

# WARREN COUNTY COMBINED HEALTH DISTRICT

## NEWS & INFORMATION

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Health Commissioner

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### Smoke-Free Workplace Compliance

In mid-2007 the Ohio Smoke-Free Workplace Law, that had been voted in by a majority of Ohio Voters in 2006, went into effect. While all of the complaints are reported through the Ohio Department of Health in Columbus, Ohio, all enforcement of these rules are handled by the local health department. During the second half of 2007, the Warren County Combined Health District conducted 118 complaint investigations into allegations of the smoke-free workplace law. The law further prescribes that if a business is found to be in violation of the smoke-free workplace law, the local health department has discretionary powers to either enforce the rules stringently or to allow for a verbal warning on the first offense. The Warren County Combined Health District decided to take an educational approach to enforcement of the law and we provided those found to be in violation of the law with the knowledge they needed for compliance. As a consequence, only a few of our businesses were required to go beyond the verbal warning prescribed in the law. If you want to report a violation of the smoke-free workplace law please contact the Ohio Department of Health at 1-866-599-OHIO (6446). This number is posted on signs that are supposed to be on every entrance into a building. If you have any questions about the smoke-free workplace program in Warren County contact Daniel Collins, R.S., Director of Environmental Health, Warren County Combined Health District at 513-695-1220, 513-261-1220, 513.925.1220 or 937.425.1220.

## PREVENTING "PINK EYE"

Conjunctivitis is a disorder or irritation in the part of the eye known as the conjunctiva. The conjunctiva is a clear mucous membrane that covers part of the sclera (white part of the eye that coats the eyeball) and lines the inside of the eyelids. **WHAT CAUSES CONJUNCTIVITIS?** This can be the result of allergies

or other eye irritants, although the most common form is viral or bacterial based. When this is present, the eye appears pink or red and may have discharge. The same virus that causes a cold or the flu can lead to conjunctivitis. The viral form of conjunctivitis has the greatest concern in childcare settings because of its highly contagious nature. **SYMPTOMS-** Red or pink conjunctiva, swelling and discomfort. Conjunctivitis for some may mean sensitivity to light and a frequent discharge. In some cases, excessive tearing and



itchiness are very common. Redness and puffiness are usually good indicators that there are eye irritations. It is important to contact your family physician for an examination when these symptoms are present. **TREATMENT—** Because viral conjunctivitis is highly contagious, it is very

important to seek medical care as soon as symptoms appear to determine if the conjunctivitis is bacterial, viral or allergy related. The treatment will differ for each type....that is why it is so important to see your physician. **PREVENTION—** For allergy-related conjunctivitis, caregivers should limit outdoor exposure and keep all windows closed when the presence of allergies are high. Viral-based conjunctivitis can be acquired by simply being exposed to someone with the virus. By enforcing appropri-

ated health policies in your home or childcare facility can limit exposure to this and other infectious diseases.

Promote thorough hand washing.

Teach children to avoid drinking after one another.

Wipe down toys, books and other items that groups play with together.

Have ample tissues on hand.

Keep frequently touched items cleaned.

Although this is a common illness, we need to make sure to practice good hygiene and make sure to follow up with your family physician. Doing so will help promote a healthier environment for everyone.

For more information on Pink Eye, contact the Child Health Clinic at 513-695-1468, 513-261-1468, 513-925-1468 or 937-425-1468. (Article from Healthy Child Care)

## Prepared for a Tornado?

The American Red Cross has outlined a checklist for homeowners to use to prepare for a tornado. The major points of the checklist are:

Designate a place where your family can gather if a tornado is headed your way. Basements or a center hallway or closet on the lowest floor are suggested locations. Assemble a disaster supply kit containing: First aid kit and essential medications

Canned food and can opener  
Drinking water—3 gallons per person is suggested.

Protective clothing, bedding or sleeping bag, battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries, special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members. Written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities



advise you to do so. Listen to local radio and TV stations for updated storm information and understand what a tornado watch and tornado warning mean. **Watch** means a tornado is possible in your area. **Warning** means a tornado has been sighted and may be headed your way. Go to safety immediately. Spring is the time of year to understand what a tornado watch and tornado warning mean.

## TRANS FATS — WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What are Trans Fats and why are Cities and States, including Ohio in 2007, proposing to ban their use in restaurants and bakeries? Trans Fats (Trans Fatty Acids) are created in an industrial process that adds hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid, more shelf stable, and to give foods a desirable taste or texture. They are also often listed on the ingredient label as partially hydrogenated oils. So why are Trans Fats considered to be a health problem to the extent that legislation is being proposed across the Country to ban them in restaurants? Trans Fats raise your bad (LDL) cholesterol levels and lower your good (HDL) cholesterol levels. Eating Trans Fats increases your risk of de-



veloping heart disease and stroke. It's also associated with a higher risk of developing type-2 diabetes. So how do you know if you are consuming Trans Fats? You can check the food label on packaged foods for the Trans Fats content. They were required to be listed on food labels since 2006. Foods that normally contain Trans Fats include french fries, doughnuts, biscuits, pizza dough, cookies, crackers, stick butter, and short-enings. The following tips can be used to keep your consumption of saturated fats, Trans Fats, and cholesterol low while consuming a nutritional diet:

- Check the Nutrition Facts panel to com-

pare foods for serving size and the content of saturated fat, Trans Fat, and cholesterol. Choose those foods with the lowest level of these types of fat. Keep in mind that for saturated fats and cholesterol, less than 5% of the daily value is considered low. 0 is the desired level of Trans Fats.

- Choose alternative fats. Replace saturated and Trans Fats in your diet with mono-unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. These fats do NOT raise LDL cholesterol levels and they have health benefits when eaten in moderation. Sources of monoun-saturated fats include olive and canola oils. Sources of polyunsaturated fats include soy-bean oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, and foods like nuts.
- Ask which fats are being used in the preparation of your food when eating or ordering out and choose foods prepared without saturated or Trans Fats.

- Choose foods low in saturated fat such as fat free or 1% dairy products, lean meats, fish, skinless poultry, whole grain foods and fruits and vegetables.

Pay attention to the nutrition labels on items such as energy and nutrition bars as they are often made using saturated or Trans Fats. Dietary supplements must also list Trans Fats on the nutrition label.



## USE CAUTION WHEN SPRING CLEANING

Spring is on the way and everyone is ready to "spring clean". The Environmental Division of the Health Department advises consumers that common household agents can cause fatal injuries when mixed incorrectly. One dangerous combination is ammonia and bleach. When these two compounds are mixed a chemical reaction occurs between the bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) and ammonia (ammonium hydroxide)



resulting in the release of nitrogen trichloride gas. This poisonous gas can cause almost instant corrosive oxidation of the mucous membranes, as in the eyes and lungs. Always use household chemical products as directed by the manufacturer and do not mix products as the result can be hazardous to your health. If you have any questions, contact the Environmental Division at 513.695.1220, 513.261.1220, 513.925.1220 or 937.425.1220.

## BED BUGS: THEY ARE PRESENT & THEY DO BITE!

Called the "new scourge of America" by some experts, this blood-feeding insect of mythical lore has been spotted increasingly in cities that have an influx of international tourists such as New York and Chicago. Infestations around the country have been reported in hotels and motels and it's not just the run down, seedy ones. The bed bug is an equal opportunity pest, invading expensive hotels with the same fervor as less fancy establishments. The bed bugs preferred food source, a sleeping human, is available no matter how clean the surrounding environment. What are bed bugs? Adult bedbugs are about the size of a ladybug and are flat, oval, and have no wings.



They are brown, unless engorged with a blood meal, which turns them red. Bed bugs feed regularly but can go six months without feeding, making them difficult to get rid of. People are often at first unaware that they have been bitten by bed bugs. When people are first bitten, the human body may have little reaction, but after numerous bites an area will itch. People who are bitten repeatedly can suffer from pallor, lethargy, and nervousness. Fortunately, bedbugs are not known to transmit any diseases to humans.

The best preventative treatment for bedbugs is to inspect rooms and caulk up holes in walls, furniture, and other hiding spots. Exterminators have found pesticide dustings to be effective in many cases. For more information regarding bed bugs please contact the Environmental Health Division at 513-695-1220, 513-261-1220, 937-425-1220 or 513-925-1220.

\*\*\*\*\*REMINDER\*\*\*\*\*  
**TEST YOUR WELL & POND WATER**  
**FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL**  
**MARCH 11, 2008 5:30—7:30 P.M.**  
**OPEN TO ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS**