



Warren County Department of Health 2007 Annual Report



From the Health Officer

It is with pleasure I present the 2007 Warren County Health Department Annual Report.

Warren County Public Health department works in many areas to accomplish the vision of public health: **“Healthy People living in Healthy Communities.”** These areas include preventing the spread of disease, protecting against environmental hazards, preventing injuries, promoting healthy behaviors, responding to disasters, providing health services, and more.

Making healthy lifestyle choices is very important for all of us. Our behaviors account for over 50% of the factors leading to premature death before age 75. This especially includes tobacco use, diet and activity patterns, and alcohol consumption. Along with many partners, we inform people about ways to lead healthier lives.

This report summarizes the activities, challenges and accomplishments of the Department in conjunction with our partners. There continue to be challenges for the department within several areas, however, staff members strive to meet all federal and state mandates placed upon them. The department continues to work closely with community partners to improve their ability to identify and respond to Public Health emergencies. The Health Department has developed several emergency response plans such as: mass vaccination, mass fatality, and isolation and quarantine. The events of 911 have forever changed the role of Public Health and resulted in the department becoming a visible active participant in emergency planning and response. Emergency planning includes the improvement of communications and coordination with hospitals, primary care providers, emergency management, other county departments, town, city and village offices, as well as several of our community partners. Planning for public health emergencies, particularly an outbreak of pandemic influenza, has been a major focus in the past year. It is difficult to predict the severity of our next pandemic, but it could be overwhelming. Once an outbreak starts it will spread rapidly and be too late for planning.

It is our responsibility to look at the possibilities and make our plans now.

Claude W. Mitchell

Claude W. Mitchell, MPH
Warren County Health Officer

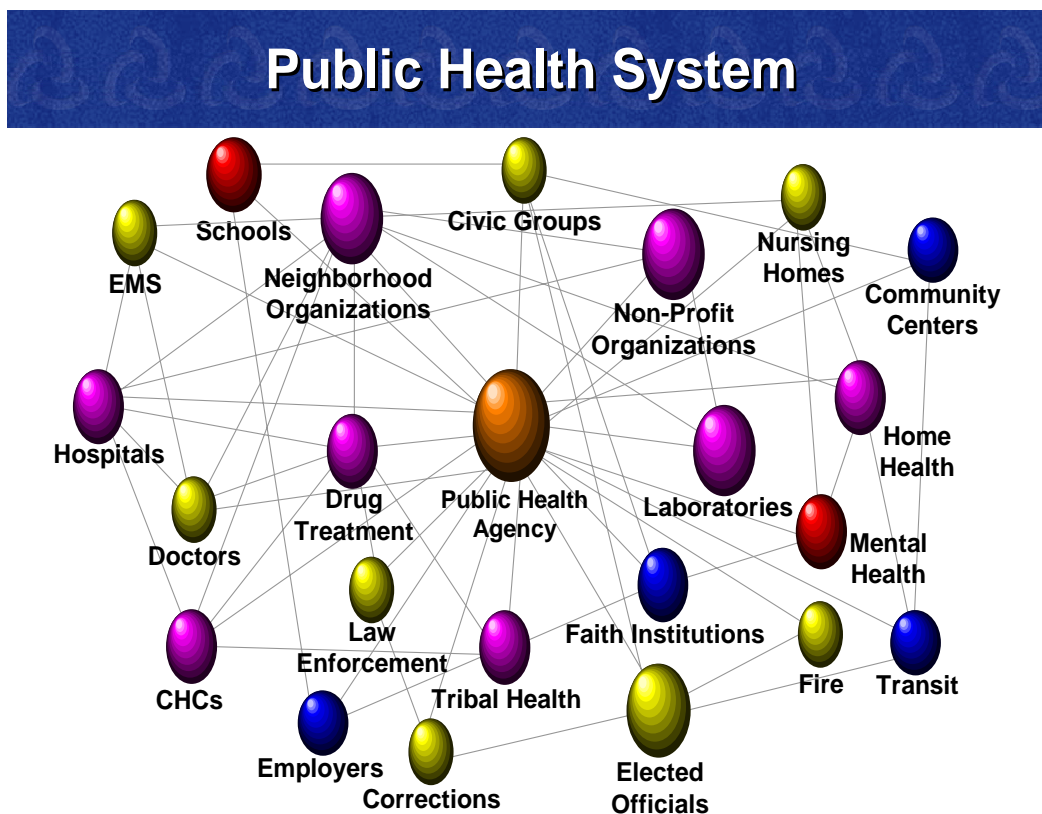
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THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

The public health system is the community system of agencies that work together to protect the health of residents through the prevention of disease, illness, and injury. It involves the collaboration of social, economic, and environmental agencies working together to achieve healthy communities. The Health Department, through implementation of the three core functions of public health: assessment, policy development, and assurance, works to accomplish the following objectives:

- ✓ Monitor and investigate health status in the community to identify problems and hazards
- ✓ Prepare for and respond to public health emergencies
- ✓ Develop, apply, and enforce policies, laws, and regulations that improve health and ensure safety
- ✓ Lead efforts to mobilize communities around important health issues
- ✓ Link people to health services
- ✓ Achieve excellence in public health practice through a trained workforce, evaluation, and evidence-based programs.



Comprised of several divisions offering services in areas of environmental health, consumer health, health education, personal health and emergency preparedness, the Health Department's goals are achieved through prevention, education and regulatory action. All activities are conducted in close, ongoing cooperation with state, municipal and private agencies. The department is staffed by highly qualified and dedicated licensed Registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS), Certified Health Education Specialist, Nurses, Therapists and support personnel. The staff invites inquiries concerning health issues and services, and welcomes the opportunity to serve the citizens of Warren County.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Division of the Warren County Health Department serves the entire county as the environmental arm of the New Jersey State Departments of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and Health. The programs of this division are designated and authorized under County Environmental Health Act (CEHA) and the county government. Programs focus on air, water, and noise pollution, hazardous waste, emergency response, solid waste, pesticides, underground storage tanks, and general sanitation services.

Air:

It is the goal of the **Air Pollution Control Program** in Warren County to maintain clean and healthful air and to protect the county's forests, land, and water bodies from being damaged by air pollutants. Activities include regular compliance inspections of air pollution sources. All program activities are:

- ✓ The investigation of DEP referrals and citizen air pollution complaints of odors, particulates, and open burning, and the initiation of enforcement actions for violations of the State Air Code.
- ✓ Performing routine air permit compliance inspections of gas stations dry cleaners, boilers, paint spray booths, and idling diesel vehicles.
- ✓ The assessment and collection of penalties from noncompliant facilities.
- ✓ Activism against any proposals by upwind power plants or other emissions that would negatively impact Warren County's Air Quality.
- ✓ Participation in air monitoring and other County air quality issues by active membership in the Regional AirQap.



Inspections for 2007 were:

29	Gas Station Inspections
1	Dry Cleaning Inspections
13	Paint Spray Inspections
7	Facilities Reinspections

In addition to the regular inspection of all necessary sites, in 2007, the Health Department received 36 Air Quality complaints from citizens, and 20 from the DEP. All complaints were responded to promptly.

Water:



It is the goal of the **Safe Drinking Water and Water Pollution Control Program** to ensure that the streams, lakes, and rivers of Warren County will be fishable, swimmable, and support healthy ecosystems, and that every person in the county will have an adequate supply of safe drinking water. In addition to these, the Warren County Health Department monitors all private and certain public groundwater sources to ensure compliance with the Safe

Drinking Water Act. To reach this goal water analysis from all installed wells are reviewed to ensure they are suitable as a drinking water supply.

The activities of this program include:

- ✓ The investigation of all complaints concerning surface and groundwater contamination, abandoned wells, and failing septic systems, as well as the necessary abatement action.
- ✓ Regulation of new and altered septic systems, including plan reviews, installation inspections, issue of certifications, and distribution of septic care information to property owners.
- ✓ Establishment of a system to track septic system malfunctions and addresses the causes of system failure.
- ✓ Regulation of new and altered private and public non-community well systems including plan reviews, inspections, review of water test reports, issue certifications, and distribution of well protection information to well owners.
- ✓ Inspection of Public Non-Community (PNC) non-transient systems every two years and transient systems every four years. Review the NJDEP public water database to identify systems that fail to samples as required. Take “zero tolerance” enforcement action against violators.
- ✓ Investigation of private and PNC well contamination complaints, as well as taking follow up action on well test reports of primary drinking water standard exceedances generated by the Private Well Testing Act, and the notification of property owners near wells found to be contaminated with a hazardous substance.
- ✓ Participation in the NJDEP ambient surface water network summer bacterial sampling.

In 2007, the Health Department received a total of 14 complaints concerning surface water, and responded with 8 initial inspections and 18 reinspections. In regards to potable (drinking) water, 190 routine Well site/Well line inspections, 11 well installation inspections, 194 PNC compliance inspections, 26 PNC transient inspections, 59 PNC nontransient inspections, and 32 PNC reinspections. Additionally, there were 33 complaint inspections and reinspections conducted.

Solid Waste:

It is the purpose of the **Solid Waste Management Program** that all waste be managed in an environmentally sound manner. The objective of this program is to help improve the overall recycling rate in Warren County. The Environmental Division conducts waste management inspections at businesses, recycling centers, landfills, and illegal dump sites.



Solid Waste activities include::

- ✓ Investigate all complaints from citizens and the NJDEP concerning improper operation of solid waste facilities, illegal dumping, unpermitted facilities and sludge mishandling.
- ✓ Conduct compliance monitoring inspections of minor landfills, recycling (including exempt) facilities, scrap tire sites, and leaf mulching sites. Inspect major and compost facilities jointly with NJDEP.
- ✓ In cooperation with the County Recycling Coordinator, conduct recycling status surveys of schools and businesses. Encourage and assist facilities found to be out of compliance with State Recycling Regulations to improve their performance.

- ✓ Monitor solid waste haulers for compliance with NJDEP transporter regulations and the Solid Waste Management Plan. Inspect vehicle loads for permitted waste type.

In 2007, there were a total of 8 complaints reported to the Health Department, resulting in 23 complaint inspections and reinspections. Other standard inspections that were conducted:

- Resource Recovery Facility 8
- Warren County Landfill Site 22
- Minor facilities 2
- Mulch Facilities 22
- Recycling Facilities 45
- Compost Facilities 3
- Closed Facilities 1
- Recycling Questionnaire 28

School Chemical Management Program



The **School Chemical Management Program** is an outreach project for the management of hazardous chemicals in schools. The main objective of this program is to provide compliance assistance at schools and address the causes and problems associated with improper school chemical storage, while assisting schools with disposal needs if appropriate. Program activities are dictated by the DEP and include:

- ✓ Conducting school inspections pursuant to the checklist and guidelines issued by the NJDEP,
- ✓ Ensuring that all appropriate regulations that apply to generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous wastes will be followed during the execution of this Pilot Program.
- ✓ Tracking the school laboratory chemicals disposed of at the Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Days.
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the program by conducting periodic inspections of school laboratories to determine compliance with the program.

In 2007, 10 school inspections resulted in lowering chemical inventories, and correct disposal of unneeded chemicals.

Noise Control Program

The Warren County Health Department maintains the **Noise Control Program**, as required by the NJDEP. The primary activities include the following:

- ✓ Respond to all noise complaints from citizens and NJDEP, and investigate all complaints which are under the jurisdiction of the State Noise Code.
- ✓ Compile and maintain files and records to support NJDEP and county enforcement actions.



- ✓ Maintain certification from the Rutgers Noise Technical Assistance center of at least one individual on staff in the performance of noise control investigations. Maintain at least one sound level meter and associated sound measurement equipment.
- ✓ Initiate enforcement proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction against violators of the State Noise Code.

In 2007 the department received and responded to 7 noise complaints.

Pesticide Control Program

The **Pesticide Control Program** dedicates itself to ensuring pesticide control compliance through multiple monitoring activities in accordance with NJDEP protocol. This protocol includes public housing, landscaping, retail food establishments, and other facilities that require pesticide control. Additionally, school inspections are conducted to assist the schools in the adoption and implementation of the Integrated Pest Management Program in compliance with State law.

Activities of this program include:

- Assessing and evaluating citizen complaints,
- Collecting environmental samples, and
- The compilation and maintenance of files and records to support NJDEP Pesticide Control Program enforcement actions.



In 2007, 26 pesticide inspections were performed.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



Through funding received from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS), the Warren County Health Department has been able to establish the **Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program**, which plays a vital role in the health department's ability to prepare and respond to emergencies through various activities such as:

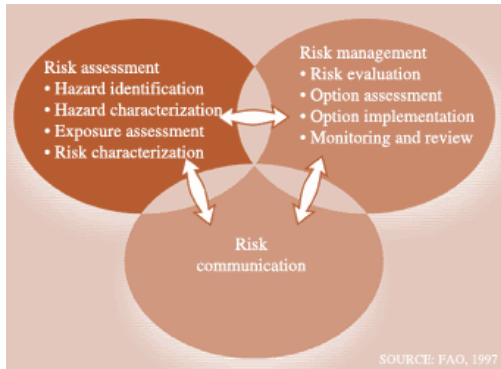
- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Exercises and Drills
- ✓ Warren County Emergency Task Force
- ✓ Education and Training
- ✓ Health Alert Network Notification of public health emergencies.

The New Jersey Local Information Network and Communications System (NJLINCS)/Health Alert Network (HAN) is an electronic public health communication system which connects federal, state and local health agencies, healthcare providers, community health organizations, and many other health and community partners throughout the state. Every County in the state is required to have a LINCS agency and the Warren County Health Department serves as the agency. The Public Health Emergency Notification System (PHENS) Coordinator, located at the health department, receives NJLINCS email



messages from the state, and electronically distributes them to healthcare providers, as well as any other public health or community partners within the county.

In 2007 the Warren County LINCS agency distributed 475 email messages to county healthcare providers, hospitals, and public health and community partners.



Emergencies or disasters are unexpected. Crisis or perceived crisis occurs when there is not sufficient time to prepare appropriate information for the public. In the absence of appropriate information, misinformation becomes news. The **Health Educator Risk Communicator (HERC)** is responsible for preparing clear, concise, factual, messages to be disseminated to the public which are simple, straight forward, and realistic. A vital part of delivering these messages are providing the public with educational programs concerning emergency situations. In 2007, 7 programs were delivered to the

public regarding topics such as Influenza, emergency preparedness, and Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). Additionally the HERC is responsible for educating and training the Medical Reserve Corps. In 2007, 6 of these training programs were presented.



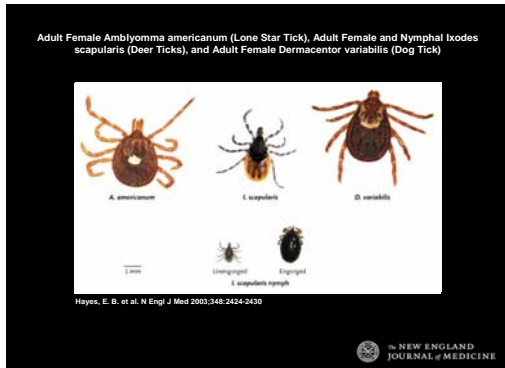
Warren County Hazardous Materials Response Team (WCHMRT).

The team primarily responds to situations and incidences when there are releases of hazardous materials affecting the environment and safety of the public. The Hazmat team responsibilities include:

- ✓ Responding to all hazardous materials emergencies referred by NJDEP or reported through 911, as well as the coordination of response action with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies.
- ✓ Investigation of Hazmat complaints received from citizens and NJDEP, and the appropriate referral of cases requiring significant remedial action to NJDEP.
- ✓ Maintaining a fully trained and equipped County Hazmat Team also capable of response to chemical, biological, and radiological incidents. The team and response program must operate in close cooperation with the County Office of Emergency Management.

In 2007 the Emergency Response Team had 45 initial responses and 25 complaint reinspections.

Epidemiology and Surveillance Program



The **Epidemiology and Surveillance Program** plays a key role within each division of the health department. The epidemiologist on staff is responsible for disease surveillance, outbreak investigations, study designs, data collection and analysis, and the development of statistical models. The surveillance data is an integral part in assessing and evaluating the overall health of the community.

Disease	# of Cases 2006	# of Cases 2007
Campylobacteriosis	11	14
Giardiasis	11	9
Hepatitis B-Chronic	25	27
Hepatitis C-Chronic	127	115
Lyme Disease	375	573
Salmonellosis	10	12

CONSUMER HEALTH

The Consumer Health Division of the Warren County Health Department works closely with the Environmental Division to ensure the safety and quality of all public services which directly or indirectly affect the health of the public. It is considered an umbrella service that includes sanitary protection, public health nuisance inspections, and a variety of additional environmental health investigations.

The **Food Protection Program** is designed to respond to citizen complaints concerning retail food establishments, and is responsible for inspecting all food establishments in the county at least once a year. By doing so, they insure the service of safe food products throughout the county. In 2007, there were:



- 786 Initial retail food establishment inspections
- 120 Reinspections of retail food est.
- 8 Vending machine inspections
- 29 Food plan reviews
- 1 Recall food inspection
- 99 Food safety complaint responses

Public Health Nuisances

The Consumer Health Division is also required to investigate **Public Health Nuisance** complaints such as those concerning waste disposal, indoor smoking, housing, weed, insect, and rodents. In 2007, a total of 421 complaints were received:

- Insect/rodents initial inspection 32
- Garbage initial inspection 116
- Weeds initial inspection 94
- Housing initial inspection 65
- Tobacco/smoking complaints 17
- Nuisance reinspections 718
- Notices of violation 200



The Warren County Health Department has been participating in the **State Tobacco Age of Sale (TASE) Program** for the last 10 years. The intent of this program is to enforce existing public laws to prevent the sale of tobacco products to minors. The department had seen a slow decline in the sale of tobacco products to minors since the inception of the program. Unfortunately in 2007 there has been an increase in the sale of cigarettes to minors. The percentage of sales to minors in 2007 was about 15%. The State goal is to bring these percentages down below 8%.

“Hazard Communication/Right To Know” is the law that each individual has the right to know the chemicals to which they may be exposed to in their daily living. All public and private employers must complete an annual Right-To-Know (RTK) survey and send a copy to the Warren County Health Department and copies are made available upon request to residents. The Health Department is the County lead agent for RTK. In addition to Right-To-Know, the Environmental Division responds with the NJDEP to any complaint of illegal dumping or storage of hazardous substances. In 2007 there were 14 RTK training programs provided and 21 outreach site visits completed.



The Consumer Health Division also enforces the county's **Rabies Control Program**, which regularly inspects and regulates kennels and pet shops for compliance with state sanitary code, tracks animal bites and exposures, enforces quarantines, and reviews lab results and exposure data. Courier service of animal specimens to the state laboratory for rabies examination is also provided. In 2007 there were:

- 35 Kennels/Pet Shop Inspections
- 215 Animal Bite Quarantine
- 219 Animal Bite/Exposure Releases
- 138 Specimens taken to the Trenton lab
- 68 Specimens delivered to veterinarians

The Health Department also conducts compliance inspections of a variety of facilities within the county. These facilities include youth camps, campgrounds, and recreational bathing sites, child health care



centers, and tattoo parlors. Additionally, this section of the Consumer Health Division conducts child lead exposure investigations. Future inspections will include tanning parlors.

In 2007 there were:

- 6 Complaints received
- 26 Youth camp inspections
- 4 Campground inspections
- 117 Recreational bathing unit inspections
- 19 Recreational bathing reinspections
- 2 Tattoo Parlor inspections
- 48 Child Health Care Center inspections
- 5 Child Lead investigations



The Warren County Health department is contracted by 11 municipalities for plumbing inspection services. The **Plumbing Sub Code Program** plays an important part in maintaining the health of the public through the careful review and approval of all plumbing plans within these jurisdictions. In 2007 there were 1222 plumbing plans approved, 762 inspections done, 1216 final approvals given, 157 notices of violations, and 146 existing cross connections inspections done. This program will be terminated in 2008 due to declining municipal participation.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

The Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders established the Public Health Nursing Agency in 1966 for the purpose of aiding the county residents to reach and maintain optimum health. Its goal continues to be one of providing quality health care utilizing health promotion and education, therapeutic and rehabilitative care, and the use of family and community resources for the solution of community health problems.



The **Personal Health Services Division** of the Warren County Health Department provides comprehensive, therapeutic home and community health services. Licensed by the State as a Medicare certified home health agency, the Public Health Nursing Agency provides skilled and rehabilitative care under physician's orders for person's who are homebound. Nursing care is available 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week. Other services include telehealth, physical, speech and occupational therapy, medical social services, certified home health aides, and nutritional counseling.

In 2007, 34,662 home visits were made with services provided to 1,132 patients. Individual nursing visits were 16,523; Home Health Aide visits were 7,474; Physical Therapy visits were 7,744; Occupational Therapy visits were 2,300; speech Therapy visits were 376; and Nutrition visits were 245.

In the **Adult Health Services Program**, screenings for diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol are performed at Senior Nutrition Centers, Senior Housing Units, the Warren County's

Farmer’s Fair, local health fairs, businesses, and through its Employees Health Program. This past year, the Nursing staff performed screenings for 1588 adults that resulted in 76 referrals and 392 risk-assessments for Diabetes and Hypertension.



The **Special Child Health Services and Early Intervention Programs** provide case management services for children from birth and 21 years of age who have special health needs. In 2007 these programs which serviced 342 and 341 clients respectively.

The **Maternal Child program** consists of health promotion, education, and early intervention for infants and children. Home visits are provided to at-risk children and parents, and to high risk pregnant women. Well Baby Clinics providing immunizations, health screenings, and physical examinations are held at various sites throughout the county.

Children served annually	134
Children immunized	157
Risk assessments- Childhood Lead poisoning	100
Children screened- Lead Poisoning	57
Confirmed positives- Lead Poisoning	0
Women receiving prenatal/postpartum visits	73
Women <20 years of age receiving prenatal/postpartum visits	8

In the **School Health Program**, nurses perform audits of the immunizations records of children attending preschool for compliance with the NJDHSS regulations. Nurses also perform health screenings, health supervision and education for parochial and private schools under contract.



The **AIDS Community Care Alternatives and HIV Home Care Programs** enable individuals infected with HIV to remain at home instead of an inpatient facility and receive necessary care. Residents may contact the agency for more information.

The **Communicable Disease Program** is responsible for offering many health services to the public including: skin tests, chest x-rays, and medication follow-up for those with TB; STD screenings; and case management follow-up of all reportable diseases (i.e. hepatitis and Lyme disease). Additionally, clinics providing Influenza, Pneumococcus and Hepatitis B vaccines are held throughout the year.

Number of immunizations administered	2000
Cases of reportable diseases	348
Investigations of reportable diseases	782
Total verified cases of TB	3
Number of TB contacts identified and examined	12
Number of positive TB contacts placed on therapy	5
Total clients receiving STD services	6

HEALTH PROMOTION AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The Health Education Division of the Warren County Health Department provides a variety of programs that encourage and enable people to take responsibility for their health and safety. Each program is designed by a certified health education specialist, to meet the specific needs of the target population. This was accomplished through various program activities including:

- ✓ Collect, compile, and maintain community data and statistics for grant applications, community profiles, and strategic plans.
- ✓ Works closely with all community organizations and other Departmental Divisions in the assessment, development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of health education programs and projects for Warren County.
- ✓ Maintain, develop and procure all necessary literature, biological models, posters, and table top displays needed to conduct current and appropriate health education programs
- ✓ Offer State-mandated Hazard Communication, Bloodborne Pathogens, and CPR/First Aid Training and other Occupational Health and Safety education to Warren County public and private organizations upon request
- ✓ Provide education programs upon request concerning various aspects of Personal health including, but not limited to...
 - Stress management
 - Nutrition
 - Smoking Cessation



- Substance Abuse
- Bending, Lifting, and Body Mechanics
- Chronic Disease topics such as Heart Disease, Hypertension, Diabetes, Cancer, and Arthritis
- Maternal and Child Health topics such as Women's health issues, Childhood Growth and Development, Lead Poisoning, and Safety
- Environmental Health concerns such as Food Handling, Radon, and Hazard Communication
- Communicable Diseases such as Lyme Disease, AIDS, Hepatitis A, B, and C, West Nile Virus, and emerging infections
- Specifically designed Health Fairs displays

In addition to the 49 educational programs that were planned and delivered throughout the community in 2007, the Health Education Division led the strategic planning process, Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Coalition in the development of the county's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which identified, prioritized, and summarized the important health issues facing Warren County.