Our Mission
Through its programs and services, the Washoe County District Health Department pursues the public health mission of health promotion, disease prevention and environmental protection to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Reno, Sparks and Washoe County, Nevada.
District Health Officer’s MESSAGE
Barbara Lee Hunt, RN, MPA

We can take pride in our accomplishments in fiscal year 2000/2001. Just to name a few: the Truckee Meadows did not exceed air quality standards even once, over 1,600 special events permits were issued with not a single special event-related case of food-borne illness reported, and thanks to the efforts of residents and the business community, Washoe County’s recycling rate of 24 percent is the highest in Nevada.

While our accomplishments have been gratifying, our agenda for the future is full. Structuring for the future is one of our top priorities. In April, we completed an internal review of the District Health Department. The review findings described our strengths and weaknesses as an agency and made recommendations to assist employees and the District Board of Health to better meet the needs of a growing and diverse population and improve delivery of service and our region’s quality of life. As we implement these recommendations, we expect to become even more efficient and effective in our day-to-day operations and better able to identify and meet our community’s public health needs.

We have changed the format of our annual report to make it more meaningful. We compare how we are doing in Washoe County to the United States Department of Human Services’ Healthy People 2010 objectives and Truckee Meadows Tomorrow Quality of Life Indicators. Healthy People 2010 objectives are ten-year strategies for improving the nation’s health, increasing the quality and years of life and eliminating health disparities. By comparing ourselves to these benchmarks, we can better target appropriate interventions to improve Washoe County’s health and track our progress.

While Washoe County is a great place to live, the District Health Department, with our community partners, continues to make strides in improving our quality of life and making our community an even better place. On behalf of the members of the District Board of Health and the staff of the District Health Department, I am pleased to present our annual report for fiscal year 2000/2001.

Barbara Lee Hunt

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District Board of Health

The District Board of Health is a policy-making board composed of seven members, which includes two representatives each from Reno, Sparks and Washoe County and a physician licensed to practice medicine in Nevada. The District Board of Health, through the District Health Department, has jurisdiction over all public health matters in the Health District.

The District Board of Health is committed to furthering our public health mission of health promotion, disease prevention and environmental protection. At a strategic planning retreat held in October 2000, the District Board of Health adopted four 12-month priorities: health data and assessment, infrastructure development, performance and outcomes measures and long-term planning, and our vision statement.

Our Vision

We are leaders in a unified community committed to optimal human and environmental health.

THE DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH

Robert K. Myles, MD, Chairman, Board Appointed
Phillip Salerno, City of Sparks
Laurie-Anne Squartsoff, City of Sparks
Jim Shaw, Washoe County
Jacqueline Glenn-McIntire, RN, BSN, Vice Chairman, Washoe County
Jerry Hall, City of Reno
Jessica Sferrazza-Hogan, City of Reno

FAMILY PLANNING

FAMILY PLANNING

Pam Becker
Ruth Cypher
Nancy Townsend
Niki Firpo
Ruby Carrasco
Stacy Hardie
Claudia Ibarra
Cheryl O’Grady

Jeanie Onitsuka
Linda Platz
Mike Haley
Julie Richards
Karen Vernon
Reverend John Ruby
Mike Wurm
Katie Tanner

AIR POLLUTION

CONTROL

Russell W. Berg
Patrick E. Fritchel, P.E.
Jon S. Greene
David A. Rinaldi
Joseph M. Serpa
Terry A. Simmons, Ph.D.
Kimberly P. Wood, Esq.

SOLID WASTE

MANAGEMENT

John W. Cunningham
Donald T. Flood
George T. Kerr, III
Laura Link
Keith Skinner
Richard L. Tannehill
Robert B. Valceschini, P.E.

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

SANITATION

Paul Abowd
Michael Chaump
Fred A. DeMars

Vern Martin
Jerry Montoya
Roger White

SEWAGE, WASTEWATER AND SANITATION

Ted Osgood, P.E.
Karen Sage Roseneau
Ron Anderson, P.E.
Harlan F. Frickie, P.E.

Carl M. Hebert, Esq.
Michele C. Dennis, P.E.
Steven H. Brigman, P.E.
Eileen Coulombe, BA, oversees the Administrative Health Services Division (AHS) and its internal and external operations. AHS currently carries a combination of direct and indirect program responsibilities.

The following pages highlight some of AHS program activities and accomplishments which support the core public health functions of assessment, assurance and policy development.

### Washoe County District Health Department Fiscal Year 2000/2001

**REVENUES**
- TAX TRANSFER $6,392,000 45.0%
- FEDERAL-THROUGH STATE $2,870,587 18.8%
- DIRECT FEDERAL $978,959 6.9%
- SERVICE CHARGES $1,427,397 10.1%
- PERMIT FEES $1,470,622 10.4%
- STATE APPROPRIATIONS $846,712 6.0%
- HEALTH AID TO COUNTY $262,264 1.8%
- TOTAL REVENUE $14,048,541 99.0%
- ENDING FUND BALANCE $138,840 1.0%
- ADJUSTED TOTAL REVENUES $14,187,381 100.0%

**EXPENDITURES**
- SALARIES $8,797,229 62.0%
- BENEFITS $2,465,100 17.4%
- SERVICES & SUPPLIES $2,863,879 20.2%
- CAPITAL OUTLAY $61,173 0.4%
- TOTAL EXPENDITURES $14,187,381 100.0%

### WIC-READY TO LEARN

The United States Department of Agriculture’s Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a preventive health and nutrition program targeting pregnant, post-partum and breastfeeding women and children, birth to age five.

WIC serves approximately 6,700 clients per month at two WIC clinics in Reno and one in Sun Valley. Participants receive a monthly nutritious food package addressing their individual needs, referrals to other health and social services and nutritional education.

**In May 2001, WIC won the Silver Syringe Award for 80% immunization rates at all Washoe County Clinics.**
Education

Education is the cornerstone of WIC and the component that sets WIC apart from other food assistance programs. Through nutrition education, WIC teaches clients about their own and their family’s lifelong nutritional and health care requirements, extending WIC’s benefits beyond the period clients participate in the program – for a lifetime.

Decreasing Infant Mortality and Low Birth Weight

Studies have shown WIC to be the second most cost-effective program for reducing infant mortality in the United States. Only prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy proved to be more cost effective.

WIC also produces long-term savings in special education costs. Children born with low birth weight are 49 percent more likely than other children to be enrolled in special education. The United States spends $370 million a year on special education for children whose handicaps resulted primarily from low birth weight. Infants born to WIC mothers have significantly higher birth weights than their non-WIC counterparts, and infant birth weight increases in proportion to the duration of the mother’s participation in WIC.

Health Passport Smart Card-A First Year Success

Ten thousand Health Passport Smart Cards have been issued in Washoe County since June 2000. The Smart Card looks like an ATM card and contains a computer chip that stores an individual’s WIC records. The card streamlines the purchase of food by using electronic benefit transfer at grocery store checkout counters. The card also saves client and clinic staff time by encoding benefits to the card electronically, eliminating unneeded clinic appointments.

28% OF WASHOE COUNTY ADULTS SMOKE

Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in our society. With one of the highest smoking rates in the nation, Washoe County’s political leaders and community residents face tremendous challenges in addressing the health risks and negative health consequences stemming from the chronic use of cigarettes and other tobacco products.

Smoking in Washoe County will have to be reduced by more than half to reach Healthy People 2010 objective of 12%.

Legislative Efforts

During the 2001 Nevada State legislative session, the District Health Department testified at several hearings on tobacco issues. One of the most important issues to the District
Health Department and the District Board of Health is local control.

Currently, local governments cannot pass ordinances/regulations that are more restrictive than that of the state. This means that Reno, Sparks and Washoe County cannot enact ordinances restricting smoking in eating establishments, casinos or grocery stores – even if the residents want it – without the state legislature enacting new legislation to change the current Nevada Revised Statutes. Efforts to enact new legislation at the 2001 legislative session were unsuccessful, but with community partners throughout Nevada, we will continue to work toward reducing the harmful effects of tobacco use through legislation or policy change.

In partnership with Saint Mary’s Health Network, a telephone survey of 455 Washoe County residents to assess attitudes toward tobacco control was conducted. A summary of the findings follows:

- 84% agree convenience stores should be smoke free
- 82% agree fast food restaurants should be smoke free
- 78% request non-smoking rooms when traveling
- 74% request a non-smoking table when dining out

Coalitions

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, through funding from the State of Nevada from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has established the Washoe County Tobacco Coalition (WCTC). One of WCTC’s goals is to develop an effective tobacco control program for Washoe County residents. The coalition uses the CDC’s best practice guidelines, and a variety of other efforts aimed at youths and adults to reduce tobacco use in Washoe County.

“A.T.R.A.C.T (Active Teens Rally Against Chew and Tobacco) is a new youth coalition, formed this past year, to help reduce tobacco use among youth in Washoe County. This coalition gives Washoe County youth a forum to discuss tobacco issues and offers ways for them to make a difference by changing attitudes and perceptions about tobacco use through positive peer pressure. The coalition is supported by the Task Force for a Fund for a Healthy Nevada grant, Saint Mary’s Health Network and the District Health Department.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program ensures the quality of emergency medical transport services, and in collaboration with our community partners, prepares for and responds to disasters.

Ground and Helicopter Ambulance Transport

The EMS Program works to ensure all patients with life threatening emergencies receive accessible, rapid, quality and cost-effective emergency medical care. Staff monitors Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority’s (REMSA) response times, listening to over 1,100 calls on tape at the REMSA Dispatch Center last year. Ninety-two percent of the time, REMSA had an ambulance on the scene within the time required by the District Board of Health.

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“*The major source of new smokers is young people – 89% of smokers smoked their first cigarette when they were less than 18 years old.”*

- National Network for Health

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Medical Disaster Management

The EMS staff helps agencies work together to decrease negative health impacts during and after disasters. In August 2000, EMS and Environmental Health Services (EHS) participated with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to develop a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) section for our regional Hazardous Materials Emergency plan. The section was developed to help prepare local agencies in case of an act of terrorism. A WMD event is different from a hazardous material event because a WMD event is a crime scene with multiple casualties and therefore, a different set of protocols are followed. WMD events can include nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) attacks.

To further ensure our preparedness, EMS staff collaborated with other local health and first responder agencies to complete a 300-question public health assessment to rate the community’s ability to respond to terrorist events. The self assessment indicated that we are well on our way to being fully prepared to respond should there be a terrorist event in Washoe County. This data was entered into the United States Department of Justice database and will be shared with other agencies throughout the nation.

QPR CAN SAVE A LIFE

In June, the District Health Department embraced an ambitious program to reduce the suicide rate in Washoe County by underwriting the QPR Gatekeeper Instructor Certification Course. QPR stands for Question, Persuade and Refer — the three steps anyone can take to help save a life from suicide. This course taught 28 people about the nature and extent of the suicide epidemic, the likely causes of suicidal behavior, how to recognize suicide warning signs and how to QPR.

Participants committed to teach QPR for Suicide Prevention for various community groups and organizations in the coming year. These new QPR instructors are courtroom and victim advocates, elementary, high school and college counselors, a program director for the Sanford Center for Aging, school police, Crisis Call staff, social workers and a parent who lost her son to suicide.

Linda Dunn, District Health Department Health Educator and coordinator of the training event states, “We believe that members of our community, regardless of their background, can assist public health in educating others about how they can save lives from suicide. Like CPR, knowing what to do at the time it needs to be done can save lives.”

Washoe County’s suicide rate of 21 per 100,000 population is far from the Healthy People 2010 target rate of 5 suicides per 100,000 persons.

Participation in disaster exercises helps keep us prepared should there be a multi-casualty event.
Quality of life indicators are often different for each individual, but clean air adds to the quality of everyone’s life. It is the mission of the Air Quality Management Division (AQMD), under the direction of Andrew Goodrich, REM, to seek solutions to our community’s air pollution problems in order to protect the health and well-being of the public. This is accomplished through a variety of activities, including public education, regulatory activity and community partnerships. During the past several years, the number of good days for air quality has exceeded the standards set by Truckee Meadows Tomorrow and Healthy People 2010. However, AQMD must remain ever vigilant in the fight for clean air.

PARTNERS WITH THE WASHOE COMMUNITY ASTHMA COALITION

“Washoe County is home to approximately 339,500 people, and it is estimated that almost 44,000 are asthmatic,” states David Byerman, Executive Director of the Washoe Community Asthma Coalition. Asthma is a serious and growing health concern. According to asthma statistics from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, in the United States “asthma is responsible for about 500,000 hospitalizations, 5,000 deaths and 134 million days of restricted activity a year.”

Elevated levels of carbon monoxide, particulate matter and sulfur dioxide have been associated with increased incidents of asthma and other respiratory health problems. AQMD is so committed to reducing the negative health effects of air pollution that in addition to ensuring compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washoe County regulations and monitoring the air, AQMD took an active and financial role in helping to establish and support the Washoe Community Asthma Coalition.
The coalition’s membership includes hospitals, government agencies and asthma experts. The overarching goal of this coalition is to promote early detection and reduce preventable attacks and deaths from this chronic disease.

We know asthma prevalence and death rates are increasing nationally. But we don’t know the asthma trends for Nevada or Washoe County. Establishing a comprehensive surveillance system for Washoe County is one of the coalition’s main goals.

MONITORING OUR AIR QUALITY

AQMD determines the levels of pollution in the air through sophisticated testing systems located at several monitoring sites. Nine different sites, located throughout Washoe County, are carefully maintained and independently audited to guarantee accurate information. The information from these sites is used to determine the pollutant concentrations and to calculate the daily Air Quality Index (AQI). This information is provided 24 hours a day to the public via the Air Quality Hotline and through local newspaper, radio and television reports.

Since 1999, Washoe County has met the Healthy People 2010 objectives of zero unhealthful days for harmful air pollutants - ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen and sulfur dioxide and lead.

PERMITTING/COMPLIANCE

AQMD issues operating permits to stationary sources as a means of controlling industrial air pollution. Currently, over 1,500 operations, from asphalt production plants and assay labs to dry cleaners and gasoline stations, are registered and require annual permits to operate. Division engineers and specialists regularly check these businesses to ensure that they are operating as cleanly as possible.

Enforcement of the District Board of Health regulations governing air pollution control is an important activity in controlling air pollution in Washoe County. AQMD staff work with violators to educate them on solving air pollution problems. When problems recur, violators must face the Air Pollution Control Hearing Board, and may be fined up to $10,000 per day for violations. All fines collected are distributed to the Washoe County School District (WCSD), in accordance with Nevada State law.
The year 2001 saw a new and inventive use for these fine monies, when the AQMD and the WCSD agreed that two-thirds of all fines collected and given to the school district will be awarded as science project grants. Since the amount of dollars collected each fiscal year varies, the number of projects funded will also vary throughout the coming years.

WE DEPEND ON YOUR INVOLVEMENT

Citizen complaints help in enforcing air quality regulations. Staff is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and responded to approximately 668 complaints last year.

### Investigations Conducted in 2000

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CLEAN FUELS FOR CLEANER AIR

Clean-burning alternative fuels for transportation are a widely recognized solution to the single largest source of air pollution — cars and trucks.

The AQMD has been actively promoting, as well as using, alternative fuels for several years. Alternatives to strictly petroleum-based fuels in Washoe County include compressed natural gas (CNG), propane (LPG), electricity and bio-fuels. Recently, hybrid technology has had a positive influence in the consumer market of ultra-low emission vehicles.

During fiscal year 2000/2001, the AQMD was successful in securing over $2 million of Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds, which were provided to the WCSD for the purchase of CNG school buses and the construction of CNG filling stations. The new buses utilize the latest engine technology for very low emissions and have the added benefit of being considerably less noisy than their diesel counterpart. Clean vehicles will be a necessity in the future if we expect clean air for our children. The AQMD is working to bring that future here today.

As an active participant in the Truckee Meadows Clean Cities Coalition, the AQMD has pursued and received funding from the Nevada State Department of Motor Vehicles for coalition objectives, including the rebuilding of a public CNG filling station. The Clean Cities Coalition is a United States
On June 17, 2001, the Martis Fire began just over the California/Nevada state line and continued to cause air pollution problems in the Truckee Meadows for over a week. Summer wild fires are common, but this fire was very close, causing pollution levels to fluctuate between unhealthful during morning hours and moderate during afternoons.

Particulate matter, or PM10, is calculated on a 24-hour average, which explains why the Air Quality Index for each day was only in the moderate range. Slight temperature inversions during early morning hours, and little to no wind, helped to bring the smoke right into our breathing space each day of the fire. Until temperatures warmed up and winds helped move the smoke out of the valley, there were some hours that were considered to be in the unhealthful range. Staff worked around-the-clock to provide the public with updated information on pollution levels.

A new program for 1st through 3rd graders has been developed and is now being used to teach Washoe County children about air pollution, its health effects, and what can be done to help control it.

**EDUCATION IS KEY TO REDUCING AIR POLLUTION**

The two largest sources of air pollution are directly caused by individual activities: private vehicles and home heating. Therefore, it is imperative that we provide accurate and timely information about air quality so you can take steps to protect your health and can reduce air pollution by modifying your daily habits. This includes reducing wood burning, increasing car pooling, riding Citifare, keeping automobiles in good repair, planning car trips and reducing your physical activity during unhealthful days.

**Did you know?**

- One smoking car puts out as much pollution as 100 clean burning cars
- We drive over eight million miles every day in the Truckee Meadows
- Errands account for approximately 75% of all of our daily trips

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Department of Energy-recognized program comprised of local fleet owners and operators dedicated to the pursuit of clean alternative transportation fuels. The AQMD is currently working with a local taxicab fleet by providing assistance for the construction of another CNG filling site.

*Alternative fuels for vehicles is a top priority of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy and the District Health Department.*

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**WILD FIRES 2001**

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Under the direction of Wende Latham, RN, MSN, Community and Clinical Health Services (CCHS) continued the transition of services to community partners. The transfer of the International Travel Immunizations Clinic to Saint Mary’s Health Network and the contractual TB/HIV testing at the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (BADA) certified rehabilitation sites to Northern Nevada HOPES allows the division to focus on building our infrastructure, concentrate more on core public health functions and better align our programs with the needs of the community.

While we still have challenges in reducing infant mortality, teen pregnancy and communicable disease rates and increasing immunization levels in Washoe County, we have made strides this past year in educating the community about these health concerns and improving the quality of life for the residents of Washoe County.

**PROTECTING OUR FUTURE**

**Nurse Home Visit**

Timely and appropriate prenatal care is known to help prevent poor birth outcomes. The age of the mother, single parenthood, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use, domestic violence and poverty are risk factors that can prevent women from receiving proper prenatal care. The primary focus for Public Health Nurses (PHNs) working in the Nurse Home Visit Program is to ensure access to prenatal care for pregnant women who fall within these high-risk groups.

In 2000, 86% of pregnant women in Washoe County received early and adequate prenatal care. With programs like Nurse Home Visit, we hope to meet the Healthy People 2010 target rate of 90%.
In 2000, the Immunization Program provided services to over 6,800 persons at off-site and community locations. Some of the achievements included:

- Over 1,400 middle school students received Hepatitis B vaccinations (a three-shot series) at their school at no charge
- Over 2,500 hundred children were immunized in their own neighborhood when they visited the Saint Mary’s Take-Care-A-Van and neighborhood WIC offices

After the baby arrives, PHNs assist families to cope with the stressors they face by providing education about infant growth and development, nutrition, parenting skills and how to access other community resources. We believe this program has contributed to the 15 percent decrease in child abuse and neglect reports in Washoe County over the past five years.

**Immunization**

Vaccination has played a key role in the reduction of infectious diseases and continues to be an important safeguard for children’s health. Vaccines not only protect the immunized individual, but the community as well. Identifying children at risk and making it easier for them to be immunized will help our community reach its goal of fully immunizing every child by the age of two.

In 1999, Washoe County’s immunization rate for children under two years old was 73.4%. Our goal is to exceed the Healthy People 2010 objective of 90%.

In 2000, 2,844 client contacts were made in high-risk neighborhoods.
The District Health Department has been working to increase community participation and partnership in our immunization effort. Program staff provides vaccine and technical support to every pediatrician’s office and 64 percent of the family practice providers in Washoe County.

While more and more medical providers offer immunizations in our community, the District Health Department still administered almost 49,000 shots in 2000, or 39 percent of the total doses given in the community.

"Some African and European countries have immunization rates of 100%" World Health Organization

Reducing the number of babies born to teen mothers continues to be a challenge. Nevada ranks fourth in the nation for teen pregnancy and Washoe County’s rate is even higher than the state’s rate.

In 2000, for every 1,000 female teenagers age 15 to 19 years living in Washoe County, there were 93 births. The Healthy People 2010 target rate is 46 per 1,000.

Teen pregnancy presents a number of public health concerns. The majority of teenage mothers do not fare as well as those who delay childbearing. They tend to have difficulty completing their education, resulting in fewer employment opportunities and dependency on public assistance.

Children born to teenage mothers are at greater risk for child abuse and neglect, more likely to be born prematurely and drop out of school. According to the Nevada State Health Division, “daughters of teenage mothers are more likely to become teenage mothers; sons of teenage mothers are more likely to go to prison.”

To help reduce the teen pregnancy rate and educate teens in Washoe County, the District Health Department offers Teen Health Mall, a clinic providing confidential medical services to teens ages 12 to 19. In fiscal year 2000/2001, 73 percent of the visits to Teen Health Mall were for family planning services.

Teen Health Mall advertisements are in all high school newspapers and brochures and are distributed at local community-based programs that work with adolescents. Most teens who access these services have no medical provider.

Initiated in 2000, the Pregnant and Parenting Teens Speakers Panel provides first-hand experiences and testimonials to at-risk teens by teen parents and teen parents-to-be. The speakers describe how their lives have changed since becoming pregnant or a parent. Abstinence and postponing pregnancy until adulthood are the main objectives of the panel. Program evaluations and posttest questionnaires strongly support this program and its message — teen pregnancy prevention is an important issue.
Teen childbearing costs taxpayers an estimated 6.9 billion a year.”
- Nevada State Health Division

THE BEST PROTECTION IS EARLY DETECTION

Breast and cervical cancers are common cancers among women. Regular screening is vital for early detection and successful treatment. Breast cancer screening methods, such as mammograms, could prevent approximately 15-30 percent of all deaths for women over 40. Virtually all cervical cancer deaths could be prevented with timely and appropriate screening.

Over 50 percent of the clients seen in the Family Planning Clinic in fiscal year 2000/2001, received a Pap test. Breast exams are provided with all routine exams. Clients age 40 to 50 receive subsidized breast and cervical cancer screening through the Women’s Health Connection, a state and federally sponsored program for low-income women age 40 and older. Funding is also available for abnormal Pap and clinical breast exams.

The Family Planning Clinic collaborates with the Mammovan of Northern Nevada to provide screening mammograms free of charge to low-income women.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

HIV/AIDS

Washoe County saw a 33 percent increase in newly reported Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infections between 1999 and 2000.

While this increase may seem alarming, we believe the increase means that the message about the need for prevention and early detection of HIV is being heard.

Identifying more HIV-positive clients is due largely to the collaborative outreach efforts of the District Health Department’s HIV Prevention Program and the Northern Nevada Outreach Team (NNOT). This partnership, formed in 2000, establishes community-based testing sites targeting high-risk individuals: the injecting drug users, women at high risk, men who have sex with men, as well as the homeless and sex worker populations. The number of HIV tests performed increased 12 percent last year, with the greatest increase among groups at highest risk for contracting HIV.

HIV education is the most powerful weapon for reducing the risk of HIV infection. While substantial gains have been made in the treatment of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), which is caused by HIV,
those practicing risky behaviors still need to be concerned about this serious disease.

**Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

The more than 25 infectious organisms transmitted primarily through sexual activity are collectively referred to as Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). According to information supplied to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by state health departments, STDs accounted for 87 percent of the 10 infections most frequently reported.

Since STDs are known to be behavior-linked diseases that result from unprotected sex, and there is often a lag time between infection and when symptoms appear, education is key to reducing the incidence of STDs. The Washoe County District Health Department has developed a program with education as its main component. The program emphasizes strategies that empower individuals to decrease risk-related behaviors, thereby decreasing the incidence of new STD infections in the community. In addition to education, clinic staff provides STD counseling and testing, diagnosis, treatment and referral services.

In the 1940s, scientists discovered the first of several drugs now used to treat TB. As a result, TB slowly began to disappear in the United States. But TB has made a comeback. Since 1984, the number of TB cases reported in the United States increased.

"TB is not a disease of the past. One-third of the world's population is infected with TB. Annually, 8 million people develop the disease and 2 million deaths occur from TB.”

- World Health Organization

The goal of the Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program is to prevent and control TB in order to reduce morbidity, disability and premature death. The District Health Department’s Chest Clinic provides tuberculin testing for the community. More importantly for the uninsured and underinsured, it provides preventive therapy for persons who have tested positive for TB and treatment for those with active disease.

**Eliminating Tuberculosis**

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It can attack any part of the body, but usually attacks the lungs. TB disease was once the leading cause of death in the United States.

Did you know?

Chlamydia is the most common STD reported in the United States and in Washoe County. It is caused by the Chlamydia trachomatis organism and is sometimes called the “silent epidemic,” as infections are asymptomatic in as many as 70-90% of women and up to 50% of the infections in men.

In 2000, Washoe County had a reported incidence of 4.2 cases of TB per 100,000 persons. The Healthy People 2010 target goal is 1 case per 100,000 persons.

Public Health Nurse, Judy Medved-Gonzalez, prepares an X-ray for review.
Carl Cahill, MS, Division Director of Environmental Health Services (EHS), leads the team that ensures compliance with local, state and federal laws regulating food, waste, water, vector and other areas of public health in Washoe County. The many programs under the EHS umbrella have an emphasis on enforcement, but also have a strong education component, promoting a collaborative approach with industry to meet established public health goals at the local and national levels.

This section highlights significant program achievements and public health challenges faced during the last fiscal year.

**PROTECTING YOU FROM FOOD-BORNE ILLNESSES**

**Food Safety Education**

Every permitted food establishment in Washoe County with more than five employees must have a certified foodservice manager on staff to ensure that food is handled under safe and sanitary conditions.

To become a certified foodservice manager, managers must attend a 16-hour training class on food preparation, food-borne disease prevention and food sanitation to protect the health and safety of consumers. Training is conducted in English and Spanish.

> District Health Department studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between the education that food managers received and higher inspection scores and decreased incidence of hazardous violations.
The key to the success of the program has been the overwhelming support of industry. Industry’s commitment to ensuring that all managers are trained and all standards are met have yielded higher inspection scores, allowing District Health Department staff to conduct only one inspection per establishment a year rather than the three to four a year that were required prior to the introduction of the training.

Since 1991, more than 3,135 food managers have successfully completed approved training programs and have been certified.

**KIDS CAFÉ**

The District Health Department is proud to be a part of the Kids Café Program, providing assistance in developing Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans and ensuring that all applicable food safety standards and regulations are being met.

The Kids Café is a collaborative local feeding program, which provides free evening meals to children living in low-income neighborhoods in the Reno/Sparks area. The program targets the 16,000 Washoe County school children whose households have no sit-down evening or lunch meals, especially those children who would otherwise go home to an empty house because their parents work late shifts or have multiple jobs. In addition to fulfilling their nutrition needs, the children are also able to make social connections with other children at the Kids Café.

During the traditional school year, the District Health Department monitors food safety at 16 Kids Café sites (local schools and a church), serving more than 700 meals a day. And for the first time this summer, breakfast lunch and/or dinner were served at three parks: Robinhood Park, Poulakidas Park and Deer Park.

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Special Events team issued more than 1,600 permits and conducted 2,500 around-the-clock inspections of the hundreds of events held...
Throughout the year in Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. At special events ranging from Hot August Nights to the Rib Cook-Off and the National Championship Air Races, an estimated 800,000 to 1,000,000 meals are served each year. Despite the large number of meals served each year, there were no cases of food-borne illness outbreaks related to special events during the last five years.

**EPI TEAM RESPONDS**

Personnel from both EHS and CCHS staff the District Health Department’s Epidemiology (EPI) team. The EPI team investigates and monitors reportable communicable diseases, addressing disease prevention and outbreak control through public health education and collaboration with the medical community and state and federal agencies.

**Our Standards Adopted by the United States Forest Service**

The EPI team developed guidelines for food handling and sanitation at fire base camps following their four-month investigation of an illness outbreak among firefighters battling the Arrowcreek Fire in August 2000. These guidelines were adopted as standards for wildfire base camps by the United States Forest Service and were in use during the 2001 Martis Fire that employed over 2,000 firefighters. There were no illnesses reported from the Martis Fire base camp.

**Staff Takes Public Health Lead in Anthrax Outbreak Response**

In August 2000, epizootic anthrax emerged in Washoe County, spreading to several ranches from Gerlach to south Reno, killing over 100 cows. Prompt antibiotic treatment and vaccinations helped to limit further spread of the deadly disease. Working with the Nevada Department of Agriculture in response to the outbreak, the Vector staff and the EPI team educated local residents through personal contact, an anthrax fact sheet and an anthrax hotline in addition to interviews with the news media. The Vector Program staff was also instrumental in treatment and safe disposal of carcasses.

**WE’RE #1**

**WASHOE COUNTY HAS THE HIGHEST RECYCLING RATE IN NEVADA**

The Solid Waste Management Program oversees all matters involving solid waste in Washoe County, including monitoring waste collection and disposal; enforcing regulations involving permits; landfill and transfer station operations and importation of out-of-state municipal solid waste. Staff also develops and implements public education campaigns for waste reduction, reuse and recycling and the purchase of environmentally friendly products.
EPA Wastewise Partner of the Year

For an unprecedented third year in a row, the Solid Waste Management Program and the Washoe County Purchasing Department were honored as the Local Government Wastewise Partner of the Year by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Wastewise Program is a joint effort between the District Health Department, which has solid waste management authority for the region, and the Washoe County Purchasing Department, which is responsible for all purchases and contracts executed by the county. Under the national Wastewise Program, staff established annual program goals aimed at waste reduction, reuse, purchasing recycled products and recycling. Their goals and accomplishments were reported to the EPA, which tracks participants’ progress. Of the 138 local government agencies, the District Health Department and Washoe County Purchasing Department partnership was first in saving money while reducing waste and increasing recycling and reuse efforts.

There is No Such Thing as Garbage

The Nevada Materials Exchange (www.nevadamax.org) is a service partnership sponsored by the District Health Department and the Nevada Small Business Development Center’s Environmental Program. NEVADAMAX is a free website service designed to help individuals, business and industry and non-profit organizations find markets for materials or wastes they have traditionally discarded. It also allows the user to search for available and wanted materials.

NEVADAMAX saves resources, money, energy and landfill space. The website is available for use 24 hours a day, seven days a week. NEVADAMAX also can provide links to other material exchange and resource information websites.

Clean Your Files Day

Twelve tons of recyclables were collected in this one-day event which promoted waste reduction, recycling and reuse in the workplace.

PROTECTING THE QUALITY OF TRUCKEE MEADOWS STREAMS AND WATER

Safe Water Engineering staff ensures that the over 100 public water systems in Washoe County comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Nevada Public Water System Construction Regulations. The regulations ensure that the water purveyors provide safe and reliable water. Program staff tracks over
Engineering staff has been instrumental in developing solutions to the problem by working with citizens and county agencies to address future contamination issues through policy and regulation development.

Through the leadership and expertise of the Environmental Engineering staff, Washoe County Land Use regulations were amended to protect area streams and water quality. Working in conjunction with Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs), realtors and developers, regulations now prohibit development within 30 feet of streambeds.

The Engineering staff works with state and local agencies to protect groundwater quality. Based on staff’s research of nitrate contamination in Spanish Springs and Cold Springs Valleys, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection ordered Washoe County and affected residents to develop an action plan to address the nitrate problem. The

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Vector Control Task Force

In 1999, the Vector-Borne Disease Program staff began holding meetings with CABs throughout the Truckee Meadows to educate area residents and decision-makers about the needs of the Vector-Borne Disease Program and how citizens can positively impact future program goals.

Following this series of meetings, the Vector Control Task Force was formed in the spring of 2000. The task force was created to address the dramatic growth and development in Washoe County and its impact on the ability of the program to continue delivery of high-level services to the community. Task force members included CAB members, concerned citizens, golfers and public sector employees whose first job was to draft a plan for the continuation of services at the level which residents had come to expect. A major component of the plan was a District Board of Health resolution supporting a stable base budget and an increase in staffing levels, both of which were approved through the Washoe County budget process in the spring of 2001.
Guide to Health Services

Washoe County District Health Department
1001 East 9th Street (Corner of 9th & Wells)
P.O. Box 11130, Reno, Nevada 89520-0027
Service Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

Immunization Clinics
(Please bring your child’s shot record)

Monday through Friday:
District Health Department
1001 E. 9th St., Reno
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Mondays:
Stead Police Station Annex
1055 Stead Blvd.
1:00 - 5:00 pm

Tuesdays:
South Reno WIC Clinic
Smiths Shopping Center
3652 South Virginia St., Suite C7
8:30 am-5:00 pm

Wednesdays:
Sun Valley WIC Clinic
5295 Sun Valley Blvd., Suite 8
Corner of Gepford Pkwy & SV Blvd
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday:
Call 328-3724 for dates and times

Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Clinics

Monday through Friday:
District Health Department
1001 E. 9th St., Reno
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
328-2299

South Reno Clinic
Smiths Shopping Center
3652 South Virginia St., Suite C7
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
828-6600

Tuesday through Friday:
Sun Valley WIC Clinic
5295 Sun Valley Blvd., Suite 8
Corner of Gepford Pkwy & SV Blvd.
8:00 am – Noon & 1:00 - 5:00 pm
674-8461
For WIC information in Incline Village call 828-6600

General Information ........................................ 328-2400
FAX ........................................ 328-2279
Internet Address .................. www.co.washoe.nv.us/Health

Administrative Health Services (AHS)
AHS Main Phone Number .................. 328-2410
Chronic Disease and Injury .................. 328-2459
Emergency Medical Services ............... 328-2411
Tobacco Prevention and Control .......... 328-2442
Vital Statistics (Birth & Death Certificates) 328-2456
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
Food and Nutrition ....................... 328-2299
WIC Marketing .......................... 328-2448

Air Quality Management Division (AQMD)
401 Ryland, Rm 331, Reno
AQMD Main Phone Number .................. 784-7200
FAX ........................................ 784-7225
24-Hour Hotline ............ 785-4110
Public Information Officer .................. 784-7203

Community and Clinical Health Services (CCHS)
CCHS Main Phone Number .................. 328-2440
FAX ........................................ 328-3750
Clinic Appointments for the Following Services: .. 328-2470
Family Planning, Podiatry, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Teen Health Mall
Communicable Disease Control ........ 328-2447
HIV Prevention .......................... 328-6174
Immunizations .......................... 328-3724
Nurse Home Visit ....................... 328-2441
Tuberculosis Control ...................... 785-4785

Environmental Health Services (EHS)
EHS Main Phone Number .................. 328-2434
FAX ........................................ 328-6176
24-Hour Hotline .................. 328-2436
(For use in the event of an after-hours emergency)
Environmental Engineering/
Safe Drinking Water Act .......................... 328-2429
Food/Environmental Facility
Construction Inspection .............. 328-2612
Food Service Education ............... 328-2615
Food Facility Inspection ............... 328-3737
Hazardous Materials/Liquid Waste ........ 328-2489
Public Information Officer ............. 328-6140
Public Information Line ............. 328-2595
(Residents can access waste management and recycling information in Reno, Sparks and Washoe County)
Solid Waste .......................... 328-2423
Temporary Foods ....................... 328-2620
Vector Control Field Station ............ 785-4599

Photographs courtesy of Washoe County and the City of Sparks