectively, DSG staff completed 50 official IT Requests in the period November 1 – November 27.
  - Bonus Plan: DSG staff supported finalizing the 2007 Bonus Plan payout recommendations utilizing, for the first time, an intranet based tool. DEH submitted the 2007 payout recommendations to the Bonus Plan Committee for review and approval.
  - GIS Day: DEH contributed maps/posters of DEH programs for display in the 2007 GIS Day.
  - CHDS Customer Survey: DSG staff updated the questions and provided management with a hyperlink for the CHDS customer service survey, as required as a performance measure in the budget book. The response rate was insufficient to generate reliable data.
- Mayor's Office of HIV Resources (MOHR):
  - Reallocation of Funds: MOHR reallocated \$125,000 from the administrative budget to three funded hospitals: Denver Health, University Hospital, and Children's Hospital. In each case,

the reallocation is to fund sub-specialty services that are not available to clients under the original allocations.

- Provider Training: MOHR held a training class for direct HIV service providers as a part of a Quality Management training series. The workshop focused primarily on Motivational Interviewing, as well as a general mix of HIV/AIDS-related skills and knowledge, including HIPAA, treatment planning, progress notes, ethics, and legal aspects of working with HIV. A total of 27 participants completed the course, all of which were case managers or others working directly with clients.
- Denver Healthy People:
  - Park Hill Thriving Communities (PHTC): CHDS developed program, environment and policy community action cards related to all areas of the PHTC Action Plan, including: 1) nutrition; 2) gardening; 3) landscaping; 4) safe routes; and 5) crime/gang activity. These cards are a social marketing tool to increase community familiarity with and involvement in the links between nutrition and physical activity programs and the environmental and policy changes that must complement programming. These social marketing tools can be applied citywide to increase equal opportunities for active living and healthy eating.
  - 2006 Annual Joint Report: CHDS disseminated the Annual Joint Report in the public health community and shared it with elected officials.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION (EQ)**

### **New Activities**

- Air Ordinance: EQ staff presented proposed revisions to Chapter 4, Air Pollution Control, to the Board of Environmental Health. Draft revisions are currently undergoing review by the City Attorney's office. Revisions are anticipated to be finalized in early December, with stakeholder involvement scheduled throughout December.
- Solar America Cities: EQ is partnering with General Services and the Mayor's Office to explore a solicitation and funding opportunity to accelerate the adoption of solar technologies in the Denver Metro area.

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Greenprint Denver: Mayor Hickenlooper and Greenprint Denver hosted an appreciation reception honoring the Greenprint Denver Advisory Council. Mayor Hickenlooper specifically acknowledged Gregg Thomas for his efforts in Greenprint and the Climate Action Plan, proclaiming Tuesday, November 27, 2007, as "Gregg Thomas Appreciation Day."
- Emergency Preparedness: EQ led a team of DEH staff in support of a statewide emergency preparedness drill and exercise designed to test the ability to mobilize and dispense vaccinations to a large segment of the population as a simulated response to a massive pandemic influenza outbreak.
- Water Quality Environmental Management System (EMS): EQ staff is conducting interviews of key City departments and personnel to gather baseline assessment data related to the Water Quality EMS.