

**DIVISION OF**  
**Environmental Health**



**2007 Division Strategic Plan**

**Florida Department of Health**

## **Introduction**

The year 2006 was, thankfully, a mild one for hurricanes despite predictions to the contrary. And it marked a great commencement for the CENTRAX Rehost project with success in the four pilot counties! It was also another banner year of Division staff moving the Department forward in using innovative products to provide better service, e.g., Breeze presentations and External Sharepoint sites. In 2006, we secured a number of critical federal grants including EPA- Radon, CDC- Health Tracking, CDC and DHS- Preparedness, CDC- Birth defects, CDC- Arbovirus surveillance, CDC- Aquatic toxins and EPA- Beach Water Quality.

Many of our leaders were tapped for Key Leadership positions in national organizations including: Debbie Gilley - Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Board of Directors Chair; Dave Johnson - Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Executive Committee Environmental/ Occupational/ Injury Chair; Mark Hooks - National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (NOWRA) Board of Directors, Kelly Nelson - NOWRA Marketing and Communications Committee; Chris Duclos - CDC Geography and Locational Referencing Group Co-Chair; and Lisa Conti- State Environmental Health Directors Chair. In state, David Hammonds was appointed to the Florida Association of Environmental Soil Scientists (FAESS) licensure board, Bart Harriss was tapped as FEHA President, Prakash Patel was elected First Vice President for the Florida Public Health Association, and Daniel Parker was appointed to the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Commission. This year Roberta Hammond and Norm Doxford became Registered Sanitarians, Mohamed Yasin received his Florida Professional Engineer licensure, Greg Kearney his Dr. PH, Dave Johnson his Masters in Health Administration. FEHA recognized Bob Vincent with the Billy G Tenant Award and Daniel Parker with the Golden Pen Award. In 2006, we saw the retirements of Mike Gilley and Art Glenn, Pad Juarez move on to becoming Wakulla EH Director. And we sorrowfully saw the passing of our friend and colleague, Becky Kessler.

In line with our vision to create a culture where every person in the state is engaged in improving Florida's environmental health, we were able to secure a Memorandum of Understanding between our Department and the Department of Community Affairs in embracing smart growth principles, we continued to support Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence (PACE EH) in the counties, and we advanced health and the built environment as critical strategic call to action within the department.

Thank you all for contributing to great successes for us to continue to build upon!

## **Executive Summary**

The mission of the Florida Department of Health is to promote and protect the health and safety of all Floridians. The Division of Environmental Health has a major role in fulfilling this mission through its efforts to prevent disease of environmental origin. Our vision is for every person in the state to be environmentally healthy.

The division has a diverse set of programs for which we provide leadership and accountability. These programs assure the water we drink is clean, the food we eat is uncontaminated and the natural and built environment we contact is safe. We do this by inspecting facilities for proper sanitary practices and equipment, ensuring the proper functioning of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, protecting drinking water wells from contamination, investigating the cause of food and waterborne disease outbreaks, protecting the public from zoonotic and vector-borne diseases, conducting assessments in response to public health needs, and working to protect human health against unnecessary radiation exposure. Taken together, the Department of Health's Environmental Health has a leadership role with 70% of Florida's drinking water, over two million septic tanks, all group care facilities that serve the young and the elderly, and all radiation sources (including nuclear power plants). These are only a few of the statewide programs and efforts in place to protect human health.

### **Strategic Planning**

The Division of Environmental Health now has an eight-year history of strategic planning initiatives. This is our sixth year of using business plans as a strategic guide to reach our goals. The top division goals for the Division of Environmental Health are as follows:

- A. Secure adequate funding, flexibility and authority for staff and programs**
- B. Realign Environmental Health under one roof or through seamless coordination**
- C. Create a statewide culture of Environmental Health**

### **Sub-goals**

Sub-goals for bureaus and offices include the following:

#### Bureau of Radiation Control

- a. Have all registration, licensing and inspection information available electronically to all programs and field staff by 2010.
- b. Support a comprehensive community-based radiological emergency response capability through local training, exercising, and assistance with radiation detection equipment purchase, maintenance, and calibration.

#### Office of Environmental Public Health & Medicine:

- a. Develop an occupational health surveillance program.
- b. Expand Toxicology staff to permit review of EPA proposed rules & ATSDR's toxicological profiles to assure the unique situations in Florida are represented.
- c. Track and make available core environmental health tracking measures (DATA) on the State and National EPHT network for selected cancers, birth defects, Asthma, Myocardial Infarction, blood lead levels and vial statistics.

#### Bureau of Onsite Sewage Programs:

- a. Execute all permit renewals online/paperless.
- b. Maintain all onsite systems by schedule and to an upgraded common modern standard.
- c. Perfect the balance of performance accountability vs. cost in the OSTDS Program PBTS permitting.

Strategic Marketing/Staff Development:

- a. Fully staff marketing department in-house; Graphic Designer, Multimedia Capabilities/Equipment, Web Designer.
- b. Identify a designated annual marketing budget.

Environmental Health Preparedness:

- a. Make EH-P an active part of local community consciousness, health and preparedness (“social networking” with EH-P)
- b. Enable a “tipping point” so that the system educating and preparing our EH workforce is seamless and self-continuing.
- c. Integrate preparedness, training and competencies into every E.H position duties.

Environmental Health Technology

- a. Create a statewide integrated geospatial system linked to virtual earth 3D.
- b. Collect, use, and analyze data.
- c. Create a totally paperless Division wide web system with field data capture and permitting.

Bureau of Water Programs

- a. Widely recognized as Florida’s guardians of safe water.
- b. Require private well owners to test their drinking water.

Bureau of Community Environmental Health

- a. Incorporate quality aspect to program evaluation tool.
- b. Provide the best Environmental Epidemiology assets .

## Objectives

Five strategic objectives are in place to help us meet our goals and keep us focused on being the best and to promote continuous improvement and innovation:

- Objective 1: Be the best communicators and educators
- Objective 2: Use our data
- Objective 3: Promote and support training and innovation
- Objective 4: Support community outreach
- Objective 5: Increase financial diversity and flexibility

## Guiding Principles

We have also identified guiding principles to justify the continued efficacy of our program mix:

- Is the program focused on a vulnerable population?
- Is the program focused on children (Healthy Environment, Healthy Children)?
- Would the program experience difficulties as a private sector function?
- Is the program cost-effective and efficient?
- Does the program support community-based efforts?

## Values

The leadership of Environmental Health has identified the following values to guide us:

Hire and Keep the Best  
Let Managers Manage  
Trust but Verify  
Receive Continuous Feedback and Continue to Personally and Professionally Improve  
Ask, Listen, and Do  
Know the Small Stuff from the Big Stuff  
PUSH the Envelope  
Challenge Poor Decisions  
Applaud Good Leadership at all Levels

We look forward to the activities and accomplishments of Environmental Health over the next year. Our work and accomplishments would not be possible without the county health departments, the backbone of environmental health services. It is our hope that these plans will shed some light on the many activities completed and the efforts planned for the coming year, and to establish a framework of success for us all. Together, we can continue to do our part to protect public health and the environment and become the national leader in Environmental Health.

Lisa A. Conti, D.V.M., M.P.H., Dipl. ACVPM  
Director, Division of Environmental Health

Daniel Parker, MSP  
Director, Office of Leadership, Innovation, and Idealism



## ORGANIZATION

The following paragraphs provide brief overviews of the four bureaus and one office managed by the Director of the Division of Environmental Health. The Director's office also offers IT, marketing, and preparedness assistance to the division and the field.

### Bureau of Community Environmental Health

The mission of the Bureau of Community Environmental Health is to protect and promote the health of all persons in Florida through prevention, surveillance, and investigation of environmentally related diseases. This includes statewide coordination of surveillance and investigation of food and waterborne illnesses, and assessing potential health effects from exposure of humans to environmental contaminants. Public health programs in the bureau include childhood lead poisoning surveillance and prevention, counter bioterrorism activities, birth defects surveillance, toxicology, pesticide exposure surveillance, aquatic toxin exposure surveillance and prevention, Superfund health assessment and education, statewide toxicology support, zoonosis and vectorborne disease prevention, and environmental health epidemiologic studies and investigations.

This bureau also works closely with environmental health professionals in the CHDs to control or remove disease-causing links between citizens and their environment. Important elements include regulation of certain food service facilities, migrant labor housing, group care facilities, biomedical waste generators/storage facilities/transporters/treatment facilities, tanning facilities, body piercing salons, and mobile home and recreational vehicle parks. The bureau also houses programs that deal with protecting residential indoor air quality and radon. It also sets standards for and certifies environmental health professionals working in primary areas of environmental health.

Eric Grimm is the Bureau Chief of Community Environmental Health. The office is located at 4042 Bald Cypress Way. The telephone number is (850) 245-4277 (SC 205-4277). Fax (850) 487-0864 (SC 277-0864). His e-mail address is: [eric\\_grimm@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:eric_grimm@doh.state.fl.us)

### Office of Environmental Public Health and Medicine

This office provides technical assistance to County Health Departments (CHD) and implements scientific approaches to resolving environmental public health and epidemiological issues. The office will work to develop and implement epidemiological studies as appropriate to assist CHDs in understanding the possible relationship between the environment and adverse health outcomes. Dr. David Johnson is the director of this office. The bureau is located at 4042 Bald Cypress Way, 2nd floor, in Tallahassee. The telephone number is (850) 245-4299 (SC 205-4299). Fax number is (850) 922-8473. His e-mail address is [david\\_johnson@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:david_johnson@doh.state.fl.us)

### Bureau of Onsite Sewage Programs

This bureau develops statewide rules and provides training and standardization for CHD employees responsible for permitting the installation and repair of all onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS) within the state. The bureau licenses septic

tank contractors and approves continuing education courses and course providers. The bureau manages a state funded research program, and helps fund a hands-on training center for contractors and CHD employees. The bureau maintains a toll-free complaint line for OSTDS contracting complaints.

Gerald Briggs is the Bureau Chief of Onsite Sewage Programs. The office is located in Suite 130, 4042 Bald Cypress Way. The telephone number is (850) 245-4070 (SC 205-4270), Fax (850) 922-6969 (SC 292-6969). His e-mail address is: [gerald\\_briggs@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:gerald_briggs@doh.state.fl.us)

#### Bureau of Radiation Control

This program has employees located throughout Florida to protect people and the environment from unnecessary radiation exposure through standards, education, inspection, and monitoring. Program elements include regulation of radiation sources, [approve continuing education for radiologic technologists](#) certification of radiological technologists, radiological laboratory services, the monitoring of nuclear power plants, maintaining a response team, and the radiological impact of phosphate mining.

Bill Passetti is the Bureau Chief of Radiation Control. The office is located at 4042 Bald Cypress Way. The telephone number is (850) 245-4266 (SC 205-4266), Fax (850) 487-0435 (SC 277-0435). His e-mail address is: [bill\\_passetti@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:bill_passetti@doh.state.fl.us)

#### Bureau of Water Programs

This bureau regulates the drinking water for approximately 70% of Florida's residents. The drinking water program promulgates rules, develops interpretations, provides training, and coordinates activities with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The program manages the DOH responsibilities under the State Underground Petroleum Environmental Response Act (SUPER Act) and the Water Toxics Program as well as the Healthy Beaches program.

Bart Bibler is the Bureau Chief of Water Programs. The office is located at 4042 Bald Cypress Way. The telephone number is (850) 245-4240 (SC 205-4240), Fax number is (850) 921-0298 (SC 291-0298). His e-mail address is: [bart\\_bibler@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:bart_bibler@doh.state.fl.us)