**Geauga County General Health District**

**Health District Advisory Council**

Composed of chairpersons of Township Trustees and Mayors of Villages and Cities, oversees the appointment of Board of Health members and reviews reports and finances of the Health District. Frank Gilia, President; Michael Brown, Secretary.

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**Board of Health**

One Board member is appointed annually for a five year term. Board members serve as advocates for public health services and programs. This Board is a quasi-judicial, policy development body tasked with determining, setting and monitoring public health policy. They are responsible for adopting the annual budget and ensuring adequate funding for the Health District.

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**Geauga County General Health District Annual Report**

The Geauga County Health District is dedicated to providing public health services by detecting, educating and preventing personal and environmental health problems in our community.

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**A Note from the Health Commissioner**

Chester Township, Term Expires 2011

Richard Lang

Hambden Township, Term Exp 2009

Melanie Eppich

Chester Township, Term Expires 2012

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Robert K. Weisdack, RS, MA, MPH

Health Commissioner / Environmental Health Director

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Environmental Health Division

Animal Bite Investigation

County Camp & RV Park Inspections

Manufactured Home Park Inspections

Nuisance Complaint Investigations

Plumbing Permits & Inspections

Private Water Well Permits & Inspections

Rabies Prevention & Surveillance

Retail Food Establishment Inspections

Restaurant / Food Service Inspections

Temporary & Mobile Food Service Inspections

School Environmental Inspections

Semi-Public Sewage Certificates & Inspections

Septic Land Application Site Inspections

Sewage Treatment Permits & Inspections

For Sale of Property Permits & Inspections

Solid & Infectious Waste Inspections

Solid Waste & Water Hauler Truck Permits & Inspections

Swimming Pool Inspections

Tattoo & Body Piercing Permits & Inspections

Vending Machine Inspections

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Vital Statistics

Birth Certificates

Death Certificates

Burial Permits

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**Personal Health Services**

(440) 279-1950

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Adult Immunization Clinics

BCMH Visits

Child Immunization Clinics

Communicable Disease Surveillance & Investigations

Health Assessment

Influenza (Flu) Clinics

Health Promotion & Education

HIV & AIDS Education

Maternal & Newborn Home Visits

Senior Clinics

TB Testing & Surveillance

Walk-in Pregnancy Testing

Women, Infants' & Children (WIC)

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Dr. Donald Bowers

Chester Township, Term Expires 2011

J. David Benenati

Chester Township, Term Expires 2011

Richard Lang

Hambden Township, Term Exp 2009

Melanie Eppich

Chester Township, Term Expires 2012

Robert K. Weisdack

Health Commissioner / Environmental Health Director

J. Bradley Moritz, M.D.

Medical Director

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The Personal Health Service division is in the process of re-adjusting programs and scheduling future events. We have and will continue to see a higher demand for services given by Personal Health Services due to the poor economy and the number of people out of work.

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Timothy Goergen

Hambden Township, Term Expires 2013

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Environmental Health Division

(440) 279-1900

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Vital Statistics

(440) 279-1902

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Animal Bite Investigation

County Camp & RV Park Inspections

Manufactured Home Park Inspections

Nuisance Complaint Investigations

Plumbing Permits & Inspections

Private Water Well Permits & Inspections

Rabies Prevention & Surveillance

Retail Food Establishment Inspections

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For Sale of Property Permits & Inspections

Solid & Infectious Waste Inspections

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Swimming Pool Inspections

Tattoo & Body Piercing Permits & Inspections

Vending Machine Inspections

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**Geauga County General Health District Annual Report**

2008

The Geauga County Health District has seen numerous changes take place in 2008 with the anticipation that more are to come. These changes have had a severe impact on the overall operations of the Health District. We have experienced a dramatic reduction in staff, going from 34 staff members to 27. The slow economy we all are experiencing has caused many agencies to rethink many of the traditional ways of how their organizations operate. This Health District has implemented even more cost cutting methods without dramatically decreasing the services we offer to the public.

Once again, the Ohio Department of Health is shifting more of the financial burden onto the backs of the local health districts. Grant funding to the local health districts is being cut by approximately 25% and based on more recent comments from the Governor, even more cuts are on their way. It is imperative that residents are mindful that due to reduced financial resources there is a limit to the number of public health services that can be offered. The Geauga County Health District is fighting and will continue to fight to keep as many public health services for our residents as financially possible, but we must remain cognizant of the fact it takes money to provide the more than 40 services we provide to our residents for free or at a reduced rate.

It appears that in July of 2009 the new sewage law will go into effect. We have been forced to adopt a portion of the newly developed rules and that has created a sharp decline in the number of new sewage permits this department has issued. Combined with significantly less new house development, this has put a strain on the Health District budget. Sewage permits that had previously peaked at 500 installations per year have fallen to 100 in 2008. This drop in permits was anticipated as a possibility for at least the past two years.

Gas well drilling continues to be of great concern to this department and residents throughout Geauga County. We have experienced a serious problem with the development of a gas well in Bainbridge, which affected numerous residential water wells. We can ill afford to allow our precious water supply to be placed in jeopardy due to gas well development. We are trying to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to protecting the resident’s health and safety.

The Personal Health Service division is in the process of re-adjusting programs and scheduling future events. We have and will continue to see a higher demand for services given by Personal Health Services due to the poor economy and the number of people out of work.

One of the biggest emphases for the division is on Public Health Infrastructure development. As part of this grant, we are required to design and implement techniques that will insure community safety in the event of a public health emergency. Such plan development must be multi-jurisdictional to provide adequate protection for the residents. In addition, such plans are now required to be coordinated on a regional basis.

**Visit Us Online at http://www.geaugacountyhealth.org**

Robert K. Weisdack

Health Commissioner
Residential Sewage Treatment

The Geauga County Health District regulates household sewage treatment systems for one, two and three family residences in Geauga County. Approximately 70% of the homes in the county are served by individual household sewage systems. The Health District issued 314 permits for new sewage systems in 2008. This included new homes and replacement systems for existing homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Permits</th>
<th>Type of Sewage System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>Septic tanks followed by leach trenches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-treatment followed by leach trenches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Septic tank to drip distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pre-treatment to drip distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>NPDES/EPA permit to discharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Septic tank/pretreatment to a mound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>Total Permits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sewage permit must be obtained from the Health District prior to the installation or alteration of the sewage system. Prior to issuance of a permit, the health district staff conducts a site visit to evaluate the property. All lots in new subdivisions must be evaluated and approved before any sewage permits are issued. Sewage systems are inspected at the time of installation to assure compliance with the sewage rules.

All homes sold in Geauga County are required to have a point of sale inspection of the sewage system by the Health District. This assures that the system is functioning properly prior to prospective buyers occupying the home.

The department maintains an active nuisance complaint program for sewage and other complaints. Written and signed complaints submitted to this office are investigated. If the complaint is justified, orders will be issued to abate the nuisance.

This office licenses and inspects semi-public sewage systems that treat less than 25,000 gallons of sewage effluent per day. This includes about 140 extended aeration commercial systems and 550 commercial septic tank systems.

Private Water Systems

The majority of our drinking water comes from the vast reservoir of ground water trapped in the rock formations beneath us. Every day, millions of gallons are pumped from these reservoirs or aquifers to supply our residential, commercial and agricultural demands. The regulations require that well drillers and water system contractors obtain a license through the Ohio Department of Health and follow strict guidelines when performing their work. Permits must be obtained from the Geauga County Health District prior to drilling, altering or sealing a well.

Once completed, the newly drilled or altered well is inspected and the water is tested for the presence of bacteria. Statistics indicate that about 20% of the water wells have bacteria in them. This usually occurs when the bacteria are introduced into the well during the drilling process or when work is performed on the system. If bacteria are found, it can be removed from the well by disinfecting it with common household bleach. The water is then re-tested twice to assure that the bacteria are no longer present. In 2008, the Health District issued 181 permits and conducted 518 inspections.

In addition to the bacteria sampling, we can perform scans for numerous chemicals and other potential contaminants through the use of a portable Gas Chromatograph/Mass Spectrometer. Although it is not required, residents may want to consider having this scan performed in order to provide background data for the water well. For more information on the Private Water System program, please visit the Health District Web site at http://www.geaugacountyhealth.org.
Raccoon-Strain Rabies in Geauga County

For the fifth consecutive year, the Geauga County Health District, in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Health, USDA Wildlife Services, and US Centers for Disease Control, along with neighboring local health districts in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Lake, Portage, Summit and Trumbull counties in ongoing efforts to control the spread of raccoon strain rabies. As the case in 2007, there were no positive cases of raccoon-strain rabies found in Geauga County. However, there were four raccoons and three skunks that tested positive for rabies in Lake, and one raccoon and one coyote that tested positive in Trumbull County.

Local health district activities include specimen collection from road-killed wildlife or wildlife that was exposed to humans and pets, and participating in hand ORV baiting. Seventeen specimens processed through the Ohio Department of Health tested negative for the virus. Forty-three districts, processed through USDA Wildlife services tested negative as well. Statewide, more than 1,000 specimens tested negative for the virus with an infection rate of less than ½ percent.

Additionally, there were 55 positive cases of raccoon-strain rabies found in bats in 29 Ohio counties in 2008. Of great concern, 35 of these cases involved human or household pet exposures to the rabid bats.

The Ohio Department of Health conducted two oral rabies vaccinations by airplane and hand delivery over Ashabula, Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga and portions of Portage and Summit Counties in 2008. Registered Sanitarians from the Geauga County Health District assisted by hand baiting that targeted densely populated municipalities.

Because rabies is a fatal disease, the goal of public health is to prevent human exposure to rabies by educating and preventing the disease by anti-rabies treatment if exposure occurs. Throughout the US, thousands of people are successfully treated after being bitten by an animal, even though the bite may be small because they failed to recognize the risk of rabies from the wild animal bites and do not seek medical advice. Most of the recent human rabies cases in the United States have been caused by rabies virus from bats. For the residents of Geauga County, the first line of defense against rabies is to avoid contact with wild animals, sick or injured animals, and animals you do not know. Prevent bats from entering living quarters or areas they encounter humans. Pet vaccinations should be kept current and pets should not be permitted to roam.

If bitten, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately. 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.

Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

Geauga WIC, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, provides nutritious foods, nutrition education and referral services to income eligible pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children up to the age of five. Geauga WIC is also involved in community activities including area health fairs, the annual Kids Fest, and hosts the Diaper Dash at the Great Geauga County Fair. From June to October, the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program supports local farmers by offering Ohio grown fresh fruits and vegetables to our participants.

Nutrition education and counseling is provided by the licensed dietitians on staff. Breastfeeding education and support is provided by an experienced lactation consultant. An emphasis is placed on the benefits of breastfeeding to all participating pregnant women. In addition, 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 convertible car seats and a related child restraint safety class to WIC clients.

WIC services include referrals to prenatal and pediatric health care and other health and human service programs. Special attention is being given to address the increase in childhood obesity by providing nutritional and behavioral intervention, and as well as physician referrals for children identified at a higher risk for health problems. WIC also helps to prevent and control obesity and other health problems associated with having excess weight among pregnant and other at-risk women, infants, and children. Geauga WIC works closely with the network of local partners, referral services and partnership with various Ohio Department of Health programs.

WIC offers three convenient clinic locations for Geauga County residents in Chardon, Middlefield and Chagrin Falls. More information is available online or call the WIC office at (440) 279-1936.

Solid Waste Program

The Geauga County Health District works in cooperation with the Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste District and Ohio EPA to inspect scrap tire generators, large and small infectious waste generators, closed landfills, compost sites, solid waste transporters and solid waste nuisance sites. Great emphasis has been placed on the enforcement of solid waste laws concerning private and public generators of scrap tires. Audits of Scrap tire generators in Geauga County are inspected to ensure that the scrap tires are stored and disposed of in accordance with the rules.

During one appliance recycling event in April, three 40-cubic yard containers were filled with Freon removed from 186 appliances and 184 vehicles collected. A household hazardous waste collection event is scheduled for April 25, 2009 and an appliance collection event on April 18, 2009 at the Geauga County Engineers yard - 12665 Merritt Road, Chardon. Some of the waste materials collected included:

- Scrap Tires - 7,700 Geauga County ........ 76.06 tons
- Scrap Tires - 32,000 Trumbull County... 316.39 tons
- Vehicles recycled........................................... 2,605
- Waste .......................................................... 335,779 lbs
- Lead acid batteries ....................................... 7,626 lbs
- Electronics ................................................... 107,837 lbs

The Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste District operates a household Hazardous Waste Recycling Facility at 5138 Enterprise Blvd., Warren, OH. The Geauga County Health District operates a household Hazardous Waste Recycling Facility at 5138 Enterprise Blvd., Warren, OH. For more information on the Geauga County residence in Chardon, Middlefield and Chagrin Falls. More information is available online or call the WIC office at (440) 279-1936.
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. The following is a summary of our various programs and those who are served through them.

Children’s Services

Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMH): is an Ohio Department of Health (ODH) program with the goal of assuring that children with special health care needs receive comprehensive, coordinated care. Public health nurses act as the local contact for families and provide early identification, evaluation, and referral of children. The Title III/Community Health Centers, with elevated lead levels, and providing educational and medical recommendations. This information is shared with ODH. Lead level screenings are provided to children at well child clinics and individually in high-risk situations. In 2008, the nurses completed 132 lead screenings.

Immunization Clinics for Children: The Personal Health Services (PHS) division holds children’s immunizations clinics at many locations in Geauga County. These are walk-in clinics that require no appointment. Immunizations are free of charge to Geauga County residents. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) collaborates on the licensing and provides guidance for these clinics. In 2008, we held 66 clinics where we administered 5,886 immunizations to 2,289 children.

Lead Program: The Personal Health Services (PHS) division and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) collaborate to provide prevention and remediation services to children with Elevated Blood Lead (EBL). Public health nurses conduct case management activities, including an individualized, family-centered approach with elevated lead levels, and providing educational and medical recommendations. This information is shared with ODH. Lead level screenings are provided to children at well child clinics and individually in high-risk situations. In 2008, the nurses completed 132 lead screenings.

Maternal/Newborn Home Visiting: Public health nurses visit new mothers and their families at their home visits are voluntary and free of charge; they include an evaluation of the mother’s recovery, assessment of the infant’s early growth and development, information on a variety of preventive health issues for the family, and referrals to other community agencies and resources. Funding for this service is made available through the Geauga County Family First Council, who administer a grant from the Ohio Department of Health called “Help Me Grow.” In 2008, the nurses made 291 home visits to families in the county, and collected blood specimens on 16 newborns for screening.

Neurology Clinic: The Personal Health Services (PHS) division provides public health nurses at three (3) clinics per year in cooperation with a Neurologist that is employed by the Geauga County Health District. In 2008, the nurses assisted 65 patients, and family members, visiting with their children who have special health needs.

School Services: The public health nurses have served the children of Geauga County schools with less than 100 students. Currently, there are 42 schools in Geauga County representing 1,700 children. In 2008, nurses made 114 school visits. The public health nurses network with school nurses at public and private schools, students, and information regarding child health issues. Public health nurses meet with public school nurses twice a year to collaborate on related issues.

SIDS Home Visits: The health district provides public health nurses that visit families who have lost an infant unexpectedly. During these visits, nurses provide support, information, and grief counseling to families, providing the opportunity to express their feelings in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

Vision Program: The health district partners with the Prevent Blindness Ohio to provide their Vision Service Plan to qualifying families of eligible children without insurance who do not qualify for federal aid. Public health nurses can identify a family in need and arrange for this service. This plan provides an eye examination by an licensed optometrist who can prescribe glasses, contact lenses, vision therapy, or vision treatment. There were 193 children served in 2008.

Well Child Services: The health district hold well child clinics two or three times a month in Middlefield for children whose families are uninsured and meet certain financial guidelines. Public health nurses provide an examination and screening to children for developmental, dental, lead, anemia, vision, hearing, and nutrition. Health education is provided to family members. A physical examination is performed by a licensed physician. The public health nurses give immunizations. This service is supported by funding from the Child and Family Health Services grant administered by the Ohio Department of Health that served 388 children in 2008.

Communicable Disease Investigation: The Personal Health Services (PHS) division provides surveillance of communicable diseases reported in Geauga County in compliance with the Ohio Department of Health Infectious Disease reporting requirements and CDC recommendations. The disease surveillance specialist and public health nurses perform investigations on diseases that pose a public health threat due to their communicability or virulence. PHS collaborates with the Environmental Health (EH) division when a food borne illness outbreak is suspected. In addition, the PHS provides information and data collection for any possible or confirmed vector-borne disease in collaboration with EH. Included in this category of diseases are West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever, to name just a few. In 2008, the health district investigated 253 reports of communicable disease.

Emergency Preparedness: The health district employs a Disease Surveillance Specialist to prepare for public health emergencies. The specialist works with local and state personnel to establish policies and procedures designed to protect Geauga County citizens. The specialist collaborates with neighboring counties in northeast Ohio to prepare for potential manmade or natural disasters. Funding is provided through the federal Public Health Infrastructure (PHI) grant administered by the Ohio Department of Health.

Immunization/Blood Pressure Clinics for Adults: The Personal Health Services (PHS) division holds clinics every Friday at the health district office for adult immunizations and blood pressure screenings by public health nurses; students, and information regarding child health issues. Public health nurses meet with public school nurses twice a year to collaborate on related issues.

SIDS Home Visits: The health district provides public health nurses that visit families who have lost an infant unexpectedly. During these visits, nurses provide support, information, and grief counseling to families, providing the opportunity to express their feelings in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

Maternity Survey: The Personal Health Services sends a representative to the annual maternity licensure survey of the local hospitals and birthing center that is conducted by the Ohio Department of Health. The Board of Health is presented with the survey results to review for approval or denial of re-licensure for each of these facilities. The PHS is also responsible for investigating any complaints received regarding the maternity facilities.

Senior Services: The health district sent public health nurses to provide services for 400 adult day care clients at the Geauga Multi-purpose Senior Center. This is funded by the Title III/Community Block Grant managed by the Board of Aging. Nurses give presentations on various topics to the general senior population at the center on a weekly basis. There were 367 presentations performed at the GMSC in 2008.

Tuberculosis Control: In accordance with Ohio law, the health district promotes Tuberculosis (TB) control and containment in Geauga County by screening high-risk populations, contact investigation, maintaining a register of positive reactors, and following through with suitable treatment for appropriate individuals. Nurses perform routine TB tests at the health district office and during visits at residential facilities. In 2008, the PHS nurses administered 367 TB tests, and had 3 TB reactors.

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

Chardon

Geauga County Health District

470 Center St., Building 8

1st Wednesday — 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Chardon Evening

Geauga County Health District

470 Center St., Building 8

2nd Thursday — 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Middlefield

First United Methodist Church

14999 S. State (State Route 60)

2nd Wednesday (except November)

9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Middlefield Evening

First United Methodist Church

14999 S. State (State Route 60)

3rd Thursday — 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Newbury

Grace Evangelical Bible Church

14951 Auburn Rd.

4th Wednesday — 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov. only

Parkman

Parkman Community Center

16295 Main Market (US Route 42)

3rd Wednesday — 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Jan., Mar., May, Sep., Nov. only

Troy

Troy Community Center

13950 Main Market (US Route 42)

3rd Wednesday — 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Feb., April, June, Aug., Oct., Dec. only

Personal Health Services Summary 2008

Communicable Disease Inv. .......................... 253

Tuberculosis Tests Administered .................. 367

Help Me Grow/Newborn Visits .......................... 299

Well Child Service Visits .......................... 1,247

Amish School Visits .................................. 114

BCMH Home Visits .................................. 147

Neurology Clinic Visits .......................... 61

Adult Immunizations Admin .................. 350

Children’s Immunizations Clinic .................. 66

Children’s Immunizations Admin .......... 5,886

Children Immunized .......................... 2,289

Senior Clinic Visits at Sr. Centers .............. 367

Senior Clinic HD Office .......................... 56

Flu Shots Administered .......................... 2,003

Pregnancy Testing .......................... 3

2009 Children’s Immunization Clinics

Free to Geauga County residents regardless of income. Out of county residents are charged $5.00 per child.