



ALLEN COUNTY COMBINED HEALTH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

---November/December 2007---

At a glance facts:

Year to Date Statistics
(As of October 31, 2007)

- **Immunizations given: 14,262**
- **Child Health Clinic visits: 994**
- **Family Planning Program visits: 5,012**
- **HIV Tests given: 1,009**
- **Tuberculosis Tests given: 1,559**
- **Reportable Communicable Diseases: 816 total**
 - **0 cases of Class A1 diseases**
Diseases of major public health concern needing immediate response, e.g. human rabies, meningococcal disease
 - **51 cases of Class A2 diseases**
Diseases of public health concern needing timely response, e.g. E.Coli 0157:H7, West Nile Virus, TB
 - **589 cases of Class A3 diseases**
Diseases of significant public health concern, e.g. STD's, Food Borne illnesses
 - **56 cases of Class B diseases**
Diseases tracked for trending purposes, e.g. influenza (flu), chicken pox
 - **120 cases of Class C diseases**
Diseases of concern when seen in multiples, e.g. scabies and staph infections
- **Number of births filed: 2,177**
- **Number of deaths filed: 1,106**
- **WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program monthly average caseload: 3,860**
- **Environmental Division Field Inspections: 7,800**

Staff working to prevent Staph

Staphylococcus Aureus, most often referred to as Staph, is a bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Some staph bacteria are resistant to antibiotics. Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a type of Staph that is resistant to antibiotics. MRSA infections have grabbed the headlines and made us all aware of the importance of managing infections.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most frequently among persons in hospitals and healthcare facilities such as nursing homes and dialysis centers who have weakened immune systems. However, Staph and MRSA can also cause illness in persons outside of hospitals and healthcare facilities. MRSA infections acquired by people who have not recently been hospitalized nor had a medical procedure are known as "community acquired MRSA infections." Most infections occur through direct physical contact of the staphylococci with a break in the skin (cut or scrape). Inanimate objects, such as clothing or sports equipment, bed linens, or furniture, may also be a source of infection when they become soiled with wound drainage and a non-infected person then comes into contact with the contaminated object.

The staff of the Allen County Health Department is committed to preventing the spread of MRSA by promoting good hygiene habits to decrease the frequency of this infection. The Health Department actively educates the community by providing the necessary tools such as fact sheets and hand washing posters. Some of the steps we've taken to better inform residents about MRSA include:

- Coaches clinics for over 400 coaches since 2005
- Educational offerings for Allen County public school administrators
- Informational mailing to all private school administrators in Allen County

Protect Yourself

Handwashing is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick from other people's germs, such as staph.

Wet your hands under running water. Add soap and rub hands together, front and back, for 20 seconds. Rinse, and then use paper towels to dry your hands.





Give Thanks...for safe food

Public health departments help assure that the food we eat is safe. You know that the quality of the food is good because your local health department inspectors routinely monitor their operations to ensure that the proper standards are met.

The Allen County Health Department inspects over 500 food service operations that prepare and serve meals, and nearly 200 retail food establishments that sell food items from grocery stores and carry-outs. Approximately 2,300 inspections were conducted during 2006.

The Ohio Public Health Council adopts the rules to be followed by all licensed facilities in the state. These rules are called the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code. Inspections and enforcement are based on these rules. Ohio's Uniform Food Safety Code is based on the Federal FDA Model Regulations used across the country.

Inspectors in Ohio must be Registered Sanitarians who meet the educational, work experience and testing requirements of the Ohio Sanitarian Registration Board. Allen County Health Department employs eight Registered Sanitarians.

Licensed facilities are classified by their level of risk. Risks are identified by menu, food preparation methods and populations served. Risk classifications are then used to determine the number and type of inspections a facility will receive. Most food operations receive between one and four routine inspections per year.



The Smoke-Free Workplace Act: One year later

Last November, Ohio voters passed Issue 5, creating Ohio's indoor smoking ban under a new chapter of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) effective December 7, 2006. This new law requires "public places" and "places of employment" be smoke free.

Rules for enforcement were finalized this spring. The rules further defined the law and enforcement by outlining the responsibilities of proprietors and individuals. They clarify the posting requirements for signs, outline due process for proprietors and individuals, and set fines and penalties for violations.

In May, the Allen County Health Department began enforcing the law as the designee in Allen County for the Ohio Department of Health.

Smoke-Free Workplace Enforcement Activity

Number of	Allen County Year to Date Totals
Reported complaints	190
Reported businesses	95
Investigations completed	64
Dismissals	57
Violations/Warning Letters sent	7
Fines imposed	0



Allen County Health Department

David L. Rosebrock, MPH, Health Commissioner

219 East Market Street

P.O. Box 1503

Lima, Ohio 45802-1503

419-228-4457 Information Line – 419-228-INFO (4636)

<http://www.allencountyhealthdepartment.org>

Protecting the Health of Allen County