

Iowa Health FOCUS

July 2001 ■ Iowa Department of Public Health

Tobacco billboards attract attention

By Keven Arrowsmith

Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

A series of anti-chew billboards sponsored by the Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control is getting national attention.

The latest series of JEL (Just Eliminate Lies) billboards take on the topic of spit tobacco and feature close-up shots of actual patients suffering from oral cancer.



The ads are a part of a counter-marketing campaign developed

to inform Iowans that chew is not a safe alternative to smoking. Input from JEL members (a statewide teen group against tobacco use) and focus group data indicated that hard hitting and graphic images would get the attention of the teen audience. Continued on page 2.



From the director

By Dr. Stephen Gleason

By all accounts, the Governor's Conference on Public Health, Barn Raising III, was a great success. Continued on Page 2.

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Cathy Callaway, Director of the Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control, has spoken to several members of the media about the ads. The chew billboards also caught the attention of CNN, which resulted in a live interview with Callaway. Press coverage about the billboards has generated several requests for the ads. The division is currently looking into ways of making the ads available for distribution to other states.

“Although we have received a few calls against the ad campaign, we have received many more that are in favor of the billboards,” said Callaway. “We want to inform the public that using spit tobacco is not a safe alternative to smoking.”

One outdoor advertising company with billboards in Eastern Iowa refused to put up the chew billboards because they felt they were too graphic. This company sold billboard space to the tobacco industry in the past, but would not run billboards that educate the public about the health risks associated with spit tobacco use.

Print, radio and mall ads that reinforce the anti-chew message are currently running throughout the state. The ads are also posted on the JEL Web site at www.JELiowa.org/news/ads.html

Another barn raising behind us; now what?

*By Dr. Stephen Gleason
Director*

By all accounts, the Governor’s Conference on Public Health, Barn Raising III, was a great success. Over 700 people registered for the sessions, held at Drake University June 14 and 15. Hundreds more from across the country participated by web cast.

But more impressive than the numbers was the quality. Because of a family emergency, I wasn’t able to hear all the speakers and participate to the extent I had hoped. But reports about the speakers – especially plenary speakers Dr. Graham, Jan Dahl, Brad Myers, Dr. Vinicor, Dr. Boxer, Dr. Wykoff and Father Mezacapa – indicated that

their presentations were outstanding. We also heard that the breakout sessions were well attended and useful.

There are so many people to thank for the conference. I tried to cover most of them during my opening speech. But none deserves more thanks than our own Dr. Louise Lex. Those of you who know her (and most of you do) know that Louise attacks projects with the energy of a power plant, and the conference was no exception. She spent much of the past six months organizing it and preparing for it.

Participants should combine Louise's kind of enthusiasm with the tools and lessons provided at the conference to improve the work of public health. As I mentioned in my conference speech, no group is more dedicated, hard-working and less recognized than public health professionals. I hope the conference refreshed us, reminded us of the importance of our work and helped us focus on our mission.

Fortunately, public health professionals are acquiring many more useful tools to help us do our jobs. Iowa's Community Health Needs Assessment is a biggie, specifying the public health needs that are the most pressing in each county. Another, the Guide to Community Preventive Services, was introduced by the CDC's Brad Myers at the conference. A federally sponsored initiative, the guide is a best-practices manual for public health professionals. It systematically reviews selected interventions within public health topics, such as tobacco use, alcohol abuse, physical activity, sexual behavior, etc. It is being published, chapter by chapter, this year and next. For more information, see www.thecommunityguide.org.

The conference was fun, too. The smoke-free Taste of Iowa buffet was wonderful, I'm told, and it was great for all of us to see old friends and meet new ones.

Thanks to all of you who participated. Please spread the word about the presentations and tools to your colleagues who didn't.

The Governor's Conference on Public Health now available on Webcast and CD ROM

With a CDC grant and the efforts of Tim Lane (IDPH), Beth Hochstedler (University Hygienic Lab), Drake University, and the Iowa Information Technology Department, plenary sessions and two breakout sessions from the Governor's Conference on Public Health: Barn Raising III held at Drake University on June 14 and 15, 2001, are now available at: <http://www.whatworksiowa.org/access.html>.

To view the various conference video archives, you will need to install Real Player on your computer. You may obtain a free copy from Real Networks. Go to:

<http://www.real.com/player/index.html?src=downloadr>. On the screen in the lower left corner is a link to the Real Player 8 Basic. This is the free player. Simply download the player and follow the installation instructions. After installation, you will need to click on the web cast link.

For those who prefer viewing the webcast on the ICN, this option will be available throughout the day of July 10 (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) in the Iowa Department of Public Health ICN room.

A **What Works CD ROM** of featured speakers, notes from presenters, significant data, and other useful items also is being prepared. To order make a check out for \$15 to University of Iowa Hygienic Laboratory and send it with your name and mailing address to Hygienic Lab., 102 Oakdale Campus, H101 OH, Iowa City, IA 52242-5002, Attention: Beth Hochstedler.

IDPH budget cut by 10 percent

*By Kevin Teale
IDPH Communications Director*

State budget reductions passed by the Iowa Legislature will cut just over \$3 million from next year's Iowa Department of Public Health budget of \$31 million. That is a 10 percent reduction for programs and services designed to promote and protect the health of Iowans.

"The cuts are painful for our employees, our local public health partners and the people who depend on our services," said IDPH Director Dr. Stephen Gleason. "We've attempted to implement the cuts in a way that result in the least disruption in essential services to those most vulnerable."

Programs that will be impacted and the reductions anticipated include those for treating people with addictive disorders (\$891,081); adult wellness (\$76,658); child and adolescent wellness (\$167,918); chronic conditions (\$519,024); and community capacity of local boards of health (\$182,520).

Also, elderly wellness (\$330,000); environmental hazards (\$835); infectious diseases (\$160,618); injuries (\$219,024); public protection, including health professional licensing boards (\$400,000); and agency administration (\$167,918).

But these are just numbers. Thousands of Iowans will be affected. For example, 770 Iowans will not receive substance-abuse treatment; treatment for another 16,622 Iowans will be reduced; maternal health services to 368 pregnant women will be reduced. Thousands of Iowa professionals will experience delays in getting licenses and complaint investigations may be delayed by the reduction in funding for 22 licensing boards.

The cuts will also result in the elimination of funding for six full-time positions in the IDPH.

“Our intent,” clarified Dr. Gleason, “is to look for ways to soften the blow and keep as many services to lowans as possible.”

With 375 employees, the IDPH directs and manages dozens of programs designed to promote public health and protect citizens from disease and disability. Nearly eighty percent of the department’s budget is passed along to local public health agencies and non-profit providers around the state, who provide direct services to lowans.

Keep your Fourth of July fun & safe

*By Debbi Cooper
IDPH Community Health Consultant*

Celebrating our nation’s birth should be fun and safe for your whole family. Fireworks add good times and excitement to this holiday celebration, but they can also turn a backyard celebration into a rush to the emergency room.

Fireworks are dangerous and present substantial risks that result in blindings, amputations, severe burns, and death. Just last year in Des Moines a vehicle carrying illegal fireworks ignited into a deadly inferno killing a 15 year old girl and seriously injuring five others. In 1999, hospital emergency rooms treated about 8,500 people for fireworks-related injuries. About 45 percent of those victims were children under age 15. Even fireworks that seem innocent can cause serious injury. Sparklers, which are legal in Iowa and often used by children, burn at temperatures of 2,000 degrees.

If you decide to use sparklers, snakes, or caps, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- Store in a secure container in a cool, dry location.
- Always supervise children using sparklers, snakes, or caps.
- Do not let children under the age of five use sparklers.

- Avoid dressing children in loose or flowing clothes and keep shoes on their feet.
- Show children how to hold sparklers – away from their body and at arms length.
- Teach children not to wave sparklers near anyone else and not to run while holding them.
- Sparkers burn at 2,000 degrees, nearly hot enough to melt gold. Always light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- Plunge finished sparklers (hot end down) into a bucket of water as soon as they have burned out.

Do not use illegal or amateur fireworks, especially bottle rockets. Enjoy your Fourth of July by attending a fireworks display put on by professionals.

Pointers on keeping pests at bay

By Russ Currier, DVM

IDPH State Environmental Epidemiologist

Ticks and mosquitoes are common warm weather pests in Iowa, and occasionally pose some risk of disease. A few simple steps should help in protecting children and adults from these diseases.

Ticks are technically in a class called arachnids, along with spiders, scorpions, and mites-- all have four sets of legs. Female ticks require blood feedings from animals and humans to reproduce and mature. They usually crawl out on brush and tall grass waiting for some hapless animal or human to stroll by contacting the vegetation. The tick then transfers to the host as sort of an unknown hitchhiker or stowaway in a behavior called “questing”.

Once on humans, ticks usually crawl around for up to 24 hours before beginning to feed and most likely require another 24 hours before they transmit disease. Optimally the time to remove ticks is before they begin feeding. By checking your entire body after being in tick-infested areas and removing all ticks, you can substantially decrease your risk of becoming ill.

Most importantly, not all ticks feeding on humans or animals carry disease organisms. Common tick species in Iowa and associated diseases are summarized in the following table:

Common Ticks in Iowa

<u>Diseases</u>	Deer Tick	Dog/Wood Tick	Lone Star Tick
Lyme Disease	X		
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever		X	
Tularemia		X	X
HME (ehrlichiosis)			X
HGE (ehrlichiosis)*	X		

(*) Presumed to be present in Iowa.

The best protective measures are a combination of 1) applying repellents (DEET to skin or clothing or permethrin to clothing only) before exposure to tick habitat (e.g. mushroom hunting), 2) checking for ticks often, 3) wearing light colored clothing so ticks are easy to see with long sleeves and full length trousers (tuck pant legs into socks), 4) bathe or shower daily and check for presence of ticks. If any ticks are attached, remove with tweezers by grasping the tick close to skin's surface, firmly grip and apply steady outward traction.

Generally there is no need to seek medical attention for tick bites since transmission risk is low unless symptoms appear. The risk of Lyme disease transmission is less than 1 to 3 percent even where the disease is present at high levels (parts of East Coast and NW Wisconsin). If Lyme disease symptoms develop such as a bulls-eye rash, seek medical attention immediately. This disease is very responsive to antibiotic treatment when recognized early.

Mosquitoes are even peskier and seem to love humans while they are trying to enjoy the outdoors. It is wise to protect youngsters with DEET-type repellents. Apply to exposed skin but weather permitting; wear long, loose, light colored clothing if possible. Use insect repellent with no more than 15 to 30 percent DEET for adults and less than 10 percent for children. Higher concentrations provide minimally longer protection but not necessarily better protection. So apply as needed. Usually one application should last for four hours if not swimming.

Western equine encephalitis and St. Louis encephalitis are two serious viral diseases transmitted by mosquitoes. Except for years with extensive flooding, they are uncommon in the state. Mosquitoes that breed in small containers (e.g. abandoned tires) transmit a third viral disease, LaCrosse encephalitis. A household and yard inventory would help keep their numbers down. Check for clogged rain gutters, leaky water equipment, plant saucers, abandoned tires, birdbaths, and boat or equipment tarps that hold water.

Studies of West Nile Virus present in eastern states, and now expanding westward toward Iowa, indicate it is transmitted by a variety of mosquitoes including the ones that live in the containers mentioned above. Animals should be protected as well as humans by vaccinating horses for Western encephalitis and giving dogs preventive medications for heartworm disease.

Obtaining Past Issues

Back issues of *Iowa Health FOCUS* are available on the Iowa Department of Public Health Web site at:
www.idph.state.ia.us.

New recruits enlist for JEL boot camp

By Keven Arrowsmith

Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Iowa teens interested in joining JEL (Just Eliminate Lies), Iowa's youth-led movement to reduce tobacco use, are gearing up for the second annual Youth Summit on Tobacco to be held July 24 to 26 at Iowa State University in Ames.

The theme for this year's summit is JEL Boot Camp. Current JEL members will be the facilitators for the different sessions, which will cover the following areas: Big Tobacco Manipulation, Health Effects of Tobacco, Counter Marketing, JEL, and Grass Roots Advocacy. Smaller breakout sessions will focus on the creation of a JEL magazine, spokesperson training, and how to become a media advocate.

Membership in JEL continues to increase at a steady pace. The first JEL Summit held last July attracted 130 young people and attendance at this year's summit is expected to surpass 700.

Tobacco use by teens in Iowa is a serious problem. According to the 2000 Iowa Youth Tobacco Survey, an estimated 25,000 middle and high school students in the state are currently dependent on a tobacco product. Nearly half of these users will be killed by their habit, losing an average of 20 to 25 years of nonsmoking life expectancy. JEL hopes to reduce the number of Iowa teens currently using a tobacco product.

"We are excited about having 700 students and 100 chaperones attend this year's summit," said Tammi Blackstone, JEL youth coordinator. "This event provides a way for students to discuss the risks of tobacco with their peers and work in an organized manner to make a difference."

The JEL Summit is free of charge for all attendees. Meals, housing, transportation and JEL merchandise will be provided for all students and chaperones. A number of activities are being planned, including an extreme carnival and outdoor concert.

JEL is just one component of the state's tobacco control program offered by the Iowa Department of Public Health's Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control. For more information about JEL, check out the Web site at www.JELiowa.org.

EMS Bureau Chief Gary Ireland Retires

After 16 years with the Iowa Department of public health Gary Ireland, Chief of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, has decided to retire.

Ireland began his career with the IDPH in 1985 as the "basic care coordinator," handling certification renewals and continuing education approvals. He became the state's south central regional coordinator when the EMS Bureau expanded in 1987 and also was education coordinator. He was appointed to the Bureau Chief position in March of 1991 when Don Kerns resigned to become the



Gary Ireland

EMS Coordinator for the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP).

Ireland began his career in EMS as a volunteer in the early 80s, taking EMT-A training through Iowa Valley Community College in Marshalltown. He completed paramedic training in 1983 at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames. Prior to becoming involved in EMS Ireland had taught and coached 13 years in Iowa public schools, including Bedford, West Burlington, and Iowa Falls.

Ireland and his wife, Judy, will be moving to the northern part of the state where they will be closer to their three daughters and four grandchildren. EMSs Mary Jones will serve as Bureau Chief in the interim.

IDPHs Altenhofen receives national honor

State Coordinator of the Emergency Medical Services for Children program, Katrina Altenhofen, recently received the EMSC Project Coordinator of Distinction Award at the EMSC National Heroes Awards in Washington D.C. The awards honor individuals for their outstanding efforts to improve emergency medical services for children.

Altenhofen has served as coordinator since the inception of the program in Iowa. She was recognized for her contributions at the state, regional, and national levels. Various writings such as "I Am the Child You Saved" are utilized by the National EMSC Resource Center. Another public information resource she has authored is the upcoming campaign of "Be Prepared Not Scared" aimed at helping parents and caregivers to recognize and handle emergency situations.

Dedicated IDPHers honored for service

By Kevin Teale

IDPH Communications Director

Nine IDPH employees were recently honored by Governor Tom Vilsack for their contributions to the state and people of Iowa. Nearly 1,000 employees were awarded during "Golden Dome" ceremonies for either exemplary service to Iowa or for years of service to the state.

Three IDPH employees were awarded for dedication and excellence on the job. They are:

- Mike Archibald, an investigator for the Board of Medical Examiners for the past 23 years was named IDPH Employee of the Year. Mike was the first full-time investigator hired by the board. According to his nomination form Mike "created the standard to which all other investigators are held." The nomination also says

that Mike's fairness and impartiality during investigations is well known in the Iowa medical community.

- Eileen Gloor, currently the associated director for nursing education for the Board of Nursing was named IDPH Leader of the Year. Eileen was nominated for her work over the last few years in helping to bring cutting edge technology to nurse licensing, such as the on-line nursing license renewal process, license verification and interactive web page. Eileen says she enjoys "the honor of working with a terrific team at the Board of Nursing and the nurses who serve Iowa in so many settings each day."
- Rose Mary Hicks, an information technology specialist with the Bureau of Information Management was given the Lt. Governor's Employee Volunteer Award. Rose Mary was nominated for her work with the Boy Scouts of America. Not only are Rose Mary's two sons (Tim and Brian) both Eagle Scouts, but Rose Mary has kept up her involvement with Scouts after her son had grown up and moved through the program. She's received several honors from the Scouts because of her involvement not just with her son's troop, but with all scouts throughout Central Iowa. Rose Mary is also known for dedication to St. Joseph's Catholic Church on Des Moines' East Side and her wonderful baked goods at parish fundraisers.

Six department employees were also given "Golden Dome" awards for their years of service to the state. Nearly 800 state employees received that honor. The following six IDPH employees were singled out for being employed 25 years or more by the state.

Janice Brooks - Vital Records
Sandra Slagle - Administrative Services
Debra Cooper - Consumer Safety
Sandra McGhee - Disease Prevention
Joyce Spencer - Radiological Health
Linda Pickering - Dental Examiners

Epidemiology notes



*From the Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology, Iowa Department of Public Health,
1-800-362-2736 (24 Hour Contact Number)*

Tick Wrangling in Southeastern Iowa (follow-up to a ehrlichiosis case): Last week, three Iowa State University students and three University of Iowa Hygienic Lab researchers collected ticks from near Farmington, Iowa in hopes of explaining a recent ehrlichiosis case from this part of the state. Hundreds of ticks were found and will be speciated. Further analysis will look for presence of infection in these ticks.

Opossum Rabies - Never Say Never: A report from Oklahoma this week confirmed the presence of rabies in an orphaned 4-5 week old baby opossum (mother was hit by a car). This young marsupial, along with its littermate, was hand raised by a well-intentioned citizen. The largest littermate suddenly turned aggressive to its sibling and the owner was bitten on the finger. The opossum was also suddenly inappetent and chewing frequently on a blanket. An astute veterinarian encouraged euthanasia and testing. Results were indeterminate FA, but follow-up testing at CDC Rabies Laboratory was positive. Monoclonal antibody testing at Kansas State University indicates the infection was from a south central skunk variant rabies strain.

This unusual case of rabies from Oklahoma confirms that skunk rabies may infrequently infect opossums. For incidents involving this species in Iowa, health care workers should carefully evaluate provocation and the opossum's behavior. If possible the animal should be tested. Iowa has never reported a FA positive opossum since this testing was instituted in 1963.

Shigellosis in Dubuque: An outbreak of Shigellosis is occurring in Dubuque. Most cases have reported being at a 'drain and fill' wading pool in a city park on June 11 or 12th. Ninety cases have been linked to the wading pool; approximately half of these are culture-positive. The pool has since been closed. As is typical in shigella outbreaks, we are seeing additional community-acquired cases as the disease continues to spread through households and day care centers. Extra efforts have been focused on ensuring that food handlers, health care workers, and children and staff in day care be tested and treated before returning to work or play.

Preparing for Influenza Season: Remember last year's Influenza season and the difficulties with the vaccine supply? Well, in order to avert another such year, the CDC is putting out information to update partners about recent developments

related to the production, distribution and administration of influenza vaccine.

Rabid Fox: Late last week a rabid fox was reported from the Waukeez area. The fox was brought in for observation; it may have been hit by a car. The fox died and was sent to Ames for FA testing. The lab at Iowa State indicated that the virus was present. The fox is being sent to Wisconsin's state laboratory for typing, since Iowa does not have fox strain of rabies virus.

Salmonella and Eggs: Recently some media reported that the 1999 FDA Food Code prohibited restaurants from serving sunny-side-up or over-easy eggs. These reports were incorrect. The Food Code says if less thoroughly-cooked egg dishes are served in restaurants, consumers should be provided with an advisory - on menus, brochures, or other written materials - that there is an increased risk associated with eating undercooked eggs, especially for vulnerable consumers. There is a new FDA rule relating to egg safety. This rule states that egg cartons sold in supermarkets and other retail establishments must bear safe handling instructions. This label is an advisory to consumers about the potential of illness from *Salmonella enteritidis*. This rule will take effect on September 4, 2001.

TB in a school: The Black Hawk County Health Department identified a presumptive case of TB associated with Orange School in Waterloo, Iowa. This person is not thought to have been very infectious, and

preliminary skin testing results of close contacts reflects this. The school district is assisting in this investigation. This person is being treated and repeat skin testing of close contacts will be done when school reopens in the fall. (Repeat testing, of those who initially test negative, is done approximately three months after last exposure to insure enough time for the skin test to convert if transmission did occur). This case had been coughing off and on for several months, and had coughed up blood (both classic symptoms of TB) before TB was even considered.

Please remember that TB is alive and well in Iowa, and should be considered in ANYONE who has a productive cough for more than three weeks. However, certain population groups in Iowa are at higher risk of developing TB disease: they include those with history of TB in relatives, the elderly, people who have lived overseas (this includes person born in other countries), the homeless, those who abuse drugs including alcohol, and those with immune compromising conditions like HIV infection.

Antibiotic Resistance State-wide Grand Rounds: As a reminder, the Grand Rounds will be held on September 6, 2001, from 11:30-1:00 over the ICN. There appears to be a lot of interest and sites continue to be added. Below are the ICN sites that have been confirmed thus far (more sites have been requested, and are awaiting confirmation). There is no cost to you to add a site in your area, and we would like to

see about 100 sites total involved. Let us know if there is interest in your area by sending an e-mail with the specific site desired to pquinlis@idph.state.ia.us. We have had some sites requested, but then denied by the local ICN people. If you have requested a site, but don't see it here, you might call your local ICN person to see if it could still be okayed by them or send us another site near you to be added.

Sites Confirmed for Antibiotic Resistance Grand Rounds:

Calmar-CC1
Iowa City- U of I 1
Ames- ISU 1
Jefferson- Green Co Hospital
Fort Dodge- Trinity Hospital
Des Moines - Lucas/public health dept (origination site)
Cedar Falls- UNI 2
Ottumwa - Hospital
Des Moines- VA Hospital
Glenwood - Hospital
Iowa City - VA Hospital
Creston- Hospital
Orange City - Hospital
Oskaloosa - Public library
Manchester- Public library
Sac City -Loring Hospital
Des Moines University

Interface A is also confirmed: this means that the Mercy Health Care System can be connected. If you want a Mercy site to be connected, call (515)323-1706.

Linn County Bioterrorism

Workshop: The organizers of the Linn County Bioterrorism Workshop are finalizing speakers and topics for this event to be held on Friday, September 21 at Mercy Medical Center in Cedar Rapids. The workshop will cover a wide variety of issues and should be of interest to public health, medical, and emergency management and response personnel. More information will be made available in the future.

Fall EPI Training: Dates and sites have been selected for the annual Fall EPI training. The first of the two-day training will be for public health nurses and infection control practitioners and the second day for long-term care personnel. If you have specific topics or questions that need to be addressed, OR, if you would like a new fact sheet developed, please call or e-mail Judy Goddard at (515) 281-7788 or email JGODDARD@idph.state.ia.us.

Dates and sites are:
October 2-3: Southwestern Community College, Creston
October 15-16: DMACC, Ankeny
October 23-24: Western Iowa Tech Community College, Cherokee
November 6-7: Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa
December 4-5: North Iowa Area Community College, Mason City

Side notes

Governor's Conference on Health Care - Due to a manufacturing error, some of the 2001 Iowa Health Fact Book CDs distributed at the Governor's Conference on Public Health may not work properly. The UI Center for Public Health Statistics (CPHS) will provide a replacement if you received one of the faulty CD ROMs. The Fact Book may also be accessed via IDPH's web site at www.public-health.uiowa.edu/factbook. If you have any questions contact the CPHS at 319.335.7005 or e-mail factbook@mail.public-health.uiowa.edu.

Focus Editor: Kara Berg

What would you like to see in *Iowa Health Focus*? Send your suggestions for future articles, letters to the editor, and upcoming events or to add names to the mailing list by e-mailing us at kberg@idph.state.ia.us