

## Statewide News Release

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### **Celebrate Environmental Health Staff**

*March 22-26 is Environmental Health Professionals Week in Kentucky*

**FRANKFORT, KY** (March 23, 2010) - Gov. Steve Beshear has proclaimed March 22-26 Environmental Health Professionals Week in honor of the numerous registered sanitarians working across the state to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their fellow Kentuckians.

Throughout the week, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH), local health departments and industry professionals will devote extra time to acknowledging the work of environmental professionals as well as educating the public about their role in public health.

“Environmental health professionals, or registered sanitarians, work very hard so that we do not have outbreaks of illness associated with foods, water, milk, swimming or other public health dangers,” said William Hacker, M.D., DPH commissioner. “This important workforce does such a good job preventing illness, injury and outbreaks that we rarely stop to thank them for the excellent job they do. This observance gives us a chance to do that.”

Environmental health professionals help ensure the safety of restaurants, grocery stores, supermarkets, food production facilities, schools, hotels, motels, mobile home parks, public swimming pools and tattoo businesses through routine health inspections. They also provide support for other health programs that target issues such as lead-based paint, septic systems, radon, milk, water, quality assurance, animal rabies and many more.

“We’re everywhere,” said Guy Delius, director of the division of public health protection and safety in DPH. “When Kentuckians eat out at our food establishments or buy our groceries, we have already been there to ensure you receive only the safest foods and dairy products. When you swim in a public swimming pool, stay in a hotel, get a tattoo, install a septic system, receive an X-ray, - the list goes on - chances are we have already been there to make sure it met the required health requirements.”

Several events are planned at local health departments for recognition of environmental health staff. Public events include:

- In Frankfort, DPH will have an informational and awareness day on March 24 in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services lobby.
- Fayette County Health Department is offering media an opportunity to “ride along with an environmentalist.”
- WEDCO District (Harrison County) Health Department will host a health fair on April 8 in Cynthiana.

Call your local health department to inquire about educational events planned for Environmental Health Professionals Week. Visit the Kentucky Registered Sanitarians Web site for information and employment opportunities at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/sanitarians.htm>.