



PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

MARCH/APRIL 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**PUBLIC HEALTH
SAFETY NOTE** 2

**ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH NOTE** 2

**CLINICAL
SERVICES NOTE** 2

**COMMUNITY
PARTNER
SPOTLIGHT** 3

**COMMUNITY
RELATIONS,
INFORMATION
AND PLANNING
SERVICES NOTE** 3

**COMMON
CONFUSIONS** 3

CALENDAR 4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Hazardous Weather Any Season (2)**
- **Catching Some Rays? Be Informed (2)**
- **STDs: Don't be a Statistic (2)**
- **Wapsi River Environmental Center (3)**
- **Spring Cleaning: Focus on Tobacco! (3)**

Spring: A Time for Change Even in Public Health

Many people view spring time as a time to start anew. It seems only natural that after a long cold winter people are ready to clean out the dust bunnies and start fresh!

Iowa's public health system has also caught its own case of spring fever. Public health is the foundation for healthy communities and is vital to the good health of all people. Since 2004 efforts through local and state partnerships have been made to redesign and modernize public health to assure that every Iowan has access to a standard level of public health services no matter where they live. While the journey has been long, many successes have been achieved throughout the process and the spring of 2010 promises to be an important time of change and learning.

Public Health Modernization Timeline:

The Scott County Health Department has been a partner in this journey and is excited to see the process through. From the beginning, the Scott County Health Department staff members have been involved in many capacities serving on

different statewide committees and helping to develop the Iowa Public Health Standards which were released in 2007.

These and the efforts of so many other public health supporters, helped sign into law the Iowa Public Health Modernization Act in May 2009. The act builds on standards proposed during public health redesign and establishes a voluntary accreditation system for Iowa's state and local public health departments.

The New Chapter:

It is now time for Public Health Modernization and the Scott County Health Department to embark on a new chapter in the journey. Six counties; Dallas, Hancock, Johnson, Lee, Tama, and Scott were chosen through a grant application process to complete a self assessment of their abilities to meet the public health standards.

Individuals from these counties will be working with state



health department staff to provide valuable feedback on the process. Findings from these six health departments will help shape the accreditation process in Iowa and may become resources for other health departments embarking on the same journey.

Watch for more information in the future about the progress of public health accreditation in Iowa.



Modernization Implementation Committee representatives listen to IDPH Director Tom Newton during their final meeting on June 17.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER ANY SEASON

NOTE FROM PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY SERVICE AREA

Spring is in the air and all of the winter woes that come with blizzards and ice storms will soon be a distant memory. While winter may be over, the fact remains that hazardous weather can happen any season.

We welcome spring with open arms but we must also be prepared for the possibility of flooding or tornadoes. Each of us can do our part to be prepared if

spring weather turns into an emergency. Here are two easy steps to help:

Develop a communications plan. It is important to designate a place to meet as well as a backup location. Also, a person should be designated as an emergency contact. This person should not live in the same neighborhood.

Make an emergency supply kit. There may not be time to

search for supplies during or after an emergency and stores may not be open to buy the supplies you need. Be sure to inform members of your household where this kit is located.

Visit the Scott County Health Department's Web site at www.scottcountyiowa.com/health to find out what items to include in your kit and to learn more about public health preparedness.



Hazardous weather can happen any season of the year.



CATCHING SOME RAYS? BE INFORMED

NOTE FROM ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE AREA

Are you tired of dreary winter weather and are looking for some "sun"? If you choose to tan, it is important to know that indoor tanning presents the same hazards as tanning in natural sunlight. Tanning salons are required to post signs warning consumers of the dangers of ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

When you go to a tanning salon, the attendant must make sure that you have

proper eyewear. He or she must assure that your exposure time does not exceed the time the bed or booth allows for your skin type. Understand that these restrictions are in place for your safety.

Overexposure to UV radiation can cause eye and skin injury and an allergic reaction.

Repeated exposure may cause premature aging of the skin and skin cancer. Failure

to wear protective eyewear may cause severe burns and long term injury to eyes. Certain medications or cosmetics may increase your sensitivity to UV radiation. As a consumer it is important to be informed of the hazards and follow safety requirements.



STDs, DON'T BE A STATISTIC

NOTE FROM CLINICAL HEALTH SERVICE AREA

Spring is upon us and many people are coming out of their winter hibernation and getting more socially active. So, spring is an appropriate time to remind people that STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) do not discriminate. They can affect all people regardless of age, gender, race, or sexual orientation.

In Scott County, and across the nation, STDs are on the rise. Numbers show that there has been a 14% increase in the number of clients seen at Scott County Health Department's HIV/STD clinic. Additionally, a 92% increase has been seen in the number of gonorrhea cases from 2008 to 2009 and a 14% increase in

Chlamydia.

The Scott County Health Department is dedicated to decreasing these numbers by preventing STDs in our community through education, as well as providing testing and treatment of some STDs through our STD clinics.

In Scott County and across the Nation STDs are on the rise.

WAPSI RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:
WAPSI RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Spring is a time to get out and enjoy the weather. The Wapsi River Center is a 225 acre nature preserve along the Wapsipinicon River, featuring three habitats: forest, grassland, and wetland. Managed by the Scott County Conservation Board, the Center exists to provide environmental education to all who are interested.

The Wapsi River Center hosts a variety of learning and

recreational opportunities that are outdoor, wild-life oriented and environmentally low impact. Sustainable resource practices are not only encouraged on-site, but comprehensive environmental programming



teaches the benefits to wild-life and community through Best Management Practices.

Interested in learning more about the natural resources and habitats here in Iowa, and the programs available at the Center? Visit the Wapsi River Center in person at 31555 52nd Avenue Dixon, Iowa 52745 or on their website at

www.scottcountyiowa.com/conservation/wapsi.php

SPRING CLEANING: FOCUS ON TOBACCO!

NOTE FROM COMMUNITY RELATIONS,
INFORMATION AND PLANNING SERVICES

In the mood for some spring cleaning? Start with cleaning tobacco out of your home and car!

Smoking is currently not regulated in homes and cars; yet children and families are often exposed to secondhand smoke in these areas. To spread the message about the dangers of secondhand smoke in homes and cars, the Scott County Health Department worked with the

Tobacco-Free QC, a coalition of community members and organizations, to design a Smoke-Free Homes and Smoke-Free Cars fact sheet for individuals and families to help educate them on ways to keep their homes and cars smoke-free. The educational fact sheet has been distributed to physicians and health care professionals as well as daycare providers in the Quad City area to share

with families they provide services to. Additionally, a Smoke-free Homes and Vehicles Pledge Program will be implemented to encourage families to pledge to make their homes and/or cars smoke-free.

For more information on the Tobacco-Free QC Coalition and the Smoke-free Homes and Cars campaign, visit www.tobaccofreeqc.com.



Clean tobacco out of your home and car starting this spring!

FLU SEASON, IS IT OVER YET?

COMMON CONFUSIONS:
SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Unfortunately, the answer is “no”. Many people are under the impression that the flu season is over once it starts to get warm outside. Actually, the flu season in the United States typically starts in October and lasts through May. The peak of flu season has occurred anywhere from late November through March.

In the United States, an average of 5 to 20 percent of the population gets the seasonal flu each year. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from seasonal flu-related complications. Some people, such as older people, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk

for serious flu complications.

There is still time to protect yourself from the flu by getting the seasonal and H1N1 flu shots and continue to clean your hands, cover your cough and sneezes, and contain germs by staying home when you are sick..

**Don't
count the
flu out
just yet.**

**SCOTT COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Saturday, March 6, 2010; American Red Cross Family Safety Day in Partnership with the Women's Lifestyle Fair
The River Center in Davenport
- April 11-17; Week of the Young Child
- April 13-14; 2010 Iowa Governor's Conference on Public Health
Scheman Conference Center, Ames Iowa
- Thursday, April 15 2010; 12:00-1:00 p.m.; Scott County Board of Health Meeting

Open to the Public; Location: Scott County Administrative Center, Board Room-1st Floor

OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.



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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.