

ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
JUNE 22, 2009
5:00 P.M.
ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PRESENT:

Paul F. Burroughs, Esq., Chair
Richard A. Ortoski, D.O.
Johnie Atkinson
Hank Hill, M.D.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Glass
Doug Range
Rich Knecht
Janet Vogt

Carol Loll
R. Anthony Snow, M.D.
Pamela Brunner

GUESTS:

Rev. Nettie Smith, PartnerSHIP
for a Healthy Community
Thomas Falasca, D.O.,
Erie County Medical Society

Danielle Peirce, Intern,
Slippery Rock University

I. Call To Order: Chairman, Paul Burroughs, Esq., called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m., and welcomed board and guests. Board members accepted the minutes as recorded for March 23, 2009, on a motion by Johnie Atkinson, seconded by Richard Ortoski, D.O.

II. Public Comments: None.

III. Tires-to-Energy Plant:

- City Council Resolution, Readings, PADOH Status – Erie County Board of Health (BOH); the Erie County Medical Society, and the American Lung Association were requested by Erie City Council to review and comment on the Erie Renewable Energy (ERE) Inhalation Risk Assessment Report sent to the PA DOH and the EPA. The ERE report presents findings on EPA regulated emissions only, and was not generated by an independent agency. The PADOH is waiting for recent modeling data/scenarios through the PADEP, and will then present an evaluation and assessment to PADEP for their review and consideration regarding ERE. Board concerns regarding the ERE report are lack of unregulated emissions testing, temperature variables, absence of information requested of ERE by the BOH, pollutants, and the format and submission of the report. At the request of the Board, Andy will prepare comments for the next City County meeting where Paul Burroughs, Esq., Board Chairman, will present the BOH position on the ERE report. Thomas Falasca, D.O., of the Erie County Medical Society stated that the Medical Society's position statement regarding ERE's report will also be presented at Erie City Council's meeting on July 1, 2009.

IV. Director's Report:

- Health Forum at Allegheny College – Congresswoman Kathy Dahlkemper will hold a Health Forum at Allegheny College on June 29, 2009, to discuss health reform. Agenda items include: key elements of health reform; main concerns of legislation; comments and suggestions on health reform. Andy Glass and Rev. Nettie Smith will present the collaboration efforts of the Healthy Erie Project and the practical experience of working with other agencies.
- Neighborhood Watch – Contact was made to the Erie County Dept. of Health (ECDH) regarding animal control and feral cats by a local Neighborhood Watch group with concerns regarding the number of feral animals, risks to people's health, and rabies. The Board reaffirms that the ECDH is not and will not become involved in animal control issues.
- Erie Community Foundation (ECF) Advisory Panel – Health Care Advisory Panel will meet on July 8, 2009. Representatives from area hospitals, LECOM and Andy will be in attendance.
- ECDH Sources of Funding for 2009 – ECDH overall budget for 2009 reflects only 16% of funding is provided by County taxpayer dollars. Other sources of funding are Federal-3%; State Grants-47%; User Fees & Donations-6%; and PADOH Acts 315/12-28%.
- PartnerSHIP for a Healthy Community – Rev. Nettie Smith, Executive Director, PartnerSHIP for a Healthy Community presented an overview of the PartnerSHIP. The PartnerSHIP is a not for profit 501(c)3 organization comprised of members from every agency in Erie County that has or provides a health care agenda. Its vision is "To eliminate barriers to wellness for the residents of Erie County". The PartnerSHIP

uses the data and information from the ECDH Community Health Status Report to focus initiatives of all providers on identified health needs within Erie County. (*see attached*)

- V. H1/N1 Pandemic Preparedness:** Rich Knecht, Manager, Public Health Preparedness, presented an overview of the status of H1/N1 (swine flu). World cases total 45,000, 180 deaths; USA cases are 22,000, 87 deaths; in Pennsylvania 950 cases, 3 deaths. Erie County has two (2) confirmed cases as of 6/22/09. Age groups most affected by H1/N1 are 5 – 17 year olds. MDA camps have closed for summer 2009, to avoid possible exposure to the flu amongst the children. World Health Organization (WHO) classifies H1/N1 as Declaration Phase 6 as an indicator of the spread of the disease not the severity of disease. US Pandemic Severity Index is level 2, which is based on a scale of 1-5. Vaccines for fall distribution are being developed, however, it will take up to 9 months to vaccinate all who want the shot and it is not know at this time if fall flu vaccines will consist of three (3) shots. ECDH Preparedness has a supply of 180,000 syringes to assist with the administration of shots. ECDH staff is working with schools, health professionals, businesses and social services to keep the community abreast of updates regarding H1/N1. As part of a collaborative effort with ECDH, the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health is sponsoring two (2) workshops on pandemic preparedness: July 22 - “A Workshop for Business and Industry”, Edinboro University of PA; August 18 - “Legal Preparedness for NW PA”, Bayfront Convention Center. (*attachments*)
- VI. Safe Communities:** Janet Vogt, Manager, Health Education, stated that ECDH and the Safe Kids Coalition is pursuing the prospect of Erie becoming a “Safe Community” through “Safe Communities America” a designation of the National Safety Council. The initial meeting of local agencies supporting this effort reinforces the collaborative efforts within the community to provide a healthy and safe environment for the residents of Erie County. If Erie is awarded the “Safe Community” designation, it would be the first “Safe Community” within Pennsylvania. (*see attached*)
- VII. Old Business:**
- Beaches – Doug Range, Director, Environmental Services, discussed the recent swimming advisories for beaches on Presque Isle (PI). Due to recent heavy rains, which cause run-off, some of the beaches are in an Advisory state. Rapid detection analysis (qPCR) enables the Park Manager to know E.coli levels within 4-6 hours of testing and provide confirmation of presumptive beach advisories or restrictions. The EPA goal is to have no more than 5% of the beaches under an advisory or restriction during the summer swimming season; PI beach advisories were 2.5% in 2008, well below the EPA recommendation. Dr. Mauro, Mercyhurst College, has studied Lake Erie watersheds to distinguish between human and animal E.coli. The headwaters of Elk Creek in McKean Township and 4 mile creek in Greene Township area have been identified as having a significant human E. coli bacteria load.
 - Rabies Baiting in Erie County – Oral rabies baiting will take place August 10, 2009, in Erie City, North East, Edinboro, and Union City; all other areas of Erie County will receive aerial rabies baiting. Oral rabies baiting is steadily declining in Erie County due to the aerial baiting process. If you have heavy infestation of raccoons in your area, contact the Environmental division at ECDH (814) 451-6700 for possible oral rabies baiting in your area. Rabies baiting is provided from Erie County to the Gulf of Mexico by the US Dept of Agriculture.
 - Ticks (Lyme Disease) – Tick identification requests, to date, have increased 36% over 2008. Of the 69 tick specimens provided to ECDH in 2009, 61 have been positively identified as Deer Ticks, or 88%. Individuals are told if the tick they submitted was a Deer Tick. Deer Ticks are now being seen in southern Erie County, where in the past their range was limited to the Lake Erie shoreline north of Route 20. PI has a 53% rate of Deer Ticks with the Lyme Disease spirochete.
 - Food Inspection Reporting System – ECDH staff have developed and critiqued an automated food inspection and reporting system. Once the system is complete, it will allow environmental inspectors to upload restaurant inspections live on the ECDH website for public view at www.ecdh.org. Web links to the ECDH website will also be available on WICU-Channel 12 and at www.goerie.com.
 - Environmental Fee Schedule – Environmental fees for food inspections have remained stagnant since 2004. County Council has been presented an updated cost based fee schedule for review and approval. If approved, the new revised fee schedule would increase County revenue by \$89,000 per year. 2009 should see an increase of approximately \$17,000.

VIII. New Business:

- Erie Coke Plant – Paul Burroughs, Esq, spoke of the emissions regulations failures in Battery 1 at Erie Coke. Battery 2 most likely is also not in regulatory compliance. Battery usefulness is approx 30-40 years; these batteries are up to 66 years old. PA-DEP and EPA received emissions reports for Battery 1 only; Battery 2 remained unregulated. These factors with Erie Coke Plant are cause for caution in relation to the ERE Tires-to-Energy Plant for Erie County. Andy Glass will make contact with Kelly Burch and John Guth, PA-DEP and request their attendance at the next BOH meeting on September 28, 2009.

IX. Board Updates:

A. Health Education Division:

Dental Sealant Grant: Janet Vogt reported the PADOH Dental Sealant Grant will not be renewed with ECDH due to lack of area school participation with the program. Through grant funding, ECDH contracted with Community Health Net (CHN), who along with ECDH staff, worked to enlist area schools to accept free dental sealant application for students. A mobile dental van, already in existence, has been providing these services to school students. Through no fault of ECDH or CHN, the number of students to be reached was not met as required in the Dental Sealant Grant. Current funding will expire on June 30, 2009.

Extreme Home Makeover: ECDH Health Education staff will participate in a health fair on July 1, 2009, as part of the community involvement/outreach in relation to the Home Makeover program. Some ECDH Education staff also offered to volunteer their time to help with the construction of the home for the selected Erie family.

Smoking During Pregnancy: Media campaign directed and sponsored by PADOH will target smoking during pregnancy. This social marketing campaign will be used to raise awareness of the affects of smoking on the fetus and to assist with quitting smoking. Smoking during pregnancy attributes to low birth weight, miscarriages, stillbirths, and SIDS. Some TV ads may be controversial. Radio ads will also air during the campaign.

X. Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m. on a motion by Richard A. Ortoski, D.O., seconded by Hank Hill, M.D.

Respectfully submitted, Pamela K. Brunner, Recording Secretary

The next Health Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, SEPTEMBER 28, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.