



Environmental Health News & Views

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Newsletter of the Illinois Department of Public Health • Division of Environmental Health
Creating a link between state and local environmental health professionals.

George H. Ryan, Governor • John R. Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., Director

Focus: General Engineering Section

Variety is the Spice of Life

The General Engineering Section (GES) within the Division of Environmental Health is responsible for enforcing a wide variety of programs to assure that people who live, work and play in Illinois are provided with a healthy and safe environment. More than 5,300 facilities are inspected to determine eligibility for an annual license and plans for new construction are reviewed and approved.



Swimming Pools...Movie Stars...

Ok, our staff is not made up of people from Beverly Hills, but they do have starring roles in the division. If you have questions about our section, there are many ways to contact us. You can contact staff of the regional office in your area, you can call the central office staff at 217-782-5830, you can surf the Department's Web site at <http://www.idph.state.il.us> or check out the agency's Intranet site. The following folks make up the staff of the GES:

- Mark Carr, program administrator for the Campground Youth Camp, Migrant Labor Camp and Field Sanitation programs and Rapid Response Team member mcarr@idph.state.il.us
- Lynn Koskey, administrative assistant lkoskey@idph.state.il.us
- Colleen Leonard, administrative assistant cleonard@idph.state.il.us
- Pat Metz, section chief, and the division duty officer during non-working hours (Call the Illinois Emergency Management Agency at 800-782-7860.) pmetz@idph.state.il.us
- John Reilly, program administrator for the Manufactured Home Community, Manufactured Tiedown and Modular Housing programs jreilly@idph.state.il.us
- John Roscetti, program administrator for the Swimming Pool Bathing Beach program jroscetti@idph.state.il.us
- Craig Steinheimer, plan review engineer for swimming pools and bathing beaches csteinhe@idph.state.il.us



Surf's Up...

Regulations and pamphlets from the General Engineering Section are available on the Internet at

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/ehhome.htm>. Pamphlets include information about living in manufactured home communities, the different types of factory-built housing, guidelines for installing manufactured homes, approved tiedown equipment and approved modular home manufacturers. Copies of pamphlets and printouts of licensed facilities can also be obtained by contacting central office staff.

- **Manufactured Home Communities** - These communities were previously known as "mobile home parks" or, for those who have been around for a while, "trailer courts." The GES is responsible for inspecting and licensing properties that have five or more manufactured homes, unless they are located in home rule units, to assure the health and safety of the residents. Items inspected include the water, sewage and electrical systems, lighting, road width and condition, spacing of homes, and general sanitation issues such as garbage disposal and weed control.
- **Swimming Facilities** - Public swimming pools are inspected for proper water treatment and safety features to prevent illnesses, injuries and loss of life. Because a crucial aspect of a safe pool is proper operation, the GES provides a voluntary pool operator certification program and provides annual regional training programs at no charge for pool operators. GES appreciates the assistance provided by staff from the city of Chicago and from Cook, DuPage, Lake, Macon, Tazewell and Will county health departments who inspect about half of the state's 3,300 pools. Bathing beaches are also inspected by the GES. In addition to the annual inspection of each of the 340 beaches licensed by the GES, two samples are collected and analyzed every two weeks during the summer to determine the bacteriological water quality of the beaches. In 2001, 60 beaches were closed because the results exceeded standards, but no illnesses were reported.

Environmental Health News & Views

- **Campgrounds, Recreational Facilities, and Migrant Labor Camps** - The GES inspects campgrounds, youth camps, migrant labor camps and the sanitation of facilities provided to agricultural workers. The main areas of interest for the GES in recreational facilities are the water, sewage, electrical systems; and food service facilities. In addition to making sure these systems are safe at youth camps, the housing units also are inspected for screens on the windows, smoke detectors, clean bedding, adequate sleeping room and separation of beds. Recreational areas such as water slides that are not part of licensed swimming pools are also inspected. Because of the importance for the health of both the agricultural worker in the field and the consumer of the fruits and vegetables that are harvested in Illinois, staff inspect those operations that employ 10 or more workers to make sure that the required toilets, hand-washing facilities and drinking water are provided.
- **Manufactured Home Tiedown** - Manufactured homes moved after January 1, 1980 are required to be anchored in compliance with the Department's standards. Only approved equipment can be used and the instructions of the equipment manufacturer must be followed. Homeowners are responsible for having their homes secured, but anyone who does this type of work is responsible for doing it correctly.
- **Modular Dwellings and Commercial Mobile Structures** - The GES regulates the construction of modular dwellings, which must be placed on permanent foundations, and commercial mobile structures, such as offices and classrooms. The plans for all models must be submitted and approved for compliance with the applicable state and national codes before the units can be constructed.

Re“mark”able Responses

Maybe you have heard of the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and wondered what it is. This team, under the leadership of Dr. Mark Dworkin, the state epidemiologist, and with support from GES staff member Mark Carr, started in 2001 to provide assistance to communities and counties dealing with outbreaks of infectious diseases.

The RRT consists of eight IDPH staff and includes persons with experience in epidemiology, communicable diseases, laboratory procedures, food protection and environmental health. Current team members are Dr. Connie Austin, Carl Langkop, Roland Lucht and Dorian Robinson from the Division of Infectious Diseases; Dr. David Culp representing the laboratory; Mark Carr from the Division of

Environmental Health; Dr. Karnail Mudahar from the Division of Food, Drugs and Dairies; and Don Kauerauf, the Department's emergency response officer.

In August, members of the team assisted Tazewell County Health Department staff when about 500 persons became ill after swimming at a municipal water park that was contaminated with *Cryptosporidium*. The epidemiological investigation entailed more than 800 interviews. Assistance was also recently provided by the RRT in the investigation of foodborne outbreaks in Douglas, Effingham and Sangamon counties.



What Will We Think Of Next?

The GES is always looking for ways to protect the public's health and safety. Several of the section's programs are being expanded to meet the needs of the 21st century.

On January 1, 2002, all installers of manufactured homes will need to be licensed by IDPH and will be responsible for installing manufactured homes in compliance with the adopted standards. While the anchoring of homes has been regulated since 1980, the support system and connection of the utilities has not. A federal law passed in December 2000 mandated the regulation of the installation of these homes by each state within five years; this served as motivation for the Manufactured Home Quality Assurance Act. Additional staff will be funded with the anticipated licensing revenues.

IDPH has applied to become a state administrative agent through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). When approved, the GES will be responsible for investigating complaints about the construction of manufactured homes. Since 1976, HUD has regulated the construction of manufactured homes. Owners of these homes often have complaints about defects caused either by the original construction at the factory, during the transportation or as a result of the installation. Staff will be able to mandate correction by the responsible party.

Another program being expanded is the regulation of aquatic facilities. As a result of legislation passed in May 2001 (P.A. 92-18), all water slides, wading pools and wave pools will be required to be licensed, effective May 1, 2002. The GES had previously inspected the 150 water slides and wading pools at licensed facilities, but they were not required to be licensed. All spas must be licensed after May 1, 2003. The legislation requires the GES to establish rules to prevent entrapment and entanglement in suction grates at both

Environmental Health News & Views

new and existing aquatic facilities. The legislation was sought after the death several years ago of a 14-year-old boy who was trapped on the main drain of a whirlpool.

IDPH received a development grant in the amount of \$58,000 from the U.S. EPA to evaluate the causes of Illinois beach closings on Lake Michigan. The funding for this program was made possible by the federal Beaches Environmental Assessment, Closure, and Health Act that was approved by Congress in 2000. IDPH will evaluate causes of Lake Michigan pollution that affect beaches, work to develop rapid testing methods, improve notification advisories and eliminate sources of pollution so Lake Michigan beaches can provide safe water quality for as many days as possible during the year.



Bioterrorism Preparation

Since September 11, this country has experienced an increased awareness about the possibility of a bioterrorism event. In response, IDPH has taken a number of actions. A bioterrorism task force, led by the agency's Director John R. Lumpkin, MD., was created. Tabletop exercises have been held to discuss possible incident scenarios.

The Division of Environmental Health is developing a response manual outlining specific responsibilities for environmental sampling, decontamination and appropriate personal protective equipment. The manual, which will be shared with local health departments, will cover likely bioterrorism agents.

In addition, the division has created a bioterrorism response plan related to environmental issues. Major provisions include the following:

- technical support to the RRT and the State Interagency Response Team on environmental sampling and the use of monitoring and detection equipment; and recommendations on threat mitigation, personal protective equipment, and decontamination and cleanup;

- toxicological information, risk assessment and environmental cleanup recommendations for residences and public buildings;

- recommendations for the emergency hauling, handling and disinfection of drinking water;

- information for emergency responders on pesticide application equipment that might be used as a weapon of

mass destruction dispersal mechanism and on potential vectors of disease;

identification of and sampling for asbestos, and risk assessment for emergency responders who might come in contact with asbestos emissions; (Levels of asbestos emissions were a significant concern for first responders and cleanup workers at the World Trade Center.)

assistance in obtaining emergency supplies of drinking water and portable toilets for the general public as well as for residents of facilities regulated by the division; and

providing staff support for lab analyses, labor at distribution points for pharmaceuticals, epidemiological investigations and any other functions beyond those normally associated with environmental health activities.

Fun Becomes Tragic

On May 23, 2001, two young men in Decatur were electrocuted when they jumped into an outdoor pool they had been preparing to open for the season. An inspection revealed several code violations with the underwater lights. It also indicated that if a ground fault circuit interrupter had been installed on the light circuit, the power would have been shut off and no one would have been hurt. In response, a notice was sent to all pool operators requiring them to install the devices on underwater lights by December 1 for indoor pools and prior to opening any outdoor pools next season. In September, a video conference training program was provided for pool inspectors from IDPH and local health department agents.

On August 13, 2001, the Tazewell County Health Department was informed of a number of individuals who had symptoms of cryptosporidiosis. During interviews, it was determined that all of the symptomatic individuals had been at a large municipal water park in East Peoria on August 3 or 4. Samples of the water were collected at locations throughout the park before the chlorine concentration of the water was increased to 20 parts per million and held for more than 8 hours. The results from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were positive for *Cryptosporidium*. This parasite is very difficult to kill because of the high concentration of chlorine that must be maintained for several hours. CDC recommends a concentration and contact time, or CT value, of 9600, which is the product of the chlorine concentration times the number of minutes it is held at that level.

Environmental Health News & Views

It is believed that a person defecated in the water and others ingested the contaminated water. CDC recommends that persons refrain from using a pool for two weeks after their last diarrheal incident. Several pools in the area were advised to superchlorinate overnight because some of the ill reported that they also swam at those pools while they were infected. The investigation included more than 800 interviews, which found that almost 500 persons had symptoms of cryptosporidiosis. A total of 74 cases were laboratory confirmed. This is the first outbreak of cryptosporidiosis in Illinois associated with a public swimming pool. The GES will be proposing minor revisions to the rules regarding fecal accidents at pools, but a real effort is needed to educate pool patrons on the importance of not swimming while they are sick, especially with diarrhea; and not ingesting pool water.

Hang in There!

The next edition of *Environmental Health News & Views* will focus on pest and vector control!



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