

Hamilton County Public Health Mission

The purpose of Hamilton County Public Health is to work with the community to protect the public health and environment. By providing education, inspections, health care coordination, and data analysis we strive to assure that the citizens of Hamilton County are safe from disease, injury and contamination.

Hamilton County Public Health Vision

Hamilton County Public Health will revolutionize the way it provides services to a changing community. We will provide a network of information to be used as a tool to improve public health. Communities will develop new and innovative ways to solve problems. Together we will be uniquely equipped to face the challenges of tomorrow and provide an environment in which we will be proud to live and work.

Our Core Values

Our service will be prompt, reliable, professional.

Our staff will be caring, responsible.

District Advisory Council

Members include presidents of township boards of trustees, village mayors, and the President of the Board of County Commissioners. Members are required by law to meet annually in March. They select four of the five members of the Board of Health, make recommendations to the Board of Health, and authorize city contractual agreements.

Chairman **Joe Sykes**
Secretary **John Waksmundski**

Licensing Council

The Licensing Council provides input on rules and fees regarding business entities licensed by the Hamilton County Board of Health. It meets at least annually and appoints one member to the Board of Health.

Chairperson of Licensing Council **Larry Riddle**
Vice Chairperson **Jim Brett**
Secretary **Bill Mowery**

Board of Health

The Board of Health is the governing body of Hamilton County Public Health. It has the authority to adopt rules and regulations which have the same status as law, enact policies within the Health District and hire a health commissioner. Meetings are held at the HCPH office the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

President **Mark Rippe**
Vice-President **Thomas Chatham**
Board Members **Kenneth Amend, M.D.**
Jim Brett
Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.

Health Commissioner and Staff

Health Commissioner **Timothy Ingram**
Assistant Health Commissioner **Kathy Lordo, Department of Community Health Services**

Divisions

Environmental Health **Chris Eddy, Director**
Epidemiology and Assessment **Mary Sacco, Acting Director**
Health Promotion and Education **Susan Schaefer, Director**
Nursing **Mary Sacco, Director**
Plumbing **Lisa Humble, Director**
Waste Management Services **Chuck DeJonckheere, Director**
Water Quality **Chris Griffith, Director**



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.



2007 Annual Report *Enhancing Our Approach for Excellent Customer Service*

Each year brings changes and 2007 was no exception as most noticeably we have a new name – Hamilton County Public Health. We chose to include “public health” clearly in our new name because we want our residents to know that if they have a public health need – whether it’s an immunization, a restaurant inspection report or emergency preparedness information – the agency they should turn to is Hamilton County Public Health. Even though our name has changed, our people, services, response and reliability are the same.

Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) continually strives to prevent disease and injury, promote wellness and protect people from environmental hazards. In fact, many of the public health activities conducted in Hamilton County in the 1920s are still carried out today. However, today our work is conducted more quickly and efficiently through our use of new technology. In 2007, HCPH further embraced digital innovations, exemplifying the ideals of our Vision and enhancing our approach for excellent customer service.

Constantly improving the efficiency of our day-to-day operations is a key motivation for the staff of HCPH. With a workforce of less than 70, including sanitarians, plumbers, health educators, nurses, epidemiologists and support staff, we strive to be resourceful, prompt and reliable in order to properly serve more than 450,000 Hamilton County residents living outside the cities of Cincinnati, Norwood, Sharonville, Springdale and St. Bernard.

Our information is now more quickly and easily accessible, giving Hamilton County residents the tools to improve their own health and that of their neighbors and community. Public health is vital to maintaining the well-being of the community and Hamilton County Public Health is meeting the challenge.



Gone Digital

Thanks to advances in technology and communication systems, public health processes can be carried out quickly and reliably. Partners in our community can be notified within hours of eminent public health threats or emergencies. Illnesses that once led to community wide outbreaks can now be identified, tracked and treated more quickly.

In an effort to keep the residents of Hamilton County safe from food borne illness outbreaks, HCPH licenses and inspects more than 3,000 food service operators – including restaurants, school cafeterias and grocery stores – every year. Depending on the type of facility, inspections (excluding follow-up inspections) occur unannounced, one to two times per year. In 2007, HCPH digitized this inspection process. All inspection reports are posted online the next business day at www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org. Digital inspection reports not only help sanitarians complete their work more efficiently, they also give residents an inside look at what a public health sanitarian sees during an inspection.

The Water Quality Division has digitized their inspection reporting process by utilizing tablet computers for digital data collection while in the field. Although this new process is unseen by our customers, Hamilton County residents benefit by receiving an error-free type written report rather than a hand written report. This digital procedure also improves efficiency allowing our staff to perform their work faster and more accurately.

Staff in the Waste Management Division also adopted HCPH's digital objective by scanning all Construction and Demolition Debris Landfill applications since 1997, which previously filled numerous binders. Now the review, sharing and storage of construction plans are all electronic, thus eliminating the use of cumbersome plan sheets and eradicating the tedious work of referencing previous years' paper versions. Staff can now easily share this information, review plans and reference earlier applications all with the click of a mouse. This extensive project – one of the first like it in the state – has increased the speed of review and also permits quick referencing.

New Web site

Though its location on the Internet is the same, www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org, Hamilton County Public Health's new Web site features a more intuitive navigation system for the general public, contractors, or agencies that may conduct business with HCPH. New features include:

- Easy access to permit and licensing forms, including the ability to purchase some permits online.
- Searchable databases for immunization clinics and other health care resources.
- Continued access to online food service inspection reports
- Web-based form for submitting public health complaints 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The screenshot shows the Hamilton County Public Health website. At the top, the logo reads "HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH" with the tagline "PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT." Below the logo is a "QUICK LINKS" dropdown menu and a "ANY QUESTIONS?" link. The main navigation menu includes: HOME, ABOUT US, BIRTH & DEATH RECORDS, PERMITS, LICENSING & INSPECTIONS, PROGRAMS & SERVICES, RESOURCE LIBRARY, and CONTACT US. A search bar is located on the left with a "GO" button. Below the search bar is an "A-Z INDEX" with letters A through Z. The "TEXT SIZE" section has "+" and "-" buttons. The "PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS" section lists: "Flu Season is Here! View the Flu Shot Locator to Get Your Vaccination", "Gastroenteritis (Stomach Flu) in Hamilton County", "View Inspection Reports for Restaurants, Grocery Stores and More...", "MRSA: What you need to know about antibiotic-resistant bacteria", and "Crypto Incidence Returned to Expected Levels - Restrictions Lifted". Below this is a "Read current news releases" link. The "WHO WE SERVE" section states: "Hamilton County Public Health is proud to serve the following communities in Hamilton County. Learn More". The "EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE" section states: "Public health agencies around the world are preparing for natural disasters, terrorist attacks and pandemics. Learn More". The "PURCHASE ONLINE" section lists: "Birth & Death Certificates" and "Swimming Pool Permits". The "JUST FOR YOU" section lists: "Pool or Spa", "Food Service", "Smoke Free Ohio Compliance", "Daycare Centers", and "School Nurses". At the bottom, there is a footer with links: Home | About Us | Permits, Licensing & Inspections | Programs & Services | Resources Library | Contact Us | Site Map. Copyright 2007 Hamilton County General District. All Rights Reserved. Terms of Use, Accessibility Statement.

Division Updates

Division of Environmental Health:

In addition to significantly revamping the food inspection process and posting the reports online, staff in this division also worked to mitigate the increasing problem with bed bugs. Bed bug complaints are increasing on both a national and local level. HCPH has begun working with our partners on the Southwest Area Regional Mosquito Taskforce (SWARM) and other local agencies to develop a coordinated response effort that will help reduce incidences of bed bugs in our region.

Division of Water Quality:

The Water Quality Division completed an intensive three-year stormwater project involving more than 7,500 outfall sites within Hamilton County waterways. This Federal Clean Water Act requirement included locating and mapping all 7,500 stormwater discharge points in Hamilton County. Additionally, 775 samples were collected from the outfalls that were flowing during dry weather. This project impacts the health of the streams and rivers that cross our county's landscape. HCPH partnered with Hamilton County Storm Water District, Hamilton County Engineers, Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District, Hamilton County Public Works and the Metropolitan Sewer District to complete this three-year project. In addition, there were more inspections conducted and more permits issued for household sewage treatment systems in 2007 than ever before.

Division of Plumbing:

Staff in this division successfully worked to implement changes in the plumbing code in July of 2007 that now requires hot water for bathtubs and whirlpools to be a maximum temperature of 120 degrees. More hot water heater permits were issued for replacement water heaters in 2007 than in previous years. In order to accommodate the increase in water heater inspections the Plumbing Division offers inspections on the second Saturday of every month as a convenience for customers who cannot be home during normal business hours.

Division of Waste Management:

Through the addition of staff, the Waste Management Division now offers quicker response times and has increased the frequency of inspections for the municipal solid waste facility program. Staff initiated the removal of 136 tons of solid waste from open dumps and nuisance sites and over 1,700 tires from various sites in Hamilton County. Additionally, staff worked with the EPA, the Metropolitan Sewer District and City of Cincinnati Health Department to monitor the water quality of area recreational waterways.

Division of Epidemiology and Assessment:

Shigella, a bacterium that causes diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps, is easily spread when proper hand washing techniques are not followed and can be serious for young children, persons with immune disorders, persons in poor health or the elderly. In 2007, staff from this division worked to successfully control a community-wide shigella outbreak, occurring predominantly in daycare settings caring for diapered children. Investigation identified 297 positive cases of Shigella in 2007, most of which occurred between April and December. Staff worked to educate the entire community about the importance of proper hand washing to stop the spread of disease.

Division of Nursing:

The healthcare of children continued to be a focus for the Nursing Division which received over 90 referrals for the BCMH/Help Me Grow partnership. The Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh) helps alleviate the financial burden of medical care for children under age 21 who were born with medical conditions that require special healthcare. Help Me Grow provides free medical services for children up to three years with developmental delays and also works to identify children that are at risk for developing such delays. HCPH provides public health nurses who can answer questions about a child's medical condition, help the family with paperwork and assist in locating resources.

Division of Health Promotion and Education:

School health proves to be a major priority nationwide and in 2007 this division received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support school health activities, specifically focusing on physical activity and nutrition. These funds allow staff to help schools implement the federally mandated school wellness policies, develop School Health Advisory Councils and establish action plans which will improve the health of school-age children in Hamilton County. One school district has already garnered positive results with offering healthy eating opportunities, universal breakfast in the classroom and gathering data to begin the evaluation of these efforts.