

# 2008 Annual Report

## *Exemplifying our mission: Prevent. Promote. Protect.*

### **Advancements in Emergency Preparedness**

Since 2002, public health agencies have been preparing for threats such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks and pandemics. Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) has made great strides, along with help from our partners in the community, towards the goal of keeping our community safe. Tremendous growth occurred in 2008 on the path to becoming better prepared.



Representatives from every community we serve have been working with our staff to identify and manage 36 Points of Dispensing across the county. A Point of Dispensing (POD) is a location where medications or vaccines will be distributed during a public health emergency such as a disease outbreak or bioterrorist attack. It will be opened if many people have been exposed to an infection that may make them sick and disease from that infection can be prevented by antibiotics or a vaccine. Coordinating a community POD is a significant effort that involves years of planning, recruiting volunteers and exercising plans.

Because an informed public is better able to cope with emergencies, in 2008 HCPH launched an awareness campaign, *Be Prepared, Be Aware, Volunteer*, that is aimed at educating residents about emergency preparedness plans. An informational flyer was mailed to all households within our jurisdiction. This flyer also asked residents to sign-up to volunteer during a public health emergency. To date, HCPH has more than 600 volunteers willing to assist in staffing PODs or other emergencies.



During the September blackout, HCPH and several partners opened a shelter for people with special medical needs. The shelter was staffed with both medically-trained and non-medically trained personnel 24 hours a day for five days.



HCPH was instrumental in the creation of Preparedness Information Network (PIN), a partnership among community organizations, emergency responders and public health agencies throughout Southwest Ohio. PIN is a growing network of organizations that have voluntarily agreed to serve as a channel of information in the event of a disaster or public health emergency to vulnerable, special needs and at-risk populations who may not otherwise be reached by mainstream media.

While remarkable improvement has been made in emergency preparedness efforts, HCPH will work in 2009 to further engage our community as we strive to prepare for potential public health emergencies.

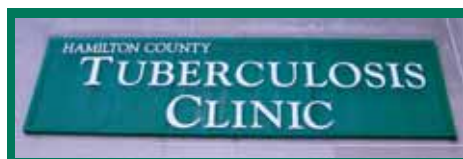


## Prevent

### TB Control

The Hamilton County Commissioners contracted with HCPH for Tuberculosis (TB) Control activities on May 1, 2008. The TB Control Unit was incorporated with the communicable disease investigation program to form the new division of Disease Prevention. TB disease was once the leading cause of death in the United States. TB bacteria – particularly dangerous for children and persons infected with HIV – usually attack the lungs and if not treated properly, TB disease can be fatal.

Tuberculosis is still a problem and demands attention from the public health community. This integration matches HCPH's mission and provides more effective and efficient services to treat and prevent TB in Hamilton County.



### Smoke Free Ohio

The Environmental Health staff continue to be leaders in enforcing Ohio's Smoke Free Workplace Law. Investigations into Smoke Free Ohio complaints, which must be completed within 10 days of receipt from the Ohio Department of Health, totaled 470 during 2008. Establishments including bars, restaurants and businesses receive an inspection at a time when there is regular activity in the facility. This means our health inspectors many times work late into the night to complete investigations. This law is effective at protecting workers from the known health hazards associated with exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke – a chemical in which there is no safe level of exposure. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, workers exposed to secondhand smoke are 34 percent more likely to get lung cancer.

The Environmental Health Division is committed to making this program a success. In fact, HCPH has issued the greatest number of \$2,500 level fines in the entire state. Statewide statistics have shown HCPH to be the most efficient Smoke Free program in Ohio as evidenced by the low percentage of open investigations and the high percentage of violations issued.

### Bed Bug School Policy

With the increasing presence of bed bugs on both a national and local level, Hamilton County Public Health created guidance to assist schools with this growing problem. Although they are unpleasant, bed bugs are not known to carry or transmit diseases according to public health scientific evidence. Bed bugs have made their presence known and they are an issue we need to deal with as a community. School guidance for handling bed bugs encourages two of the best tools we can use: prevention and controlling the spread of bed bugs.

## Promote

### Odor Complaint Hotline

Through HCPH's work with the community of Colerain Township, Rumpke and the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services, a 24-hour odor complaint hotline was established to respond to odor complaints from the operation of Rumpke Sanitary Landfill. The odor hotline has clarified response procedures to increase the flow of information to interested citizens and to ensure a more timely response to possible odor issues.

The hotline provides enhanced assessment of odors and enables us to better target solutions to prevent recurrent odors. HCPH's focus however, is not just to respond and document reported odors, but to minimize their offsite occurrence as much as possible. Staff from the Waste Management Division monitors this compliance with unannounced routine inspections, as well as weekend, early morning and evening hour inspections. HCPH continues to work with Rumpke personnel to identify measures to minimize the occurrence of offsite odors as much as possible.

## **CDC Grant**

For the first time, HCPH was awarded a grant directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The *Strategic Alliances for Health* is a new program focused on training local communities to create policy and environmental changes that address lifestyle behaviors linked to some of the leading chronic diseases impacting the nation's health. Evidence shows that being physically active regularly, eating a healthy diet, and avoiding tobacco use and exposure can help people prevent and manage chronic diseases.

The program is part of a larger \$25 million CDC investment in local community efforts to reduce the burden of chronic diseases across the nation. HCPH health educators will collaborate with leaders and community members in Lockland, Woodlawn and Lincoln Heights to develop specific strategies that promote physical activity and healthy eating and reduce tobacco use and exposure – all lifestyle behaviors associated with obesity, heart disease and diabetes.

## **Protect**

### **Federal Clean Water Act**

The Water Quality Division continues to work with the Hamilton County Storm Water District to help carry out the requirements mandated by the Federal Clean Water Act including locating, mapping and sampling all the storm water discharge points within Hamilton County. In 2008, a total of 1,892 outfalls were visited and 250 samples were collected and analyzed. This project protects the health of the streams and rivers by targeting storm water discharges that contain pollution exceeding water quality standards set by the State of Ohio. Staff then investigates any possible pollution sources and coordinates enforcement and clean-up.

### **Blackout**

With widespread power outages from remnants of Hurricane Ike during September, HCPH worked swiftly and diligently to protect people from the dangers of food-borne illnesses by stressing proper handling of food during power outages. Public health sanitarians ensured the safety of food at restaurants and other food service facilities. Staff from across all divisions answered calls to the Food Safety Hotline and advised residents and food service facilities how to properly handle food. We also asked residents to use caution when patronizing restaurants that appeared to be operating without power and to contact us if they saw a restaurant that was without power and open for business.

### **Lead Poisoning Prevention**

Through the Nursing Division's participation with the Hamilton County Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Collaborative, we provided 150 childhood blood lead level screening tests. Lead poisoning is invisible and 100 percent preventable. A Public Health Nurse accompanies a certified lead risk assessor from the Waste Management division to homes where a child has been identified as having a high blood lead level to provide education about the health risks associated with lead exposure and tips on how to limit the effects of lead exposure, including hand hygiene, cleaning and nutritional information.

### **Itch Mite Identification**

The divisions of Environmental Health, Waste Management, Epidemiology and Assessment and Disease Prevention worked together in August to identify *Pyemotes herfsi*, otherwise called "itch mites," as the source of an outbreak of skin rashes in the eastern Hamilton County suburbs. HCPH was quick to warn about occurrences of these bites from microscopic mites and inform the community that they are not known to transmit disease in humans.



### **Community Health Reviews**

The Division of Epidemiology and Assessment worked with the Public Affairs Specialist to complete Community Health Reviews for each of the 43 jurisdictions served by HCPH. These reports provide a better idea of the public health issues that impact each community including births and deaths, injury occurrences and communicable diseases.

## 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 and professional. Our staff will be caring and 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 jurisdiction of HCPH 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** Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.  
**Board Members** Kenneth Amend, M.D.  
Jim Brett  
Thomas Chatham

## Health Commissioner and Staff

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

## Divisions

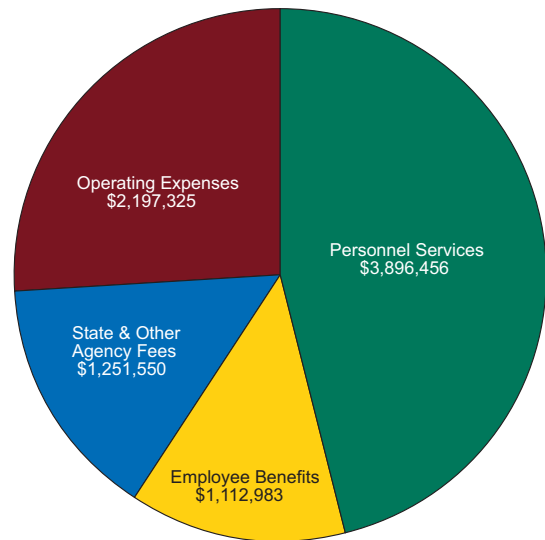
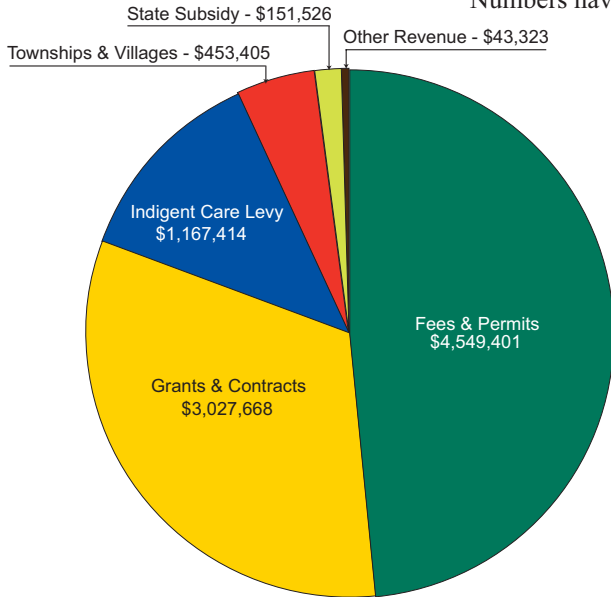
**Disease Prevention** Pat Allingham, Director  
**Environmental Health** Greg Kesterman, Director  
**Health Promotion and Education** Stacy Wegley, Director  
**Nursing** Mary Sacco, Director  
**Plumbing** Lisa Humble, Director  
**Waste Management** Chuck DeJonckheere, Director  
**Water Quality** Chris Griffith, Director



# Financial Report

## 2008 Financial Report of Hamilton County Public Health

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest dollar.



**Total Revenues & Resources: \$9,392,737**

**Total Expenditures: \$8,458,314**

### Epidemiology and Assessment

Birth Records Recorded	6,053
Birth Records Issued	14,036
Death Records Recorded	4,785
Death Records Issued	28,250
Communicable Diseases Reported	803
Confirmed Cases of Tuberculosis	13
Directly Observed Therapy Visits	2,446

### Environmental Health

Food Inspections	6,678
FSAP – Individuals Trained	257
FSAP – Facilities Participating	45
Jail Inspections	19
Manufactured Home Park & Camp Inspections	135
Marina Inspections	3
Motel Inspections	130
Housing Inspections	1,184
Nuisance Complaint Inspections	947
Rabies Control Cat & Dog Bites	403
School Inspections	347
Swimming Pool/Spa Inspections	1,200
Smoke Free Ohio Inspections	470

### Nursing

BCMh Contacts	1,555
IAP Home Visits	26
Immunizations Given at Clinics	3,726
Flu Shots Given	178
Patients Visiting Regular Clinics	1,738
Public Health Nursing Referrals	30
Tuberculosis Screenings	114

### Plumbing

Backflow Surveys	291
Backflow Inspections	431
Testable Backflow Devices	8,782
Plumbing Inspections	8,909
Plumbing Investigations	345
Plumbing Permits Issued	3,652

### Health Promotion and Education

Active for Life Participants	89
Chair Volleyball Participants	369
Fall Prevention Presentation Attendees	1,232
You Hold the Key Participants	10,581
Mocktail Event Participants	825
Walk Club Participants	234
School Wellness Teams	5

### Water Quality

Mechanical STS Inspections	10,782
Mechanical STS Re-inspections	2,408
STS New Construction/Repair Reviews	130
Household Sewage Code Variances	20
Installer/Repairer Registrations	120
Non-mechanical STS Inspections	1,223
Non-mechanical STS Re-inspections	107
STS Installation Inspections	443
Private Water Inspections	87
Semi-public STS Inspections	473
Semi-public STS Re-inspections	105
Septic Hauler Registrations	30
STS Permit to Install	117
Subdivision Reviews	26

### Waste Management

Construction and Demolition Debris Landfills	182
Compost Site Inspections	99
Infectious Waste Facility Inspections	199
Lead Risk Assessments	9
Municipal Solid Waste Landfill Inspections	136
Open Dumping Investigations	133
Environmental Sampling at Waste Facilities	41
Solid Waste Nuisance Inspections	645
Tire Site Inspections	24
Tattoo/Piercing Facility Inspections	46

## Frequently Requested Information

### Hamilton County Public Health Online

On the HCPH Web site, you can review your favorite restaurant's latest inspection report; find an immunization clinic; search for a plumbing contractor or septic system installer/repairer; file a nuisance complaint; request a birth or death certificate; and much more. Visit us online at [www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org](http://www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org).

**Main Number.....(513) 946-7800**

**Fax Number.....(513) 946-7890**

### Departments

Administration.....(513) 946-7822

#### Department of Community Health Services

Division of Disease Prevention.....(513) 946-7809

Division of Epidemiology and Assessment.....(513) 946-7924

Office of Vital Statistics.....(513) 946-7932

Division of Health Promotion and Education....(513) 946-7811

Division of Nursing.....(513) 946-7881

#### Department of Environmental Health Services

Division of Environmental Health.....(513) 946-7831

Division of Plumbing.....(513) 946-7851

Division of Waste Management.....(513) 946-7875

Division of Water Quality.....(513) 946-7866

### Other Important Phone Numbers and Web sites

Environmental Health Information Line.....(513) 946-7832

*Report High Mosquito Activity*

*Report an Animal Bite*

File a Nuisance Complaint.....(513) 946-7800

[www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org](http://www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org)

Get a Plumbing Permit.....(513) 946-7852

Report Storm Water Pollution.....(513) 946-7000

Find a Flu Shot (seasonal).....(513) 931-SHOT (7468)

[www.931SHOT.org](http://www.931SHOT.org)

Hamilton County Tobacco-Free Partnership.....[www.tobaccofreehamiltoncounty.org](http://www.tobaccofreehamiltoncounty.org)

Hamilton County Fall Prevention Task Force.....[www.fallpreventiontaskforce.org](http://www.fallpreventiontaskforce.org)



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