your public health department
su Departamento de Salud

2008 Annual Report
HEALTHCARE HELPLINE
512-248-3252 OR 1-800-890-6296

CLINICS

CEDAR PARK
350 Discovery Blvd., Suite 102
Cedar Park, TX 78613
Nursing 512-260-4240
WIC 512-260-4241

GEORGETOWN
100 West 3rd St.
Georgetown, TX 78626
Nursing 512-943-3640
WIC 512-943-3680
Communicable Disease 512-943-3660

ROUND ROCK
211 Commerce Blvd.
Round Rock, TX 78664
Nursing 512-248-3257, Suite 109
WIC 512-248-3254, Suite 115

TAYLOR
115 West 6th St.
Taylor, TX 76574
Nursing 512-238-2121/512-352-4121
WIC 512-238-2109/512-352-4109

Visit your public health department online at www.wcchd.org
Administration office located in the old jail at 312 Main Street in Georgetown, Texas

VISION

Healthy people thriving in healthy communities in Williamson County.

MISSION

The Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD), in partnership with communities, protects and promotes the health of the people of Williamson County.

WCCHD VALUES STATEMENT

WCCHD employees commit to:

- Act honestly and ethically
- Show respect toward each other and the public we serve
- Support, educate, and partner with the public we serve to achieve our mission and vision
- Promote a positive work environment through teamwork, good communication, and continuous learning

WCCHD will take reasonable steps to provide language services to participating clients with limited English proficiency and/or hearing impairments, as needed. This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.
WCCHD Funding Sources

WCCHD’s funding comes from a variety of sources including state contracts, Williamson County contributions, client service fees, city contributions, Medicaid Cost Claiming and other sources.

See chart below.

* In addition to these funds, Williamson County contributes facilities, utilities, janitorial and maintenance services, payroll processing, administration of the employee benefits program, workers’ compensation insurance, vehicle insurance, and telephone/computer network support.

** The city of Leander’s contribution is a voluntary contribution as a non-member government.
HEALTH DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Your public health department has provided public health services to Williamson County since 1943. Currently 95 full time, part time, and hourly employees serve county residents through offices located in Cedar Park, Georgetown, Round Rock, and Taylor.

In 1989, what was formerly the Williamson County Health Department became the Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD)—a separate governmental entity under Texas law. The Williamson County Commissioners Court along with the governing bodies of Cedar Park, Georgetown, Round Rock, and Taylor signed a cooperative agreement which created the district. The cooperative agreement was amended and restated in 2007 with the cities of Liberty Hill and Hutto joining the district.

Board of Health Directors

The WCCHD Board of Health is the administrative authority for the health district. Member cities and the Williamson County Commissioners Court appoint citizen representatives to serve on the Board. The seven voting Board directors serve without compensation for staggered three-year terms. The WCCHD Executive Director is a non-voting member of the Board. The Board meets every two months and meetings are open to the public. In 2008, Mary Faith Sterk and Robert Stluka represented Williamson County on the Board. Katherine M. Galloway represented the city of Cedar Park. Kerry Russell represented the city of Georgetown. Arlen Zander represented the city of Round Rock and served as the Chair of the Board of Health. Pamela Sanford represented the city of Taylor. According to the district's cooperative agreement, Liberty Hill and Hutto have one representative for both cities since they each have a population of less than 15,000. Florence Winkler served as their representative.
Health District Executive Director & Local Health Authority

James K. Morgan, MD, MPH, serves as the Executive Director and Health Authority for WCCHD. Dr. Morgan is board-certified in General Preventive Medicine/Public Health. He has many years of experience in public health, having served for almost twenty years with the state as a clinician and Regional Medical Director for Texas Department of State Health Services prior to coming to WCCHD in October 2007. In 2008 Dr. Morgan served on several county and regional committees, workgroups, task forces and advisory groups. He also served as an Assistant Professor in Health Policy and Management with the Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health and as a preceptor for two MPH students who completed practicum work at WCCHD in 2008.

As a physician, Dr. Morgan serves as Local Health Authority for Williamson County. By Texas statute, a Local Health Authority (LHA) is a physician appointed to administer state laws and local ordinances relating to public health. As part of his LHA role, Dr. Morgan also assisted in emergency preparedness and response activities and served as a consultant physician on communicable disease issues.

From James K. Morgan, MD, MPH

“I am honored to have been of service to the people of Williamson County and the Board of Health as Executive Director and Local Health Authority for WCCHD in 2008. The County and member cities of the Health District have provided outstanding support to the District and to me personally. It has been a pleasure to serve alongside the dedicated staff of the District and the many outstanding county and city officials I have worked with.”
“In 2008, WCCHD initiated new partnerships and collaborations with a number of other organizations and governmental entities. We explored the possibilities for integrating public health program elements with academic medicine and community health service providers in the county. We re-focused our efforts on population-based services that complement the increased availability of primary and specialty care services being provided through other community-based organizations.”

“2009 will present many new challenges as the population of the county continues to grow and new ideas for integration of public health and medical care services take shape. WCCHD will continue the tradition of excellence and innovation that it has become known for across the state.”

James K. Morgan, MD, MPH
In 2006, the WCCHD Board of Health established a semi-annual employee recognition award named in memory and honor of Scott D. Evans. Mr. Evans died in 2006. He was the first chairperson of the Board of Health when the health department was reorganized as a district. Mr. Evans served almost 10 years on the Board of Health. Co-workers nominate each other for the Scott D. Evans award and the Board of Health makes the final selection.

In April 2008, Sandi Halstead-Bohac, a breastfeeding peer counselor with the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Community Nutrition division, received the Scott D. Evans award. WCCHD staff members who nominated her for the award stated that they admired Ms. Halstead-Bohac’s can do attitude, quick wit, and passion for public health. Ms. Halstead-Bohac is often the calming voice to many a new mom faced with breastfeeding concerns or problems.

WCCHD employee Gayle Lewis received the second 2008 Scott D. Evans award in October. Ms. Lewis, a licensed social worker and Certified Information and Referral Specialist, is the lead specialist on the Healthcare Helpline with the Community Health Education and Social Services division. Due to the nature of the calls she receives, Ms. Lewis is challenged to handle unusual problems almost everyday requiring creativity, energy, compassion and patience. Covering a broad range of programs, Ms. Lewis performs integrated eligibility screening efficiently and effectively, greeting each caller warmly and courteously. If callers are not eligible for the usual medical assistance programs, she does what she can to facilitate access to other resources.
Cynthia Guerrero, Director for the Community Health Education and Social Services division, was recognized as one of only three recipients of the 2008 Outstanding Employee Recognition award presented by Williamson County during National County Government Week. Ms. Guerrero was recognized for her commitment to public health, innovative approach to the district’s work, and excellent service to protect and promote the health of the people of Williamson County.
INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

The mission of the Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD), in partnership with communities, is to protect and promote the health of the people of Williamson County. WCCHD professionals work every day to:

• Engage communities to identify and solve health problems;
• Provide people information they need to make healthy choices;
• Help people receive health services, including health promotion and disease prevention services;
• Protect people from health problems and health hazards;
• Enforce public health laws and regulations; and
• Assess and monitor the health status of the residents of the county.

The public health services profiled in this report help maintain healthy communities throughout Williamson County.
Education and community-based health promotion are crucial to maximize the efforts of staff to prevent disease, promote healthy lifestyles, and protect residents from health threats. Information and education about healthy living and good nutrition are more important than ever as the county, state, and nation confront trends of increasing overweight and obesity in children and adults as well as the related increases in incidence of chronic diseases such as diabetes.

Every program at WCCHD includes education. Every WCCHD employee spends time informing county residents about health and health services. The community and individuals benefit from WCCHD education and health promotion efforts related to:

- Healthy living;
- Preventing disease through good health practices and immunizations;
- Preparing for and responding to emergencies;
- Community resources for personal health care;
- Prenatal and diabetes care;
- Behavioral health risks in the community;
- Construction practices that mitigate environmental damage; and
- Food safety.

Stacy Schweitzer provides immunization information at an outreach event.
Community-wide Health Education and Promotion 2008 Highlights

For six years running, WCCHD has hosted a well-attended free Children’s Health Festival in partnership with the Round Rock Express at the United Heritage Center at the Dell Diamond. The March 8, 2008, festival drew more than 1,300 attendees. At the event families learned about resources for underinsured and uninsured children, health and safety, and good nutrition. Thirty-eight exhibitors distributed information. The vendors represented a cross-section of organizations that included groups that had participated for several years as well as new ones. Several radio stations also joined the festival and provided music and giveaways. The festival continues to grow in attendance. Exhibitor and vendor participation has also grown each year.

Throughout 2008, WCCHD staff disseminated information about services such as childhood and adult immunizations, health education classes, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program participation at more than 10 health fairs.

WCCHD hosted the fifth annual Williamson County School and Public Health Nurses Conference in August 2008. School nurses from every independent school district in Williamson County attended as well as WCCHD public health nurses. Nurses learned about the latest immunization requirements for children. Information on reportable communicable diseases and disease outbreaks was shared. There were also presentations about local asthma programs for children and the correlation between physical and mental health.

The WCCHD website is an excellent source for general and county-specific public health information. The WCCHD website welcomed more than 36,711 unique visitors in 2008.

WCCHD works closely with print, radio, and television media to promote public health initiatives and to inform the public about public health threats. In 2008, WCCHD issued 25 press releases and responded to approximately 30 media requests for information and interviews.

WCCHD website: www.wcchd.org
HEALTHY NUTRITION

WCCHD promotes healthy nutrition in a number of ways. The WIC program, the gardening program, healthy cooking classes, and diabetes classes/support groups all offer community members information in a fun environment to make the dietary changes they may need.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AND CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Stacy Schweitzer 512-943-3645 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Williamson County and Cities Health District Says, Don’t Wait, Vaccinate

July 21, 2008 (Williamson County) –

The end of summer is just around the corner and that means it is time to think about “back to school immunizations.” Not only are immunizations required for your child to attend school, they also protect you and your family from contagious and sometimes fatal diseases.

The Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD) encourages caregivers to contact their child’s primary health care provider to ensure all immunizations are up to date. The immunization requirements for kindergarten through 12th grade for the 2008-2009 school year are posted on the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) immunization website: http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/region7/documents/ImmunizationRequirementsquickref08-09.pdf.

Sample Press Release
The WIC program is a federally-funded program coordinated by DSHS and administered in the county by WCCHD. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, help accessing health care, and food vouchers to women who are pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding, as well as infants and children less than five years of age. Eligible clients have an income at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For example, in 2008 a family of four could have an annual gross income of up to $39,220 and meet the WIC income guidelines. The family would still need to meet residency and nutritional risk criteria to qualify. Nutrition education is provided at each WIC client visit and through several venues including interactive cooking classes, facilitated discussions, informative videos, self-paced and internet-based nutrition modules, and one-on-one counseling with a WIC registered dietitian, nutritionist, or nurse.

The WIC program also includes a breastfeeding peer counseling program. WIC peer counselors are WIC mothers who have successfully breastfed and have gone through extensive training. The peer counselors offer services at WCCHD clinics and provide phone consultation as needed. WIC continues to have great breastfeeding success with clients. Approximately 80% percent of infants born to WCCHD WIC mothers during 2008 were breastfed at or before the time of the baby’s first WIC appointment.

Food benefits are given to WIC participants as an incentive to receive nutrition education. The food benefits are funded by the federal government and are redeemable at local grocery stores for healthy foods such as milk, eggs, cheese, cereal, beans, and fruit juice. In June 2008, the WCCHD WIC Program went from a voucher system to an electronic benefits system or EBT, in which food benefits are loaded onto a “smart chip” on an EBT card.

In 2008, $4,509,262.87 in food voucher redemptions were paid to Williamson County grocers. Eligible WIC recipients also receive Farmers’ Market vouchers for locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. During 2008, 5,668 sets of Farmers’ Market vouchers (each set worth $10 in fresh fruits and vegetables) were issued to WIC program participants. WIC provides services at WIC clinics in Cedar Park, Georgetown, Round Rock, and Taylor as well as at the Bartlett Head Start program.
Community Gardening

Gardening and cooking programs teach the value of growing and eating fresh vegetables and fruits every day. WCCHD manages the Heritage Community Garden in Georgetown and the Taylor Community Garden, but the impact in the community goes well beyond the physical gardens.

Some highlights of the WCCHD gardening program, led by the WCCHD horticulturist, include:

• Community members can adopt plots at both gardens managed by WCCHD. In 2008, all 101 plots available at the gardens were adopted. WCCHD leads monthly community gardens meetings. Gardeners with plots at the community gardens donated more than 1500 pounds of fresh organic produce to the local food pantry.

• 22 Gardening 101 classes were taught with an average attendance of 15 participants in each class.

• As a result of WCCHD Expert Gardener classes, 11 new graduates were certified.

• The Expert Gardener Association of Williamson County (EGAWC) was created by people who were certified as expert gardeners through the WCCHD expert gardener classes. The group has 37 members. The association is incorporated and is tax exempt with a 501(c)(3) status. WCCHD staff made 5 educational presentations to EGAWC and 15 presentations to other clubs and organizations in the county in 2008.

• WCCHD and several volunteers hosted 12 field trips at Heritage Community Garden.

• During 2008, 32 people volunteered nearly 1,146 hours of their time maintaining WCCHD community gardens.

• CDC toured Heritage Community Garden and extended an invitation to WCCHD staff to give a presentation in Chicago at the PHHS Block Grant Summit.
Healthy Cooking Classes

WCCHD’s From the Garden to the Table (FTGTT) series of classes are free and teach participants how to prepare delicious, healthy, and inexpensive meals while learning about good nutrition. Classes meet once a week for 90 minutes during a six-week period. After each class, participants receive a bag of ingredients so that they can prepare the recipe they learned in class at home.

- **During 2008, 145 individuals attended FTGTT classes and 85 graduated from the series.**
- **Eight FTGTT facilitators were trained during 2008 and 70 hours were logged by FTGTT volunteers who either taught or assisted with the classes.**
Several Texas laws require that persons working in certain health-related occupations having knowledge of a person suspected of having a reportable disease or condition must notify the local health authority or local health department. Health care providers, hospitals, laboratories, schools, and others are required to report patients who are suspected of having a reportable disease or condition. The state has more than 30 diseases on its list of reportable diseases. In addition, the state requires that certain other health issues must be reported and investigated such as drownings and deaths from influenza. In 2008, WCCHD processed more than 2,500 reports of disease (including sexually transmitted diseases or STDs) or other reportable conditions, resulting in 1,250 investigations.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

The Health District provides screening and treatment for three sexually transmitted diseases: gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis. Notification and treatment of partners is also available. WCCHD provides STD-related services to individuals seen in WCCHD clinics. The Health District provides HIV education for Williamson County residents and provides confidential and anonymous HIV testing and counseling through all of the Health District clinics. Those who are HIV positive are referred to a case manager to assist them in obtaining medical care and other services. In 2008, 358 clients were tested for HIV and 338 clients were tested for gonorrhea and chlamydia. The number of clients tested for gonorrhea and Chlamydia decreased dramatically from 2007 because prenatal clients were transitioned to other medical providers in the county.

Photos courtesy of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Public Health Image Library (PHIL).
DISEASE PROFILE

Tuberculosis (TB) & Latent TB infection (LTBI)

People with TB disease are sick from TB germs that are active, meaning that they are multiplying and destroying tissue in the body. In most cases, people with active TB will have symptoms. People with TB disease of the lungs or throat are capable of spreading germs to others and are prescribed drugs that can cure TB disease, but they must be treated with multiple medications for a minimum of six months. WCCHD personnel meet regularly with patients who have active TB to ensure that they take their medications. This is called Directly Observed Therapy (DOT). DOT makes sure that people with TB are taking medications appropriately; ensuring adequate treatment, preventing the spread of disease, and reducing the risk of recurrence and development of drug resistant TB germs.

People with LTBI have TB germs in their bodies, but they are not sick because the germs are not actively multiplying. These people do not have symptoms of TB disease, and they cannot spread the germs to others. However, they may develop TB disease in the future. They are often prescribed treatment with one TB medication for nine months or longer to prevent them from developing TB disease. WCCHD personnel monitor LTBI patients for signs and symptoms of disease as well as possible adverse events related to their treatment regimen.

In 2008, WCCHD investigated or provided treatment services for eleven cases of TB and five suspected cases of TB. All five suspect cases were ultimately ruled out. Every case of TB generates a WCCHD investigation to search for the source of the infection and for others who may have been infected by the person being treated. These investigations involve several District staff and hundreds of hours of work for every new case. Of the 126 clients receiving LTBI in 2007, 36 continued therapy in 2008. Seventy-four clients started LTBI therapy in 2008.
IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are available to children and adults year round by appointment and on a walk-in basis. WCCHD provides over 20 different types of vaccine. In 2008, 26,669 vaccinations were administered in WCCHD clinics to 9,807 clients. Demand for immunization services is highest during back-to-school clinics in August and in the Fall at the beginning of flu season.

Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) is a program for improving vaccine availability for uninsured and underinsured individuals by providing vaccines to community doctors’ offices, schools, and community clinics to be administered to eligible children. In 2008, approximately 64,607 vaccinations were administered by 60 TVFC providers (excluding WCCHD sites). WCCHD provides education and technical assistance to these providers and works to recruit other providers to participate in this program.
COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Information and Referral

The Healthcare Helpline is an information and referral service for Williamson County specializing in access to healthcare. Anyone may call to find out about healthcare information and resources and to be screened for public medical assistance programs. A social worker is on call during operating hours, Monday through Friday, to help answer questions and direct people to resources in the community. In 2008, the Healthcare Helpline provided integrated eligibility services to 3,269 callers through 5,593 contacts.

Through September 2008, the Indigent Care Collaboration (ICC), insure•a•kid, Lone Star Circle of Care (LSCC), and WCCHD partnered to allow individuals without a doctor to schedule a first appointment with a medical home by calling the WCCHD Healthcare Helpline. Individuals calling the Helpline were transferred to insure•a•kid staff who provided a first appointment with LSCC. Uninsured callers were screened for Medicaid and the state’s Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility as well as other possible medical payment resources. For children and pregnant women eligible for CHIP or Medicaid, insure•a•kid provided application assistance. Once families have health coverage, insure•a•kid helps families use and renew their children’s insurance. The collaborative project ended on September 30, 2008, when grant funding ended.

From January 2008 to September 2008, 1,649 individuals were referred to insure•a•kid workers for screening. Of the approximately 755 Williamson County clients initially screened eligible for CHIP or Medicaid through September 2008, 222 were enrolled at the time this report was prepared. The remaining clients may not have followed through with the application process, were ineligible for benefits, or could not be located. The immediate health or medical need for many of these clients was taken care of even though an application for assistance was not submitted; 494 individuals were scheduled for medical appointments.
Healthcare Programs and Case Management

The Wilco Care Card Program (County Indigent Health Care Program) is a state-mandated program that pays for medical care, including doctor visits, hospitalization and pharmacy needs, for uninsured Williamson County residents with very low incomes (under 25% of the Federal Poverty Level) who do not qualify for Medicaid. WCCHD provides initial program screening, eligibility management and claims oversight for this program. New in 2008 is the addition of a pharmacy benefits coordinator, to assist enrollees to apply for donated medications through manufacturer patient assistance programs—improving health outcomes and cutting the program’s pharmaceutical costs. Case management services were provided to medically high risk clients and other clients with special needs who are eligible for the Williamson County Indigent Health Care Program. In 2008, WCCHD served 1,247 Wilco Care Card Program clients.

Clients diagnosed with diabetes and enrolled in the WilCo Care Program are provided diabetes testing supplies free of charge. In 2008, 176 case management services were provided to 76 enrolled clients. In addition, a total of 58 people attended six diabetes education series offered by WCCHD in 2008.

WCCHD Social Workers provide case management services to pregnant women and their families. Pregnant women are evaluated for Medicaid, CHIP Perinatal Program, Title V, WIC and other programs. Eligible women are guided to prenatal care either in the community or in WCCHD clinics. Pregnant women who are uninsured, ineligible for Medicaid and have income at or below 185% FPL are eligible for the Maternal...
Billye Navarro provides diabetes information.

Child Health Title V program. Women who have income between 186% FPL and 200% FPL may qualify for the CHIP Perinatal Program. In 2008, social workers assisted 287 prenatal clients in applying for the CHIP Perinatal Program and 202 clients received prenatal services in the WCCHD prenatal clinic.

Title V Case Management services were provided for 290 high risk pregnant women. Case Management is a service where Social Workers assist pregnant women and their families in getting help with access to needed medical services, family problems, financial concerns and finding help near where they live. In 2008, social workers provided 983 face to face or telephone contacts to prenatal clients, 602 of these contacts were billable contacts which resulted in $27,108 paid contacts from the Title V Maternal and Child Health grant program.

WCCHD Social Workers provided a set of prenatal education classes to pregnant women in the WCCHD Cedar Park Clinic. A series of 8 prenatal education classes were provided to 16 pregnant women. The classes consisted of learning about the benefits of the CHIP perinatal program, labor and delivery, parenting, family planning, depression/post partum depression, learning English and a special class for Fathers only.

Health Educators provided two parenting education series in Round Rock. A total of 29 people attended parenting series in 2008. WCCHD Social Workers also provided Case Management for medically high risk Medicaid eligible children and pregnant women. The Children and Pregnant Women’s Program (CPW) provides services...
to children with a health condition/health risk, birth through 20 years of age and to high-risk pregnant women of all ages, in order to encourage the use of cost-effective health and health-related care. Together, the case manager and family assess the medical, social, educational and other medically necessary service needs of the eligible recipient. WCCHD provided CPW case management services (paid by Medicaid) to 90 clients. In 2008 Social Workers provided 519 face to face or telephone contacts to 90 clients. Of these contacts, 197 were billable contacts which resulted in $14,068 paid by the Medicaid program.

In 2008, Social Workers promoted the Children and Pregnant Women’s Program (CPW) by attending the Children’s Health Festival, WIC breastfeeding awareness walk/health fair, and Round Rock Independent School Districts teen parent workshop.

The Community Clinic Services (CCS) Program is a program administered by WCCHD that is funded by Williamson County utilizing Tobacco Settlement funds. Through this program, the community clinics, Health Center at Johns Community Hospital, Samaritan Health Ministries, and Lone Star Circle of Care, are reimbursed on a fee-for-service visit basis for care provided to uninsured residents whose income is at or below 150% FPL. The per-visit rate covers part of the clinics’ cost of the service. In 2008, CCS provided 5,440 services to 3,734 residents.

Prenatal Care

Until October 2008, all four Health District clinics provided prenatal care, case management and referral services for pregnant women in Williamson County who were not able to access care from a private physician or other community clinic. Clinical services were provided by Registered Nurses and an Advanced Practice Nurse with oversight by a consulting OB/GYN physician. There were 202 maternity clients entered into care in 2008. In 2008, more private physicians began to enroll as CHIP insurance providers allowing WCCHD to transition pregnant women out of care. By October 2008, all WCCHD prenatal clients had either delivered or their care had been transferred to a local OB/GYN physician.
The Food Inspection Team of the Environmental Health Services Division inspects food establishments throughout the county. Establishments inspected include restaurants, convenience stores, schools, daycare centers, hospitals, mobile food vendors, and other types of establishments that serve food to the public. Of the 1,281 establishments inspected in 2008, most were inspected two to three times.

The Food Inspection Team also provides general sanitation inspections for day care centers and foster/adoptive homes that are licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. These inspections are conducted annually or bi-annually. In 2008, 255 general sanitation inspections were conducted.

Complaints

All complaints related to food safety are investigated. The Food Inspection Team works closely with WCCHD Communicable Disease staff to investigate any reported, suspected food borne illness complaints. The Environmental Health Services Division may also lead investigations or coordinate a response to other general sanitation or environmental complaints. In 2008, Environmental Health Services staff conducted 340 investigations.

Food Handler Education

The WCCHD Environmental Health Services staff teach food handler classes at a variety of locations and times throughout the county. Employees of food establishments and daycare centers are trained in basic sanitation and safe food handling practices. Satisfactory completion of the one-hour training is required every one to two years. A total of 2,896 individuals attended 211 food handler classes offered at different WCCHD locations. Nineteen of the food handler classes were offered in Spanish; 840 individuals attended Spanish classes. Twelve of the courses were “train-the-trainer” food handler classes, allowing employers to teach their own classes and submit self-testing results for their employees to WCCHD. In 2008, 204 participants from all over the county attended “train-the-trainer” classes and 6,673 individuals attended food handler classes taught by non-WCCHD instructors who completed the “train-the-trainer” course.
On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSF) Permitting and Inspections

The Environmental Health Services Division issues permits for On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSF), commonly known as septic systems. Staff inspect the points during the installation process. A final inspection must be passed before the system can be used. Note that many OSSF permits and inspections take place outside of city limits, in areas lacking waste water services. In 2008, WCCHD staff issued 590 OSSF permits and conducted 4,034 inspections. Staff also address failing septic systems and other problems and regulations related to existing systems.

Floodplain Regulation

WCCHD administers the county’s floodplain regulation. The floodplain program seeks to minimize the public and private losses due to flooding conditions and to promote the National Flood Insurance Program. Any building project or major improvement in the 100-year floodplain must have a Floodplain Development Permit before work can begin. The 100-year floodplain consists of those areas of Williamson County that have a one-percent chance of flooding in any given year as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) official floodplain maps. Floodplain regulations apply to the placement of bridges, driveways, ponds, fill (dirt), placement of recreational vehicles, and excavation or alteration of creek channels.

In 2007, FEMA updated floodplain maps for the county in order to make them more accurate and easier to use. A few revisions were made to the proposed maps to reflect site specific engineering appeals. The updated maps were approved in September 2008. The Williamson County Commissioner’s Court approved a revised Flood Damage Prevention Order in August 2008, requiring building one foot higher than the established 100-year floodplain. Because FEMA was unable to restudy the hydraulics throughout the county it was necessary to add this freeboard to make up for the increased development density (and impervious cover) which has taken place in the past 20 years. In 2008, WCCHD staff evaluated 1,882 floodplain construction projects.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Exercises and Response

April 1, 2008: WCCHD conducted an Epidemiological Tabletop Exercise in order to assess the District’s ability to respond to a Bioterrorism event. This exercise tested WCCHD’s ability to coordinate a public health response with the regional and central offices of Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and first responder agencies. Procedures to establish a WCCHD Operations Center were also tested.

July 30, 2008: WCCHD participated in a Regional Virtual Pandemic Influenza Tabletop Exercise. The objectives for this exercise included discussing procedures for isolation and quarantine, identifying trigger points for implementation of non-pharmaceutical interventions, assessing WCCHD’s disease detection and surveillance procedures, and activating the WCCHD Crisis Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Plan. Participants in this exercise included representatives from public health, local hospitals, and local Independent School Districts (ISD).

October 8, November 5, November 19, and December 18, 2008: The WCCHDEmergencyPreparednessandResponseCoordinator conducted multiple Regional Pandemic Influenza Seminars with the overarching goal of reviewing and revising stakeholder Pandemic Influenza Plans in order to ensure consistency, identify resources, and eliminate gaps between plans. Exercise participants included representatives from local health departments, DSHS Region 7, the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), the Capital Area Trauma Regional Advisory Council (CATRAC), local offices of emergency management, and local hospitals.

October 28, 2008: WCCHD conducted a Critical Infrastructure Personnel Distribution and Vaccination Full-scale Exercise in order to test WCCHD’s ability to distribute medical countermeasures throughout Williamson County during a public
Staff get “just-in-time” training before a flu drill

National Preparedness Month Word Search

Training

The Health District engages with first responders and a variety of state, regional and local health/medical and emergency response agencies to plan, train and exercise for responding to natural and man-made disasters. WCCHD offers emergency preparedness and response courses specific to public health. In 2008, WCCHD staff provided three emergency preparedness classes to WCCHD staff with a total attendance of 54 for all three classes.
Friends of Public Health, Inc. (Friends) is a public non-profit organization in Williamson County that supports local public health programs by augmenting funding for innovative programs provided by WCCHD. Dean Hamilton serves as the President of Friends and Kathy Galloway serves as the Treasurer. Other Board members include: Lettie Lee, Lara Reinhard, Jewel Thompson, and Arlen Zander.

Volunteers and interns have worked in every program at the Health District for many years. WCCHD has emergency preparedness and response opportunities for those interested in preparing for and responding to public health emergencies should they occur. In addition, WCCHD has opportunities to volunteer in health promotion activities such as projects related to community gardening, leading healthy cooking classes, assisting with large events such as the WCCHD Children's Health Festival, office work such as assisting with mail-outs, and many other opportunities that could match particular interests of volunteers when possible.

During 2008, 36 volunteers and 3 volunteer groups contributed 1,509 hours to the district. The WCCHD Volunteer program received a $5000 Capacity Building Award from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to help with the continued development and sustainability of the Williamson County Medical Reserve Corps (Wilco MRC) program. For more information on volunteering, please visit the WCCHD website at www.wcchd.org.

Be a part of public health in your community!
The Williamson County & Cities Health District, your public health department since 1943, celebrates 65 years of providing public health services in Williamson County.

**WCCHD OFFICES**

**Administration**
100 West 3rd Street
Georgetown, TX 78626
Phone: 512-943-3600

**Environmental Health Services**
303 Main Street
Georgetown, TX 78626
Phone: 512-943-3620

**Community Health Education & Social Services**
211 Commerce Cove, Suite 114
Round Rock, TX 78664
Phone: 512-248-3252

**Communicable Disease**
100 West 3rd Street
Georgetown, TX 78626
Phone: 512-943-3660

**Retail Food Inspection Services**
211 Commerce Cove, Suite 111
Round Rock, TX 78664
Phone: 512-248-7617

**Emergency Preparedness & Response**
100 West 3rd Street
Georgetown, TX 78626
Phone: 512-943-3665
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