



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Denver Environmental Health Department

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (DEH) Report for October, 2008

### ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL (ACC)

#### New Activities

- Skunk Rabies: State laboratory testing confirmed a rabid skunk was found in the area of Sloan's Lake. The rabies strain was determined to be bat rabies, as opposed to terrestrial rabies that can be spread quickly among animals. ACC responded by holding a pet vaccination clinic that weekend at Sloan's Lake Park, at which over 100 dogs and cats were vaccinated.
- Adoption Events in the Webb Building: ACC, in conjunction with the DEH Communications Director and with the assistance and approval of Webb Building management, held mobile adoption events on Fridays through October for Adopt a Shelter Dog month. More than 20 dogs were adopted at the event or at a later time at the shelter, as a result.

#### Update on Key Issues

- HSUS Evaluation: While awaiting the final evaluation report from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), ACC began proactively addressing certain evaluation findings:
  - Staff Training. Field, office, and shelter staff received training on the Chameleon software. Field and office staff also received training on the changes to the call for service process as a result of the integration between the Chameleon system and the City's 311 CRM system. In addition, shelter staff were trained by Jenny Orme, a nationally-recognized trainer in animal care and control who was recommended by HSUS, on shelter cleaning and disinfection practices.
  - ACC Protocols: ACC is in the process of revising and developing protocols on vaccinations, cleaning, euthanasia, and intake procedures.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DECISION SUPPORT (CHDS)

#### New Activities

- Park Hill Thriving Communities (PHTC):
  - Redevelopment Opportunities. PHTC staff are exploring collaboration with Civic Canopy related to the Holly Square redevelopment and submitted to Councilwoman Carla Madison, Denver Urban Renewal Authority and Urban Land Conservancy a white paper reflecting the community's desires for the redevelopment.
  - Renewal Application. PHTC began preparing Year 4 renewal application and action plans.

## Update on Key Issues

- Decision Support Group (DSG):
  - Chameleon Update. The integration of HLP's Chameleon software with the PeopleSoft CRM (311) is near completion and will go live in November.
  - Mobile Solutions. DSG is supporting Environmental Quality (EQ) by piloting a mobile solution that will be used in the Facility Compliance program area and is targeted for roll out on November 10, 2008.
- Mayor's Office of HIV Resources (MOHR): MOHR staff completed the fiscal year 2009 application for Part A funding for disproportionately affected cities for HIV services for the Denver Metro Area. This source of funding is through the Ryan White CARE Act administered through the Health Resources & Services Administration.
- Denver Healthy People:
  - Program Manager Position. DEH received 55 applications for the Healthy People Program Manager vacancy. 17 applicants were evaluated for interviews. Interviews are scheduled in November, with an offer expected to be extended by the end of November.
  - Community Action Plan. Staff continued drafting the Community Action Plan for Park Hill Thriving Communities in partnership with LiveWell staff and stakeholders. The final plan and budget are due to LiveWell Colorado on December 1, 2008.
  - Public Works Partnership. PHTC staff continued partnering with Public Works staff to determine costs and feasibility of transferring PHTC funds to Public Works to paint bike sharrows throughout Park Hill.
  - City of Axum Park Renovation. Staff continue collaborations with Parks and Recreation regarding the timing, logistics and costs associated with City of Axum Park renovation. A multi-use perimeter path is scheduled for a spring 2009 build out.

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (EQ)

### Update on Key Issues

- Environmental Management System:
  - Environmental Leadership Program. Denver was accepted into the Colorado Environmental Leadership Program at the silver level and the City was recognized by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for the efforts of six agencies (Public Works, General Services, Mayor's Office, Environmental Health, Theatres & Arenas, and Denver Zoo) in establishing Environmental Management Systems covering their operations.
  - EMS Audit. DEH successfully completed the Stage 1 audit for the six agencies listed above with third-party auditors. The external audit will continue in November.
- Water Quality: The 2007 water quality reports, which describe water quality in Denver's lakes and rivers and recommend actions for improvements, were published and posted on DEH web site.
- Globe and VB/I70 Sites: The City reached a settlement agreement with ASARCO, who is in bankruptcy proceedings, for ASARCO's contribution to the remediation costs at the Globe and

VB/I70 sites. Under the settlement, the City will receive over \$600,000 from ASARCO to cover past and future response costs at these sites.

- Air Ordinance: EQ continues to provide updates to interested parties regarding proposed air ordinance revisions. Briefings were provided to individual City Council members, the Greenprint City Council Committee, the Board of Environmental Health, the Inter Neighborhood Council (INC), Home Builders Association, Suncor, and Metro Wastewater District. Offers for briefings have been extended to Kasel Industries (pig ears) and Purina. Air ordinance revisions will be formally introduced to Mayor's Office in early November. To date, all outreach efforts (Council, INC, Home Builders Assoc., Suncor, Metro WW) have been well received and no opposition has been voiced. Council Greenprint Committee voiced unanimous support.

## **OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER (OME)**

### **New Activities**

- Community Outreach: Dr. Amy Martin attended the first meeting of the Denver Drug Epidemiology Workgroup, a multidisciplinary team whose membership includes of representatives from OME, Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, Denver Police Department, Denver Police Crime Laboratory, Denver Office of Drug Strategy, Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), and various drug treatment facilities in the Denver Area, at which trends in drug use and drug related fatalities were discussed. Such trends may be useful in developing treatment and prevention strategies. Dr. Martin collaborated with Bruce Mendelson, Senior Data Consultant for the Denver Office of Drug Strategy, on a project examining drug fatalities in Denver from the past five years. In October, OME collected three years of data. The results of this data were presented at this meeting.
  - Pathology Fellowship: Dr. Michael Madsen, a third year resident in pathology from the University of Vermont, spent a one month elective rotation at OME. He is interested in pursuing a career in forensic pathology, and is a potential applicant for the forensic pathology fellowship year in 2010.

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Workload: For the month of October, OME performed 61 autopsies, 23 externals and 11 chart reviews/death certifications.

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

### **New Activities**

- Retail Food:
  - RMN Article Regarding Dogs on Patios: The Rocky Mountain News obtained information from PHI and published an article on November 3, 2008 regarding the one-year old regulation allowing dogs on retail food establishment patios. The story indicated that the regulation is seen as favorable to patrons, as well as the registered establishments. PHI staff also provided a fact sheet to City Council regarding the dogs on patios regulation.
  - Kevin Taylor's Hearing Petition: PHI received a petition for hearing before the Board of Environmental Health (BEH) from Kevin Taylor's on a civil penalty assessed to the establishment for repeated violations resulting from a malfunctioning dish machine that was not

sanitizing effectively. PHI has set the hearing for the combined November-December BEH meeting and will recommend the fine be upheld.

- Child Care: PHI is collaborating with the Colorado Department of Human Services' Division of Childcare and other contractors in the state to develop a training program to assist public school districts in obtaining director certification for their early childhood teachers
- Residential Health: On October 30, Westword published an article regarding a vacant housing unit located at 500-518 Parkway Avenue. Neighborhood Inspection Services has been working with Residential Health to address complaints received by residents this past month. Residential Health placarded the property as uninhabitable as a result of homeless individuals attempting to reside in the property without the benefit of any utilities.
- Health Facilities: PHI will train, at the request of Denver Public Health Infectious Disease Control staff, community corrections participants at an infectious disease control class on November 21.

### **Update on Key Issues**

- Retail Food: PHI met with the petitioner of Lannie's Clocktower Cabaret after their variance was heard by BEH in October. At the meeting, PHI continued discussions for a solution regarding the lack of water to the petitioner's kitchen. The petitioner has indicated that it may install plumbing and a hand sink in the kitchen without presenting any additional proposals before the BEH.

### **COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA UPDATE**

- Environmental Health had numerous media contacts during October, including:
  - Rabid Skunk at Sloan's Lake. The Communications Director (CD) worked with CDPHE on the messaging and release of information regarding rabies found in the Sloan's Lake area. The public response included planning and hosting a pet vaccination clinic immediately following the release of the rabies testing information on October 5. All media outlets carried both the outbreak and promoted the clinic. As a result, more than 100 pets were vaccinated. KCNC News 4 covered the clinic.
  - Food Safety Month. On September 29, the CD pitched a segment on food safety tips for morning shows, and PHI staff appeared on CW2 to promote Food Safety Month.
  - Environmental Response Rates. The Denver Post continued research on environmental response rates and published a story in mid-October about environmental response. While the story was not focused on Denver, DEH was noted to have better ability to respond to environmental complaints than other jurisdictions.
  - Adopt A Dog from A Shelter Month. The CD assisted in planning five dog adoption events in the lobby of the Webb Building throughout October, where more than 20 dogs were adopted, not including pets that were adopted the following day as a result of the excitement garnered by the events. KCNC also covered the October 17 pet adoption event.
  - Media Training. DEH Division Directors and communications staff completed a half-day media training conducted by an outside public affairs firm. The media training included on-camera interviews, post-interview evaluation, and message development techniques.