A Note from the Health Commissioner

We have seen many things happen in Geauga County over the years; however, we are now faced with the challenge of implementing the new Ohio Department of Health Household Sewage Treatment System Rules in 2007. The new sewage treatment systems must be installed above the seasonal high water table, which is the highest point in the soil where the water resides under saturated conditions. These types of systems, which include drip distribution and mounds, will be designed to treat all of the sewage before it reaches the seasonal high water table. The seasonal high water table varies based on soil type. Some soils will have a shallower (higher) seasonal high water table, while others will have a deeper seasonal high water table. Therefore, identifying the depth of the seasonal high water table is critical in the design and effectiveness of the systems allowed in the new household sewage treatment regulation.

In 2006, the Health District staff continued to take preparedness training to assure the community that public health concerns will be addressed in an emergency. Our staff prepares for regional public health emergencies, as well as any local emergencies that may arise.

July 2007 is the target date the Health District has set to provide water scan tests for chemicals that may be found in residential water wells. A machine that was purchased by the Health District and the Geauga County Department of Emergency Services has made this possible. We will be providing news releases in the near future to inform residents of this new service.

If you have visited the Vital Statistics office at the Geauga County Health District to obtain a death or birth certificate in 2006, you probably have encountered staff members who are working with the new State computer system. This system will allow quicker access to official records, which are on file with this office.

Finally, the Environmental Health Division is in the process of developing a Web based portal to the Health District. This system will potentially provide a means for faster, shared access to property records. Since development is in its infancy, further information will be provided as this exciting new technology unfolds.
Residential Sewage Treatment

Many of the homes in Geauga County are served by individual household sewage treatment systems. The Geauga County Health District is responsible for regulating Household Sewage Treatment Systems (HSTS) serving 1, 2 and 3 family residences throughout the county. The Health District approves permits and repairs for HSTS for new homes and existing homes updating their systems to the current rules.

For 2006, the GCHD issued 813 sewage permits, 228 for new construction and 585 for existing homes. The department also had 1290 requests to conduct lot evaluations for approval to install sewage treatment systems on properties in the county.

The types of sewage treatment systems will change greatly and the cost of installing new sewage treatment systems will in many instances increase significantly. The new rules spell out that the owner of the property is responsible for the siting, installation and operation of the sewage system.

The Geauga County Board of Health adopted new fees for the HSTS program which went into effect on January 1, 2007. The GCHD will continue the For Sale of Property program. This program requires that all residential homes served by a HSTS must have an inspection of that system before a property is sold in Geauga County. The department received 539 applications for a P3 inspection in 2006.

The department has an active nuisance complaint program and will investigate signed written complaints submitted to this office. In 2006, the department received 45 written complaints.

Through an agreement with the Ohio EPA, the department also licenses and inspects semi-public commercial sewage systems that treat less than 25,000 gallons of sewage effluent per day. This includes 140 extended aeration systems.

Food Program Division

The goal of the Food Safety Program of the Geauga County Health District is to ensure that safe and wholesome food is provided to the public. Locations that sell food to the public such as restaurants, grocery stores, mobile food stands, temporary food stands, and vending machines must fulfill the requirements set forth in the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code. A license is purchased from the Geauga County Health District and inspections are routinely conducted to ensure compliance with the rules of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code. Inspection frequency is based upon state law and is determined by risk classification of the facility. Areas addressed during an inspection include staff hygiene, food handling, physical facilities, and general sanitation practices. Over 2,000 inspections were performed in 2006. As Geauga County continues to grow, the number of new food facilities opening per year has also grown. In 2006, there were 32 plans for new food facilities reviewed by our department. We look for this trend to continue in 2007.

In addition to educating the operators of the food facilities during inspections and completing several personalized consultations, the department offered a ServSafe seminar on food safety. The staff also provided food safety education to the public and answered their many questions. When a food borne outbreak is suspected, it is investigated and laboratory test collections are completed. There were no food-borne outbreaks linked to any of our licensed food facilities during 2006.

2006 Financial Report

Revenue

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<td>Levy</td>
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Expenditures

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Employees by Division

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<tr>
<td>Public Health Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Vital Statistics</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Women, Infant, Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Employees</td>
<td>34</td>
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</table>

Vital Statistics

The Geauga County Health District, Office of Vital Statistics records all birth and death occurrences in Geauga County.

In 2006 there were 1,327 births, 654 females and 673 males. 1,278 births were at UHHS Geauga Medical Center, 135 births were at Middlefield Care Center and there were 14 home births. This represents an increase of 170 births from 2005. There were 691 deaths recorded in Geauga County for 2006. The Health District Medical Director reviews all death certificates and compiles statistics on the most common causes of death.

2006 Most Common Causes of Death

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer (Lung)</td>
<td>162</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cerebrovascular (Dementia 76, Stroke 51)</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infection (Pneumonia 38)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung (COPD 26)</td>
<td>162</td>
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</table>

HAPSITE Chemical Scanning

In the summer of 2006, Health District Sanitarians set up the HAPSITE machine in the Kiwanis Lake Community to scan the residential water wells. Approximately fifty residents brought in water samples to the Kiwanis Lake Community Hall, where the Sanitarians scanned their samples.

The HAPSITE is a Gas Chromatograph/Mass Spectrometer. The portable HAPSITE unit can scan for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) analyzing samples of air, liquid and solids. A VOC is a carbon-containing compound that evaporates easily into the atmosphere. The HAPSITE gives a chemical breakdown of the compounds being analyzed. For example, if gasoline was a possible contaminant the HAPSITE will give an indication of the presence of compounds contained in gasoline, which include benzene, toluene, ethyl, methyl, MTBE, and ethanol. Common substances that can be scanned for using the machine include gasoline, fuel oil, diesel fuel, and cleaning solvents.
Public Health Emergency Preparedness

The Health District continues to develop, review and revise our emergency response plans. These plans include the local deployment of the Strategic National Stockpile to ensure availability of needed medications and a Mass Dispensing/Vaccination plan that addresses reaching the entire population of Geauga County. The Pandemic Influenza response plan details activities to detect and monitor influenza activity in Geauga County, prevention strategies, and collaboration with health and critical infrastructure systems. The Health District maintains Emergency Communications protocols for dissemination of information to the public and media during a public health emergency. We continue to update our Continuity of Operations plan so that the Essential Services we provide to Geauga County will continue in the event of a disaster affecting our facility.

To ensure a trained workforce, staff members are participating in incident management training. They also participate in large-scale, multi-agency public health preparedness exercises. This training is critical to prepare staff to assume leadership roles in the event that these plans are employed. It also provides opportunities to coordinate with other public health, law enforcement and emergency management agencies in Northeast Ohio.

Real events are the best way to practice our emergency response plans. In July, during a power outage the Health District nurses were called to assist at a shelter set up for residents of local assisted living facilities. In August, we participated in a Pandemic Influenza Tabletop exercise with individuals from private and public sector. In October, we utilized our Mass Vaccination Plan with flu clinics held at the Cardinal and West Geauga Middle Schools. This year, two Registered Sanitarians became members of the County Hazmat Response Team. All of these situations provided us with the opportunity to work side by side with the traditional First Responders and Service Agencies of Geauga County. As this agency develops reviews, revises and trains to respond in the event of a public health emergency, it is important that individuals create a family disaster plan. Keep the following emergency supplies on hand:

- At least a three-day supply of water and food that won't spoil
- Clothing, blankets, and sleeping bags for all family members
- First aid kit, including family’s prescription medications
- Battery-powered radio and flashlights with extra batteries
- Extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash, or traveler’s checks
- Sanitation supplies
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members
- An extra pair of glasses and contact lenses

In 2007, the Health District staff will continue to work with community organizations to better prepare for emergency events, whether natural or manmade.

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

The Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program of Geauga County is a supplemental food program that provides nutritious foods, nutrition education and referral services to over 700 residents of our community. WIC offers services to income eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children until the age of five. The foods offered through this program include milk, cheese, cereal, juice, peanut butter and beans. From June to October, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program offers Ohio grown fresh fruits and vegetables to our participants.

Nutrition education and counseling is provided by our Registered Dietitians to all WIC participants and parents or caretakers of child participants. An emphasis is placed on the benefits of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding education and support is provided by an experienced lactation consultant. In addition, other breastfeeding aids such as breast pumps may be provided to eligible mothers returning to work or school. Infant formulas are also available as needed. Geauga WIC and University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital is collaborating to offer infant car seats and an infant car seat safety check for Geauga County clients.

WIC works with area physicians and social agencies providing referrals for clients who are at risk for growth problems, anemia or are in need of social or community services. Special attention is being given to address the increase in childhood obesity by providing nutritional and behavioral interventions as well as physical activity classes for children identified at a higher risk for health related complications. Geauga WIC is also involved in community activities, including health fairs, the 2nd annual Kids Fest, and hosted the 5th Annual Diaper Dash at the Great Geauga County Fair.

WIC offers three convenient clinic locations for Geauga County residents: Madison, Middlefield and Bainbridge. An evening clinic is also available in Chardon to accommodate families who are unable to attend day clinics due to employment or transportation issues.

Raccoon-Strain Rabies in Geauga County

Since the confirmed discovery of raccoon-strain rabies in Geauga County in July 2004 there has been an ongoing, collaborative effort to monitor and control the spread of the disease. The primary agencies involved have included the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and USDA Wildlife Services, the Ohio Department of Health Centers for Disease Control, as well as the local Health Districts in Geauga, Lake, Ashtabula, Portage, Summit, and Cuyahoga Counties.

For the third year, the Geauga County Health District has been directly involved with specimen collection, most of which were road-killed raccoons, some wildlife that had been exposed to household pets or humans, and some wildlife that had demonstrated behavior consistent with a sick animal. In 2006, there were four positive cases of raccoon-strain rabies found in Geauga County, six positive cases in Lake County, six positive cases in Summit County and one positive case from the 28 samples collected by the Health District. There were 133 samples collected in Geauga County, resulting in a 3% infection rate. The total positive cases are down slightly from 23 positive cases in 2004 and 11 positive cases in 2005. The USDA Wildlife Services has continued their trap, test and release program, but the vast majority of the testing has moved out of Lake and Geauga into neighboring counties allowing the USDA to monitor the spread of the disease into other Ohio counties.

The Ohio Department of Health conducted two oral rabies vaccinations by airplane and hand delivery over Ashtabula, Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga and portions of Portage and Summit Counties in 2006. Registered Sanitarians from the Geauga County Health District assisted by hand bating that allowed for a distribution in more densely populated municipalities and at locations more attractive to raccoons. Surveillance of the raccoon population will continue into 2007 to monitor the effectiveness of the ORV bating.

Thanks to local veterinarians, volunteers and community businesses, two low cost household pet vaccination clinics were held in 2006. These clinics offered vaccination for household pets including dogs, cats and ferrets. Additional vaccination clinics are scheduled for 2007.

For the residents of the Geauga County, the first line of defense against raccoons is to be cautious with wild animals, sick or injured animals, and animals you do not know. Pet vaccinations should be kept current and pets should not be permitted to roam. By closing garbage lids and not feeding household pets outdoors can help eliminate foods that attract wild animals in residential areas. Residents should continue to report all animal bites to the Health District and contact us if they suspect the possibility of a rabies exposure to themselves or a household pet.

Solid Waste Program

The Geauga County Health District has an aggressive Solid Waste Program. In 2006, the Solid Waste Program conducted 211 inspections of solid waste generators, closed landfills, compost sites, solid waste transporters and solid waste nuisance sites. Emphasis has been put on the enforcement of solid waste laws pertaining to mosquito control and scrap tire generators, due to the West Nile Fever, joining other already endemic vector borne diseases, such as St. Louis and LaCrosse encephalitis. Impairedly stored, rimless scrap tires can quickly become very efficient mosquito breeding sites. Ohio EPA’s rules consider the storage of scrap tires in any amount a nuisance, fire hazard and a threat to public health and safety. If the tires are treated and stored in compliance with standards set forth in the rules, the 50 registered scrap tire generators in Geauga County are informed that they are in compliance of its accordingly.

There were three solid waste collection events held in Geauga County in 2006, two for scrap tires, and one each for appliances and household hazardous waste materials. These collection events helped to reduce the amount of solid and hazardous waste material that may have been discarded illegally. Some of the waste materials collected included:

- Scrap Tires—16.8 tons
- Appliances—23,720 lbs
- Freon—94 units
- Municipalities & Townships—57 tons
- Househould Hazardous Waste—17,273 lbs

The three solid waste collection events were helpful in disposing of waste capable of damaging the environment. The Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste District operates a Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Facility at 5138 Enterprise Blvd., Warren, Ohio. This facility operates from Spring to Fall, providing disposal of household hazardous waste for residents. The facility collected and recycled more than 180,000 pounds of household hazardous waste in 2006. The facility will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesdays from May 2 through September 30 and the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. during May, June, July and August, 2007.

Private Water Systems

Geauga County is fortunate to have an abundant supply of ground water. Providing this valuable resource and providing safe drinking water is the goal of the private water system program.

A permit must be obtained prior to drilling, altering or sealing a well. Anyone who performs these services must be registered with the State of Ohio. New wells are inspected and sampled to insure that they comply with the code and that they are free from bacterial contamination. If bacteria is present the well can be disinfected with common household bleach.

In 2006 the Health District issued 544 permits and performed a total of 820 water sample tests and inspections. For more information on the private water systems program please visit the Geauga County Health District Web site.
The Personal Health Services Division of the Geauga County Health District is responsible for maintaining a healthy and prepared community through various programs. Our focus is on prevention, and many of our services are offered at different locations throughout the county, as well as through home visits. In 2006, we had over 7,000 client contacts to carry out these programs. The following is a summary of our various programs and those who are served through them.

### 2007 Children’s Immunization Clinics

Free to Geauga County residents regardless of income, and $5.00 per child, per visit for out of county residents.

#### Chardon
- **Geauga County Health District**
  - 470 Center St., Building 8
  - 2nd Wednesday—9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

#### Middlefield
- **First United Methodist Church**
  - 14995 S. State St. (State Route 608)
  - 4th Monday (except May & Dec.)—9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

#### Middlefield Evening
- **First United Methodist Church**
  - 14995 S. State St. (State Route 608)
  - 3rd Thursday—1:00 PM to 6:00 PM

#### Parkman
- **Parkman Community Center**
  - 16205 Main Market (US Route 422)
  - Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov., Sept. only

#### Russell
- **Russell Fire-Rescue Station**
  - 14810 Chillicothe Rd. (State Route 306)
  - 1st Thursday—9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

#### Troy
- **Troy Community Center**
  - 13950 Main Market (US Route 422)
  - 4th Tuesday—9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

#### Friday Morning Clinic

**Adult Immunizations**

**TB Testing**

**Blood Pressure Screening**

Geauga County Health District
470 Center St., Building 8
Fridays — 8:30 am to 11:00 am

There are no clinics on public holidays. Please check our website or call for a schedule.

### Children’s Services

**Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMH)** — The BCMH program provides early identification, evaluation, referral, and coordination of services for children under 21 years old with handicapping conditions. This program is funded and administered by the Ohio Department of Health and the public health nurses serve as the local contact for families with children in this program. The nurse provides education and information to the families, develops plans of care, and provides advocacy at no charge to families. We currently have approximately 140 families on the BCMH program and, in 2006, over 200 BCMH home visits were made by public health nurses.

**Orthopedic and Neurology Clinics** — The Geauga County public health nurses host quarterly clinics for children up to age 21 years with suspected orthopedic or neurological problems. Pediatric specialists from Rainbow Babies’ and Children’s Hospital perform examinations and schedule follow-ups for these children. There is no charge to the family for having a child seen at the clinic, but an appointment is required. In 2006, 186 children were seen at the eight clinics.

**Help Me Grow/Newborn Home Visits** — The public health nurses from the health department make home visits to newborns and their mothers and infants. This includes an evaluation of the mother’s postpartum recovery, an assessment of the infant’s early adjustment to his new environment, education on parenting, and referrals to community resources. This program is funded by the Family First Council of Geauga County via a grant from the Ohio Department of Health. In 2006, the nurses made 331 newborn home visits.

**Children’s Immunizations** — Clinics for administering children’s immunizations are held in Chardon, Middlefield, South Russell, Parkman, and Troy. Children’s vaccines are free of charge to Geauga County residents and no appointment is needed. The vaccines given at these clinics are supplied by the Ohio Department of Health. In 2006, there were 2,218 children seen at 67 clinics where more than 5,200 vaccinations administered.

**School Services** — The public health nurses work closely with the school nurses in the county, monitoring illness outbreaks and sharing relevant information on vaccines, reportable diseases, and community health issues. In schools with less than 100 students where there is no school nurse, the public health nurse performs vision checks and makes appropriate health care referrals. In 2006, 108 school visits were made by the public health nurses.

**Well Child Services** — Well child clinics are held in Middlefield, twice each month, for children without health insurance and limited financial means. At these clinics, the child receives health screening for vision, hearing, general development, dental, and nutrition. Physical exams are done by a physician or nurse practitioner, vaccinations are updated and the family receives appropriate health education. The nurses at these clinics also perform screening tests for lead levels and hemoglobin when indicated. Done for services are based on income, and no one is denied services due to inability to pay. In 2006, 388 visits were made to the well child clinic.

### Adult Services

**Communicable Disease Investigation** — The reporting of communicable diseases to the local health jurisdiction is mandated by the state of Ohio. These reports come to us from laboratories, hospitals, and physicians. They are handled confidentially. The communicable disease control nurse is then responsible for patient follow-up, contact investigation, and any necessary intervention to prevent further transmission of the disease. She is also involved with disease surveillance in the county to provide early recognition of unexpected diseases or abnormal disease patterns. In 2006, the Health District investigated 275 communicable disease reports.

**Tuberculosis Control** — According to Ohio law, each health jurisdiction is responsible for TB control and containment in the county. This is done through screening of high-risk individuals, assuring that exposed individuals receive appropriate treatment, and providing follow-up and contact investigation. In 2006, we performed 727 TB tests, documented 13 positive reactors, and provided 28 follow-up visits.

**Adult Immunization Services** — Adult immunizations are offered every Friday morning at the Health District office. Besides immunizations, the nursing staff also performs TB testing and free blood pressure screening, as well as free pregnancy tests. This year, some new vaccines have been added, including a live virus vaccine that also protects adults from pertussis (whooping cough), and a vaccine that combines Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B protection into one shot. The schedule for adult immunizations is determined by the price of the vaccine and the cost of administration. No appointment is necessary to be seen at this clinic. In 2006, 350 adult immunizations were given along with 1,770 flu shots.

**Senior Services** — The Geauga County Department on Aging contracts with the Health District nurses to provide blood pressure screening and health promotion activities at the Multi-purpose Senior Center every Thursday morning. The public health nurses also offer free blood pressure screening once a month at the centers in Middlefield, Thompson, West Geauga, and Chagrin Falls Park. In 2006, the nurses provided over 1,100 blood pressure screenings at the senior centers.