

## BOARD OF HEALTH PROCEEDINGS

February 3, 2005

Acting Chairperson Jayni Kamin called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Attendance: Board Member, Chair, Lynda Ring-Erickson-Arrived late; Board Member, Tim Sheldon; Board Member, Jayni Kamin.

### ATTENDANCE

Dr. Diana T. Yu, Health Officer  
Steve Kutz, Department of Health Director  
Debbie Riley, Environmental Health Director  
Rebecca Wells, Mason County Journal, Reporter  
Lynda Ring-Erickson, Board Member  
Tim Sheldon, Board Member  
Jayni Kamin, Chair, Board Member  
Elizabeth Custis, RN  
Linda Bullock, RN  
Pam Benett Cummings, Water Quality Staff  
Stephanie Kenny, Water Quality Staff

### CORRESPONDENCE - None

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board members Sheldon/Kamin moved and seconded to approve the regular Board of Health meeting minutes of November 4, 2004, with the signature from the 2004 Board members and the regular meeting minutes of January 6, 2005 and special meeting minutes of January 25, 2005. Motion carried unanimously. S-aye; K-aye; RE-absent.

### ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Mr. Kutz introduced Dr. Yu as the new Mason County Health Officer.

The Board welcomed Dr. Yu to Mason County.

### **HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT:**

Dr. Yu, Health Officer reports for January, 2005 Communicable Diseases as two cases of Chronic Hepatitis C, ten cases of Latent Tuberculosis, two cases of Strep A-Necrotizing Faciitis, and one case of Diphylllotherieum Latrum (fish parasite).

Dr. Yu stated the Strep A-Necrotizing Faciitis is in other words a flesh eating disease. It is a skin infection that has become very serious. Because it was her first day of work she is not familiar with the two cases reported.

Mr. Kutz responded both people were hospitalized and were very ill.

Dr. Yu stated that many people die of that type of skin infection because it is such a severe infection.

Mr. Sheldon asked about the case history of the flesh eating disease and if it is unusual and what the cause of it is.

Dr. Yu stated she didn't know much about the cases here in Mason County, but primarily it is caused by injection drug use. She said it is more sporadic than rare.

Mr. Sheldon stated his neighbor had the flesh eating disease. He said the man had a stroke and almost lost his leg from having the skin infection. He also stated he knew the man well enough and he was not an injection drug user.

Dr. Yu said the type of cases that were reported here in Mason County were infections very deep into the skin. There are different types of skin infections that are very serious and are on rise right now. Not all skin infections are

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associated with drug users. Everyone has bacteria on their skin but usually it doesn't grow into flesh-eating bacteria. Medical professors are not sure why there is a rise in the skin infections recently but they are suggesting that fewer antibiotics should be used and prescribed. The more antibiotics that are used the more normal bacteria becomes resistant.

Mr. Steve Kutz, Health Department Director reported that both of the flesh-eating cases were caused by Strep A. He stated that everyone carries Strep A on his or her body. He said there are times when a person has an injury that causes the bacteria to get into places where it has a chance to grow.

Dr. Yu reported the number one sexually transmitted disease reported is Chlamydia. In January 2005 there was six cases of Chlamydia reported. She said it is an indication that people are still having unprotected sex. Chlamydia can lead to infertility.

Mr. Kutz stated that a process has been presented to the health departments to do a directly delivered partner treatment for people with Chlamydia. When a patient is treated for Chlamydia medication would be given for the patient and their partner. Mr. Kutz stated the paperwork has been signed to include Mason County to receive funding through a grant for the medication. There are many Chlamydia cases in Mason County. Mr. Kutz hopes that being able to provide medication for the partner would reduce number of cases.

Dr. Yu reported there are several different diseases that she will be monitoring, locally there have been several influenza cases. She will also be monitoring both the RSV and the Adeno virus. There are tests that can be done to determine if they have a respiratory infection.

Dr. Yu reported in South East Asia there have been fifty human cases of an influenza that are normally only seen in birds. Usually it is only transmitted from bird to bird. The fatality rate is around 70%. Of the fifty cases forty of them have died. Most of the human influenza cases were people who work with birds regularly. There is concern if a person is infected with one of the human influenza then is infected with the bird influenza and passes it on it will be a new hybrid strain of the human influenza. It takes about nine months to make a vaccine for a new strain of influenza.

**PERSONAL HEALTH ISSUES**

Mr. Kutz gave the Personal Health Report for 2004. Each staff member in the Health Department has been requested to make a presentation to the Board on the services they provide during 2005. Next month Diane Crabtree will be presenting the Children with special health care needs.

Mr. Kutz reviewed each program within the Personal Health Department and gave statistics of them. He stressed through out the review that many of the services are provided to the Hispanic population. The Hispanic population is growing in Mason County and it is the goal of the health department to provide the services in Spanish to ensure their needs are being met. Many of the Hispanic people don't get medical services because their language is a barrier to the services available. Mr. Kutz stated 10% of all clients served by personal health in 2004 were Spanish speaking clients.

Mr. Kutz stated the health department has a contract with Mason Matters to provide services for them. He said that the health department is involved in many projects with Mason Matters. Mr. Kutz stated that Mason Matters should be very proud for receiving an award from the Washington State Hospital Association. They recognized Mason Matters with the "Community Health Leadership Award", for the community mobilization work they do on behalf of the Health Department and the Hospital. There are many communities that don't have these mobilization efforts being facilitated.

The Board thanked Mr. Kutz for the report and said it will be a good tool for the Board to use when working out in the community.

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Mr. Kutz stated that in 2005 the staff would be keeping track of services offered to county residence versus city residents. When the motor vehicle excise tax was eliminated the requirement for the City of Shelton to support public health was eliminated. The goal is to acknowledge the services that are being provided to the City of Shelton residents. This is going to be important as more funding at the state level is cut. In the past when the City of Shelton did provide support for the services they would receive an annual report to show the amount and type of services that were administered to the people living in the city limits.

**ENVIROMENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**

Ms. Debbie Riley, Environmental Health Manager introduced Ms. Pam Benett Cumming and Ms. Stephanie Kenny as Environmental Health staff in the water quality program.

**Water Quality Annual Report:**

Ms. Pam Benett-Cumming and Ms. Stephanie Kenny gave a PowerPoint presentation on water quality. The presentation was an overview of what the water quality program does and a report of 2004 services provided. Ms. Benett-Cummings stated that she covers the county from the top of Mason Lake up through the Hood Canal to the north county line and Ms. Kenny covers Mason Lake and south to the county line for the water quality issues. Their job is to protect county health in ways that are integrated with all the rest of the health services. She explained how their jobs integrated with the other departments.

Ms. Benett-Cummings stated they monitor the streams, swim beaches, salt water, lakes, and ground water work. Essentials they identify and remediate problems working with property owners on land use practices, septic system maintenance and repair, homeowner education, and presentations to groups and homeowner associations. The homeowner education is done individually.

Ms. Kenny presented a map showing where the ambient monitoring is done in the county; it is one of the long-term programs that the two of them work on. There are fifty-six sites in the county and most of them are streams. Ms. Kenny stated that most of the areas they monitor are recommended from Watershed Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) and the reports are forwarded to the committee.

Ms. Kenny wrote a grant based on the concerns of the Skokomish Valley residents that the water levels were continuing to rise in the valley. The county received the grant to install port piezometers at ten different locations in the valley. This allows a measurement of the ground water to be measured regularly. Over a long-term period of time the report would show if there were a rise in the ground water.

Ms. Kamin asked if the results to date show an increase in the ground water.

Ms. Kenny stated that it has been monitored for two years and it is not enough to say it has increased. She said that it would be about ten years before it could be considered long term monitoring then a true evaluation could be done with the testing results. Ms. Kenny stated that currently the water level is only about three or four feet under ground even in the summer.

Ms. Kenny reviewed the lakes program. There are 223 lakes in Mason County. The Department of Ecology provides very few services to those lakes. This was the first year Mason County provided public outreach and education to the lake property population. Ms. Kenny said there are fourteen swimming beaches on the lakes and she monitors them during swimming season to test for bacteria levels.

Federal money has been passed down to the County and the Skokomish Tribe to fund a marine beach program. The County and the Tribe work in partnership on the project to test public swimming beaches on the marine waters.

Marine shellfish areas are monitored in support of a Washington State Department of Health (DOH) program. To ensure the shellfish being harvested are safe to eat.

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All of the solid waste, bio-solid application sites, and the wood waste landfills have been designed so pollution is not supposed to leak out of the sites. The long term assurance program that the County provides is to monitor quarterly testing of the ground and surface water in and surrounding areas where contamination would be likely to reach first if it was indeed coming out of the site.

Ms. Bennett-Cumming reviewed the special projects that the two of them work on. The Norovirus alert was issued for Mason County after someone in Oregon got sick from eating oysters harvested from Shelton. The site was dye tested and found not to be the cause of the virus.

The water quality program was involved in the monitoring of the illegal dumping of bio-solid waste on property in Mason County. Samples were taken around the property and in the stream that flowed through the property for bacteria. Normal levels of bacteria were found in the testing. The testing was done weekly, biweekly and monthly until the State Department of Health notified them to stop the testing.

Ms. Kamin asked if that area had ever had reports of water quality problems in the past.

Ms. Bennett-Cumming replied that the DOH required samples of Oakland Bay which is near the site because there are shellfish harvested from there. There were times when bacteria levels were up but it was at a particular site. The illegal dumping was the closest line of fresh water input near that site but it was not lined up to prove that was the cause. Close monitoring was done at the time.

Poor water quality in Hoodspout, Allyn, and Uncle Johns Creek has been identified. Water quality tests are done regularly. The Hoodspout work is in support of the research for a potential sewer system. In the Allyn area there have been water quality problems in the marine waters. Some of the problems have been resolved so DOH reopened some of the shellfish harvest areas.

The Hood Canal dissolved oxygen problem has been a very serious topic in the water quality program. They are working with the other counties water quality programs to coordinate the monitoring of the streams that feed into the Canal.

Ms. Bennett-Cumming stated public outreach and education is the most important part of their jobs. They work very closely with other agencies including the Conservation District, both the Skokomish and Squaxin Tribes, State agencies, and Federal agencies on grant and partnership programs.

The grant projects currently include the lower Union River restoration study, and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study. The restoration study is sanitary surveys and dye tracing, and the TMDL is the monitoring of the Skokomish River. Projects in the near future include a nutrient management study in the Skokomish Valley and the Skokomish Annis Bay restoration study. All these projects are managed through partnerships with other groups.

The latest grant that was written for Hood Canal included a component to educate students in a field experience based program. Today's students are our tomorrow's environmental decision-makers and they don't often get opportunities to work on real world problems. The dissolved oxygen issue is a serious issue and would be a chance for students to learn how to identify and explore solutions to the problem.

There have been many public complaints about the eastside of HWY 106 and Purdy Canyon Road. The public has concerns of run-off from the Webb Hill bio-solid site. Studies have already been conducted on the wells to say the run-off has not been an issue to them. A grant for funding has been submitted to investigate further of any run off from that site.

**ENVIROMENTAL HEALTH WAIVERS/VARIANCES - None**

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**ADJOURNED**

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m. due to no further business.

BOARD OF HEALTH  
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Lynda Ring Erickson, Chairperson

HEALTH OFFICER

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Jayni Kamin, Board Member

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Dr. Diane Yu, Health Officer

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Tim Sheldon, Board Member