Local Efforts Highlighted During Public Health Week

April 2-6, 2012 is National Public Health Week. Since 1995, when the first full week of April was declared as National Public Health Week, communities across the United States have used this time to recognize the contributions of public health and highlight issues that are important to improving the public's health.

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department plays a vital role in protecting against disease and death and in helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives.

Health Department highlights from the past year include:

- The epidemiology section investigated several disease outbreaks, including a recent rise in pertussis (whooping cough), E. coli liked to eating raw sprouts, several daycare outbreaks and listeria in cantaloupes. The listeria outbreak was a major national story, and two deaths were recorded in Greene County.
- The department's shingles vaccination program administered over 1,200 doses in 2011, paid for through the Greene County Senior Citizens Services Fund Board. This popular program has been renewed for 2012. Interesting fact: the Springfield-Greene County Health Department was the No. 2 purchaser of the Zostavax shingles vaccine from its sole manufacturer in 2011 – second only to the country of Canada's national healthcare system.
- The department was one of many agencies that aided in response to the Joplin tornado. These efforts included mobile tetanus vaccinations for volunteers and citizens alike, night patrols searching for lost animals, and investigating a rash of rare fungal infections in the ensuing weeks.
- The health department's Women, Infants & Children program saw more than 90,000 visits from its participating young families in 2011, and also opened a fourth satellite location in partnership with Schweitzer United Methodist Church.
- The department's new Child Safe Facility Program helps local Childcare providers make changes in their own facilities to make them safer in the areas of emergency preparedness, immunizations, indoor safety, outdoor safety and safe sleep practices for infants.
- Thanks to "express" testing, the department's STD clinic now averages more than 200 clients each month for testing, and has recently expanded those services to a location in Republic.
- The department's volunteer program logged 860 hours of service in 2011, as compared to 580 hours served in 2010.
- About 400 local food handlers and preparers were educated through the department's Food Safety School in 2011 at no cost to participants.
• Working with several rescue partners, the Animal Control program is on a five-month streak of placing for adoption all potentially adoptable dogs brought to the City animal shelter. More than 600 dogs have been sent to rescues during the streak.

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