



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO • DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

*Protecting Public Health & the Environment*

## *A Message from the Director*

*The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) protects public and environmental health through a variety of programs. Our inspection, permitting, and community outreach activities range from assuring the safety of the food and water we consume and use, to controlling vector borne diseases from mosquitos, fleas, ticks and rodents. We also regulate the handling and disposal of hazardous materials, and are the local enforcement agency for solid waste issues.*

*As the Director of the Department of Environmental Health, my goal is to assist businesses and the community in managing environmental issues through partnerships and enhanced customer service. I promote education and prevention as the Department's primary focus, with enforcement only as necessary to protect public health. Benjamin Franklin once said, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Preventing environmental degradation is both cost effective and a sound management practice in enhancing and protecting our community's quality of life.*

*This past year brought many changes to DEH. On January 1, 1995, we separated as a Division of the Department of Health Services and became the Department of Environmental Health. This change enhances the visibility of environmental issues and enables more direct access to the policy and decision making process. In an effort to be both responsive to the community needs, and cost effective in service delivery, we have consolidated inspection activities and streamlined our permitting processes. Additionally, on July 1, 1995, DEH incorporated the Building and Zoning Enforcement Divisions of the Department of Planning and Land Use, and the Codes Enforcement Unit of the Department of Public Works. I welcome the staff of these programs and the challenge of these new responsibilities.*

*With the commitment and innovative leadership of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, DEH will continue its mission of protecting public health and the environment. We live here, we are your neighbors, and we care about our community's future.*



Daniel J. Avera, Director  
Department of Environmental Health

# Your Department of Environmental Health

The County Department of Environmental Health's (DEH's) goal is to ensure that people can lead healthy, productive lives, and enjoy our natural surroundings with peace of mind. This is accomplished by:

## Protecting...

*public and environmental health in a cost effective manner;*

## Providing...

*programs to prevent disease and disability; and,*

## Promoting...

*public health and safeguarding environmental quality for future generations.*

In fiscal year 1994-95, we had a budget of \$21.9 million, a decrease of two million dollars from the previous year. We have streamlined permits and consolidated inspections to keep operating costs down, and have not raised inspection fees in the last three years. We work with industry, community-based groups and the public to determine the appropriate levels of service and fees, and we value their input and suggestions. We continue to strive for the same high level of service while using cost saving measures and alternate sources of funding.

We pride ourselves in providing the community with courteous, helpful, and expert service. Our 338 staff are highly trained in areas ranging from environmental health, biology, chemistry, geology, industrial hygiene, construction technology, toxicology, radiological health, and other related sciences, including State licensed and registered professionals. Specialists inspect business operations, and monitor environmental factors that may impact public health. For example, restaurants are inspected to prevent food related illnesses, and contaminated properties are monitored to assure proper clean-up.

Although DEH enforces public health and environmental laws and regulations, we have been most successful using education and prevention efforts in gaining compliance with these laws. We seek to create a community-based environmental awareness through community/business outreach, public education, and open communication.

### COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

**DIRECTOR:** Daniel J. Avera  
338-2211

**MISSION:** To serve the citizens of San Diego County through programs designed to prevent disease and disability, promote health and protect the environment.

**ACTIVITIES:** Education, Emergency Response, Regulation, Consultation, Inspections, Surveillance, Plan Check, Enforcement, & Complaints

#### ▼ COMMUNITY FOOD & HOUSING

- Restaurants–Markets
- Public Swimming Pools
- Hotel–Motel–Apartments
- Jails/Detention Facilities
- Bathhouses
- Food Handler Training
- Special Events
- Epidemiological Investigations

#### ▼ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

- Hazardous Incident Response Team
- Industry Compliance
- Hazardous Waste Generation
- Hazardous Materials Processing, Storage, & Disposal
- Biomedical Waste
- Hazardous Substance Underground Storage Tank Monitoring, Installation & Removal
- Oversight of Clean-ups at Hazardous Materials Contaminated Sites
- Monitoring Well Permit Program
- Closed, Illegal & Abandoned Landfill Sites
- Legislative Review/ Planning
- Business & Community Outreach
- U.S./Mexico Border Issues
- Pollution Prevention
- Household Hazardous Materials Program

#### ▼ LAND USE

- Land Use Regulatory Planning
- Planning Commission & Board of Supervisors Hearings
- Water Well Construction Abandonment
- Small Water Systems
- Septic Tank Systems
- Water/Sewage Regulation Enforcement
- Housing

#### ▼ OCCUPATIONAL & RADIOLOGICAL HEALTH

- County Employee Respiratory Protection
- County Employee Hazard/ Evaluations
- Asbestos Management
- Radioactive Material License
- X-Ray Machine Inspections
- Nuclear Emergency Planning
- Noise Ordinance Enforcement

#### ▼ VECTOR SURVEILLANCE & CONTROL

- Mosquito Control
- Domestic Rat Control
- Fly Control
- Vector Source Investigation & Reduction
- Vector-Borne Disease Investigation & Prevention
- Specimens Identification

#### ▼ BUILDING & CODES ENFORCEMENT

- Building Inspections & Permits
- Plan Checking
- Codes Enforcement

# Protecting the Public & the Environment

## ▼ Safe Food

Over 10,000 retail food establishments in San Diego are inspected by DEH. Restaurants are inspected three to four times a year to ensure that food is safe to eat, of good quality and properly labeled and advertised. Unsafe foods can cause illness and sometimes even death. We require all foodhandlers to be trained on proper methods to prevent food contamination and illness. When necessary, contaminated foods and consumer goods are recalled and destroyed.

### Posting of "A" Cards

All restaurants in San Diego County MUST post a grade card at the entrance. There are 3 types of grade cards.

A blue "A" card indicates the restaurant is in good compliance with food sanitation regulations.

The green "B" card indicates some serious violations need to be corrected.

The red "C" card indicates many serious violations and if not corrected, the restaurant will be closed!

This grading system helps DEH keep restaurants in compliance and keep the rate of foodborne illnesses in check. Always look for the blue "A" card in the window!

FOOD PROTECTION YEARLY ACTIVITIES	
10,370	Facilities Permitted
30,189	Facilities Inspected
2,102	Complaints Investigated
181	Foodborne Illnesses Investigated



### If you get sick from "eating-out..."

call your doctor, then CALL US!! County DEH responds to all calls received on foodborne illness, and calling us right away may prevent others from getting sick. All complaint calls received are kept CONFIDENTIAL.

Our staff will obtain specific information from you about what you ate today, and what you ate yesterday. Foodborne illnesses sometimes do not affect you right away. Some take days to cause illness. We try to determine the type of illness, such as *Salmonella enteritidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, or other agent. We then try to determine which meal may have been the culprit.

If a suspected meal was at a restaurant or other food establishment, our staff will conduct a thorough inspection of that establishment. The inspector will check specifically for proper food temperatures and food preparation. The owner or manager is instructed on proper food handling and prevention methods, and if any serious violations are recognized, they are immediately corrected.

Remember, foodborne illness is no laughing matter! Always consult a physician if you are ill. Then, don't hesitate to call us. Your call may help to prevent others from getting ill.

## ▼ Safe Water

DEH assures that San Diego's drinking water, groundwater, reclaimed water, and recreational waters are safe for use by the public.

Drinking water systems must be completely separate from any other plumbing system to prevent contamination. Cross connections where drinking water is incorrectly connected to non-potable plumbing can lead to water contamination. For example, a garden hose left in a container of pesticide may siphon some of the pesticide back into the water system. Siphoning occurs

### DRINKING WATER WELL AND SEPTIC SYSTEM YEARLY ACTIVITIES

550	Drinking Water Well Permits
224	Small Public Water Systems
905	Septic System Installations

when the water pressure drops, such as when a fire hydrant is being used, or work is being done on water lines down the street. Likewise, this same principle may occur in industry if a pipe is in

a vat of toxic chemicals, the toxics can siphon into the

drinking water system if water pressure drops. DEH checks industrial and manufacturing equipment for cross connections to prevent contamination of drinking water. DEH also regularly inspects public small drinking water systems, and reviews water sample results to prevent and detect contaminants that can affect public health.

In rural areas where septic systems are commonly used for sewage disposal, DEH inspects for proper installation and maintenance. Contamination of underground drinking water supplies by septic systems is a special concern for communities who depend on well water for drinking.

### Did You Know?

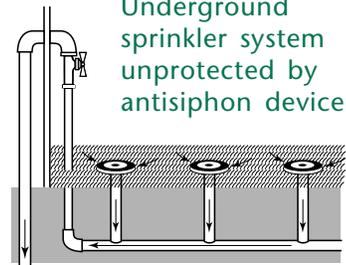
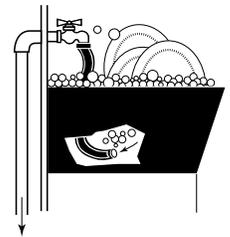
- Septic tanks should be pumped out every 3 to 5 years!

### Avoid these common household cross connections!

Garden hose submerged in container of toxics



Spray hose submerged in dishwasher



Underground sprinkler system unprotected by antisiphon device

Contaminants can siphon back into the drinking water system if water pressure drops.

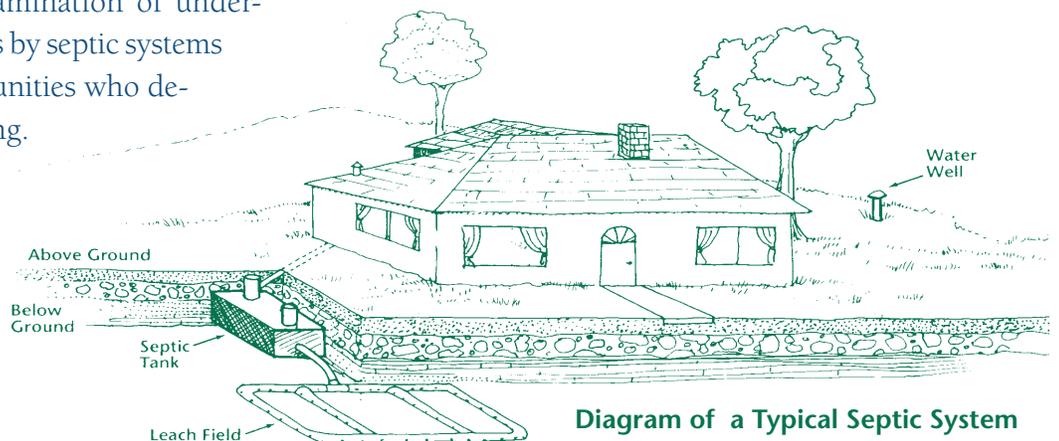


Diagram of a Typical Septic System

## Swimming Should Be Both Fun and Safe

Annually, over 6,000 public swimming pools are inspected for proper sanitation and life-saving equipment. Unsafe pools (e.g., lack of disinfectant) are closed until the violations are corrected.

County beaches and bays are monitored to make sure the water is safe for swimming and other recreational uses.

When coastal waters are contaminated by sewage or chemical releases, the public is notified and beaches are closed until tests determine the water is safe for public contact.

Underground storage tanks (UST) can contaminate water supplies if they leak the chemicals they contain, such as gasoline or oil. UST monitoring records and leak detection equipment are evaluated by DEH inspectors to identify and correct potential contamination problems. When removed or replaced, USTs are also checked for leakage. Sites that have become contaminated from these chemical leaks are evaluated for risk to the community and their clean-up is monitored.

Mismanagement of solid waste can pose a risk to the community because trash disposed of improperly may contaminate groundwater. Additionally, there may be uncontrolled releases of methane and other gases generated by the decomposition of trash. DEH inspects active landfills and reviews historical solid waste information to determine disposal history and potential risks. If these sites become a threat to the community and the environment, including closed and inactive sites, appropriate enforcement and clean-up is initiated. All solid waste sites are monitored, and information is continually analyzed for community protection.

Water reclamation is the process whereby sewage water is treated for reuse. By reusing this water for irrigation, we save more of our precious drinking water supplies. DEH reviews construction plans and tests water reclamation systems to ensure the community's health is not endangered.

Within the next two years, there will be over 500 sites using reclaimed water in San Diego County, including the Del Mar Fairgrounds, golf courses, college campuses, community landscaping and parks.

CONTAMINATED SITE YEARLY ACTIVITIES	
UNDERGROUND CHEMICAL STORAGE TANK (UST) RELATED SITES COUNTYWIDE	
1,430	Contaminated Sites
1,039	Sites Resolved/ Cleaned Up
328	Construction Permits for UST Installations/ Repairs
802	Monitoring Well Permits
OTHER CHEMICAL RELATED SITES COUNTYWIDE (NON-UST)	
232	Contaminated Sites
213	Sites Resolved/ Cleaned Up

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL SITES COUNTYWIDE	
8	Active Solid Waste Disposal Sites
80	Closed, Abandoned Sites (continual monitoring)
5	Solid Waste Sites Resolved/Cleaned Up

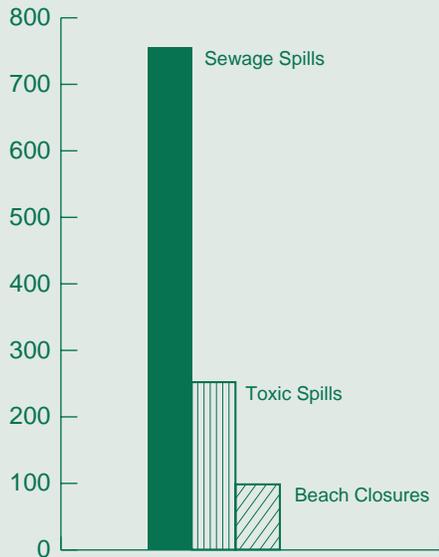
RECREATIONAL WATER YEARLY ACTIVITIES	
6,243	Public Swimming Pool Permits
15,152	Public Swimming Pool Inspections
223	Public Swimming Pool Complaints Investigated
98	Beach Closures Countywide

### Did You Know?

- Each year in the U.S. an estimated 180 million gallons of used oil are disposed of improperly (dripped, spilled, or poured onto the ground, directly into waterways, or down storm drains). That is sixteen times the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez!

## Public Health Notifications

FY '94-'95



DEH responds to sewage spills in San Diego County with an immediate risk evaluation and initiation of actions to notify the public. If spills reach recreational waters, beaches may be closed.

In fulfilling the requirements of Proposition 65 and health laws, the public is notified of any threat to human health caused by spills of sewage or toxics. Don't hesitate to call us at (619) 338-2222 if you see a sewage or toxic discharge!

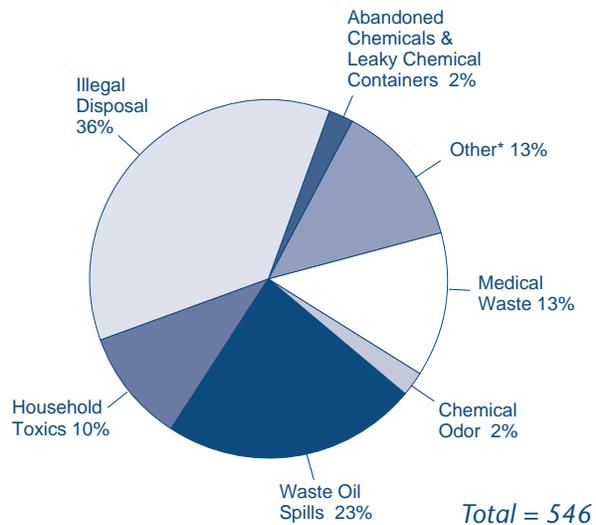


## ▼ Safe Use of Hazardous Materials

DEH oversees the storage and disposal of hazardous materials countywide. Hazardous materials range from industrial chemicals to common household products such as, motor oil and paint. Safe management and proper disposal of these materials is essential to prevent human exposure and environmental contamination. Hazardous materials enforcement, education, and emergency response services are provided to businesses and the public by DEH.

Our primary purpose in the enforcement of hazardous materials laws and regulations is to educate and assist businesses in the community with their compliance efforts. Federal and State hazardous materials laws are enforced primarily through business inspections. Businesses are required to safely use, and properly dispose of their hazardous materials and waste. Hospitals and doctor's offices must also properly dispose of their medical waste. Businesses are required to develop plans to prepare for an emergency such as a fire or chemical spill. These plans are reviewed to ensure that employees will know how to respond to an emergency, and prevent harming themselves and the surrounding community.

## Hazardous Materials Complaints FY '94-'95



County DEH investigates all hazardous materials complaints. Call us if you see hazardous materials being abandoned and disposed of improperly. Most of the complaints received are for illegal disposal.

\* Other includes fuel spill, transport accident, chemical fire, pesticide related, illegal dump site, and referrals.

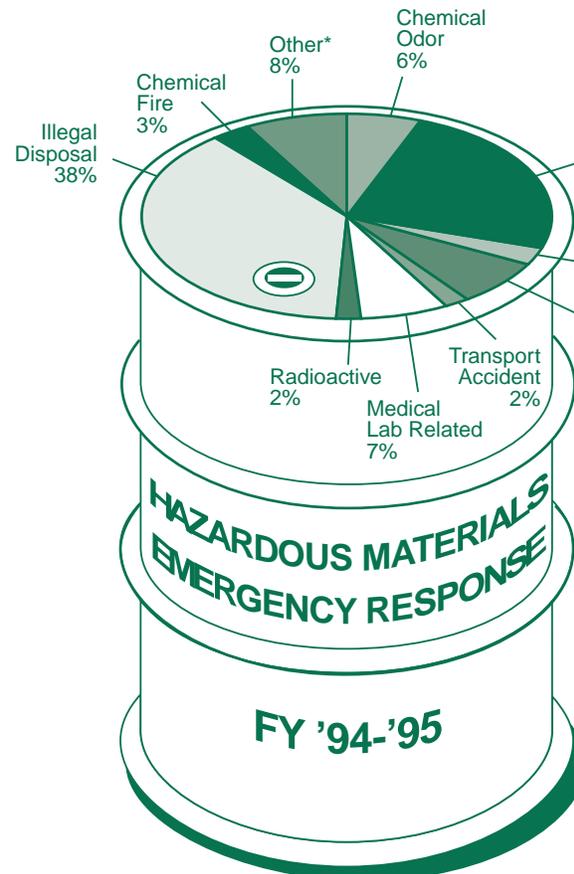
### Did You Know?

- Pollution prevention strategies helped a local company reduce its use of chemicals by 93%. Pollution prevention can save businesses money and lower health and environmental risks.

Educational activities encourage pollution prevention as a first-line approach to preventing chemical hazards. DEH staff provide information to local businesses on waste minimization, which not only reduces hazardous waste produced but can often times save money. Substituting safer chemicals and modifying manufacturing processes are other ways to reduce waste. We also participate in workshops and conferences, providing guidelines and information on new laws and regulations to help businesses comply. The Household Hazardous Materials Program provides San Diego residents with information on the potential dangers of household hazardous materials, the use of safer substitutes, and proper waste disposal methods.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS YEARLY ACTIVITIES	
12,967	Businesses Permitted (hazardous materials, medical waste)
755	Public Complaints Investigated (business related)
546	Public Complaints Investigated (non-business related)
6,500	Hazardous Materials Duty Desk (public calls answered)
337	Emergency Incident Responses (countywide)

We provide 24-hour chemical emergency response service to the region. This service is cooperatively funded by the County and the incorporated cities of the county.



Specially trained DEH staff, in partnership with the City of San Diego Fire Department staff, respond to chemical emergencies countywide. Their job at the scene of a chemical emergency is to ensure the safety of the public, prevent environmental contamination, and ensure proper handling and clean-up of spills. We coordinate training and resources with environmental and emergency agencies on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

*Our Emergency Response staff are on call 24 hours to respond to public health and environmental emergencies referred through 911.*

\* Other includes fuel spill, medical waste, pesticide related, trash related, and non-emergency referrals.

Total = 337

## ▼ Healthy People

Many factors of our environment can cause disease or injury if not managed properly. These factors include food that may become contaminated, poor housing conditions and sanitation, animals that may carry disease, and ionizing radiation to name a few.

Foodborne illness can cause discomfort and even death. Food establishments are checked for adequate food temperatures, proper food handling methods, proper hand washing, and overall cleanliness. We require all foodservice workers to have foodhandler training. Food remains safe if cooking temperatures reach at least 165°F, food is kept hot at 140°F, and then quickly cooled and refrigerated at 45°F or lower. Food preparation surfaces such as cutting boards can become a source of contamination if they are not thoroughly washed after preparing raw foods. Good hand washing habits help prevent workers from passing disease to customers through the food they serve. These food handling techniques also apply when preparing food at home.

Vectors are animals that carry disease to humans. Many vector-borne diseases can be passed to humans by mosquitos, fleas, ticks, and rodents, such as, rats, mice, and squirrels. Rodent fleas and feces can carry infectious diseases such as plague and the Hantavirus. Mosquitos can carry malaria and encephalitis. Educational materials are provided to the public on ways to control vectors and to prevent exposures. For example,



## Did You Know?

- Ingested doses of lead can be stored in the skeletal system for 25 years.
- 90% of homes built before 1940, 80% of homes built between 1940 and 1959, and 62% of homes built between 1960 and 1979 contain lead-based paint!

mosquitos can be easily controlled by eliminating standing water. Rodents can be discouraged by stacking firewood off the ground, and removing trash and other food sources, such as dog food, from around the house or yard.

Radiation exposure is another area of concern. There are many man-made sources of radiation in the county including radioactive materials and x-ray machines. Users of radioactive materials must all be properly licensed. We inspect medical and industrial facilities to make sure that x-ray machines are in proper working order, operators are certified, and that all radioactive materials are used correctly.

### DISEASE AND INJURY PREVENTION YEARLY ACTIVITIES

4,665	Vector Service Requests/Complaints
2,694	Housing Inspections
486	Housing Complaints Investigated
95	Miscellaneous Permits (Tattoo Parlors, Massage Businesses, Large Animals, Pet Shops, Bathhouses)
858	X-ray Machine Inspections
65	Radioactive Material Inspections

## ▼ Safe Buildings

Poor housing conditions can promote the spread of disease. Good sanitation is the key to prevention. We inspect multi-family housing for substandard conditions. We focus on problems such as the lack of electricity, water or heat, improper sewage disposal, conditions that encourage rodent or insect infestations, and safety hazards. Housing inspections also include looking for abandoned wells, open excavations and discarded refrigerators that can be extremely hazardous to children who may fall in, or become trapped inside. Inspectors also check for chipped or peeling paint, especially in homes built before 1978, because the paint may contain lead. Crumbling and chipped lead-based paint, and the dust it creates, can cause lead poisoning, especially in young children who tend to put things in their mouths. County owned buildings are also inspected for hazards to protect County employees, and the public that enter these buildings. In the unincorporated areas of the county, we plancheck and inspect new building construction to ensure safety and code compliance.

## Lead poisoning . . .

is a serious disease, especially for young children. Lead poisoning can cause permanent injury, such as learning disabilities, behavioral problems and stunted growth. Extreme cases may even result in coma and death.

The primary sources of lead poisoning nationwide are lead-based paint and contaminated soil. Recently, another source was discovered...lead tainted candy wrappers, which prompted an immediate investigation and prevention effort.

The investigation revealed that the primary source of lead poisoning in several children was candy wrappers from

imported candy. The ink used on these wrappers contained high levels of lead which contaminated the children's hands and the candy.

Currently, no law prohibits foreign manufacturers from using lead-based inks on food packaging. But, due to DEH's efforts, along with other southern California counties, the Federal Food and Drug Administration is now working with foreign candy manufacturers to eliminate lead from their packaging.

Call our Lead Specialist at 338-2293 for information on preventing exposure to lead.

# Providing the Public...

## ▼ Customer Service

*The Department of Environmental Health values its customers—the community.*

**WE LISTEN** to concerns and respond with action. Specialized, expert staff give technical assistance whether questions relate to food, water, housing, sewage disposal, hazardous materials, lead, or vector-borne disease. Our office hours are 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Our general phone number, (619) 338-2222, or any of our other direct lines (see “Who to Call” box) will connect you to staff who will assist you.

**WE RESPOND** to a wide variety of environmental complaints including unsanitary restaurants, suspected food related illnesses, hazardous materials dumping, and substandard housing. Complaints are investigated and resolved with an effort to prevent problems from recurring.

**WE CONTINUALLY ASK** our customers how we can improve and make changes to better our service. A suggestion received on our customer survey resulted in the development of inspection checklists to improve consistency. Utilizing customer feedback is a continuous process for us to improve our delivery of services.

**WE REACH OUT** to create avenues for community involvement. Educational workshops and seminars are held for schools, community groups, businesses and the general public for the exchange of information. In addition, DEH outreach encourages discussion and input on the impacts of new laws and regulations. Shared public and environmental health information can apply at work and at home. For example, replacing an industrial or household cleaner with a less toxic one is pollution prevention. Learning about vectors helps to prevent exposure to vector borne disease while working outdoors or taking a canyon walk.

## Who to call

**For All Your  
Environmental  
Health Concerns Call:**

**County of San Diego  
Department of  
Environmental Health  
(DEH)  
338-2222**

**Other DEH Direct Informational  
Phone Numbers You Can Call:**

Asbestos & Asbestos Testing  
694-3550

Beach/Bay Hotline  
338-2073

Bees  
694-2888

Building Inspection & Code Enforcement—  
Unincorporated Areas  
Kearny Mesa Office  
565-5920  
El Cajon Office  
441-6666  
San Marcos Office  
471-0730

Contaminated Properties & Clean-ups  
338-2222  
(ask to speak to the S.A.M. Duty Specialist)

Contaminated Properties—Non-underground  
Storage Tank Related  
338-2259

Cross Connections  
338-2481

Drinking Water Wells & Systems  
565-5173

Fleas & Ticks  
694-2888

Flies  
694-2888

Food—Restaurants, Markets, Special Events  
338-2222

Food-related Illnesses  
338-2289

Food Handler Training  
338-2222

Hazardous Materials & Hazardous Waste  
338-2231

(over)



## Who to call (continued)

- Household Toxics Hotline  
235-2111 or  
800-246-1233
- Housing–Multi-family  
338-2222
- Housing–Rural  
565-5173
- Industrial Hygiene–Occupational Health  
694-3550
- Land Use Planning–Unincorporated Areas  
565-5173
- Lead Abatement  
338-2293
- Lead Information  
338-2293
- Medical Waste  
338-2231
- Mobile Home Parks  
565-5173
- Monitoring Wells  
338-2339
- Mosquitoes  
694-2888
- Permit Assistance Center  
236-5938
- Pollution Prevention Program  
338-2204
- Radiation Management  
694-3550
- Rats, Mice, & Rodent Control  
694-2888
- Recreational Waters & Sewage/Toxic Spills  
(Prop. 65)  
338-2386
- Septic Systems  
565-5173
- Site Assessment Assistance Program  
338-2259
- Swimming Pools–Public  
338-2222
- Underground Storage Tank  
Construction/Removal  
338-2214
- Underground Storage Tank Monitoring  
338-2231
- X-ray Machines  
694-3550

**County of San Diego  
Department of  
Environmental Health  
(DEH)  
338-2222**



# Promoting Public Health

## ▼ Education & Prevention

The strong educational component of our programs has been successful in preventing health problems. The Hantavirus is a virus associated with rodent droppings. When it was identified as causing three deaths in California, we began a proactive investigation into the virus' prevalence in the county, and initiated control measures. We expanded our public education outreach efforts to educate communities on ways to prevent exposure to the virus. As a result, no cases of the disease have been reported in San Diego County.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentations</li><li>• Workshops</li><li>• Seminars</li><li>• Public meetings</li></ul>

## ▼ Efficient Service

Automation of data and tasks reduces response time for services. For example, to further enhance the community's health and safety, a *First Responder Plan* was developed. Fire fighters keep this plan in their vehicles for immediate access when they are called to the scene of a fire. It is critical for first responders to have information about hazardous materials stored at a site, to prevent public exposure to chemicals, and fire fighter injury. DEH works diligently with the local fire agencies to provide this information quickly.

## ▼ Responsible Regulation

We believe that public and environmental health and economic success are linked and can prosper together. To further this commitment, DEH pursued and obtained designation as a hazardous materials "lead agency", allowing many businesses to report only to DEH, instead of multiple local, State and Federal agencies. By building on our existing regulatory program, and developing support from cities and other agencies, we were able to consolidate hazardous materials regulation and save time and money for local businesses and the public.

In the rural areas of the county, several inspection programs have been consolidated to further simplify procedures. Businesses in these areas are now visited by a single DEH inspector for all of their public and environmental health needs. This service has been very well received, and we are looking forward to expanding it into other locations. In addition, DEH is now the lead agency for codes enforcement, construction, grading, and abandoned vehicles in the unincorporated areas of the county.

## ▼Public/Private Partnerships

Public education is fostered through public/private partnerships of businesses and government working together to promote public and environmental health in the workplace and the home. The Environmental Alliance Program (EAP), one of DEH's public/private partnerships, helps businesses to meet one-on-one with each other and with regulatory agencies. Through the EAP, our Pollution Prevention Program helps businesses save money and reduce risks by minimizing their use of hazardous materials. Another example of a public/private partnership is the Business and Industry Group (BIG) League, a program developed by our Household Hazardous Materials Program to educate communities on household hazardous materials. In fiscal year 1994-95, BIG League members printed and distributed educational materials to over a 1,000 of their employees.

### Did You Know?

- The name for the Hantavirus was used to describe a variety of the virus first seen in Korea during the Korean War.
- X-ray machines are inspected by DEH staff to ensure proper operation.

## Hazardous Waste Disposal Is Expensive!

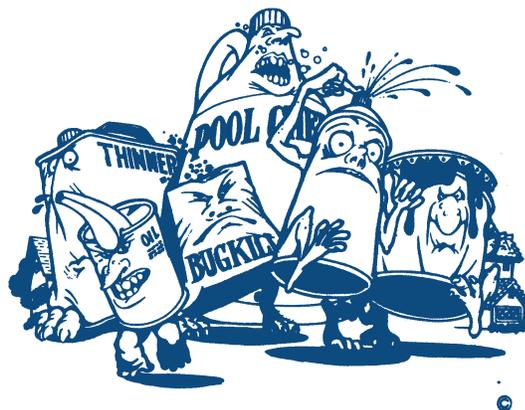
It costs approximately \$20.00 to dispose of 1 gallon of household hazardous waste! Be S.M.A.R.T. (Save money and reduce toxics)!!! The key is to not purchase products that will later need to be disposed of as a hazardous waste.

### Here is a List of Safer Substitutes:

- Use pump sprays instead of aerosols.
- Use water-based degreasers and paints (latex).
- Use a plunger or metal snake for a plugged drain instead of chemical drain openers.
- Buy one product that will accomplish many tasks, instead of a separate cleaner for every household chore.
- Sprinkle baby powder along your kitchen window sill to prevent ants from entering your home.

Return used motor oil and old car batteries to your local retailer for recycling.

If you must use a household hazardous material, buy only what you need and use it all up! For household hazardous waste recycling and disposal options call the Information Hotline, 235-2111 or 800-246-1233.



## San Diego Regional Permit Assistance Center

offers business assistance with Regional, County, State and Federal Permits. It also provides pre-project planning services, resource library access, government financing information, environmental technologies certification, and a place to file permit applications.

Open Mon.-Fri.,  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

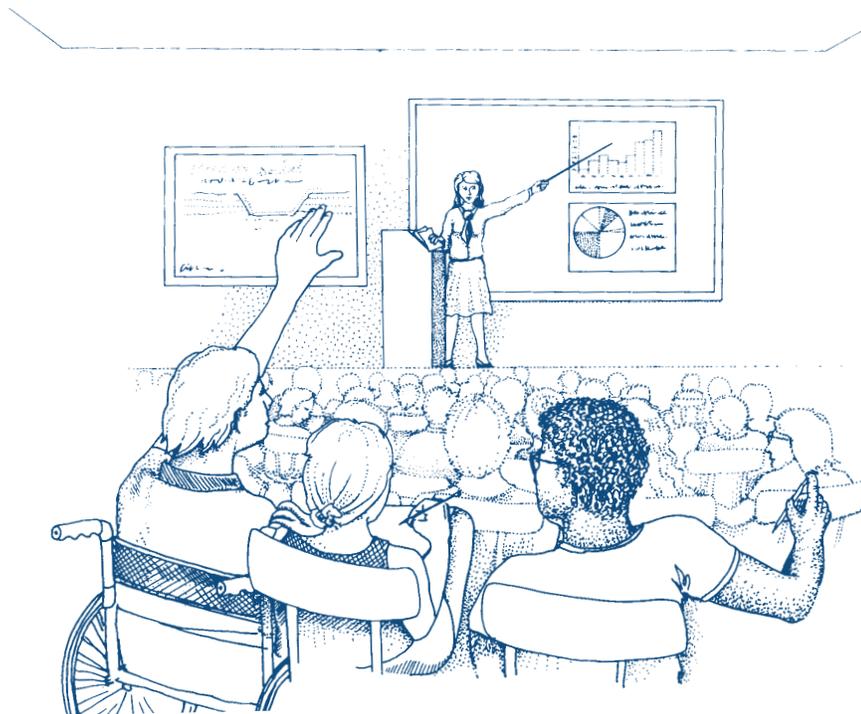
Located in the City  
Operations Building,  
1222 First Avenue  
Fourth Floor  
San Diego, 92101

Phone:  
(619) 236-5938  
Fax:  
(619) 236-7200

## ▼Leadership

When businesses had difficulties in understanding and complying with environmental laws and regulations, we clarified these requirements through guidance manuals, saving businesses and the community, time and money. We developed work groups comprised of representatives from industry, various regulatory agencies, and the public, to annually update our Site Assessment and Mitigation (SAM) Manual. This “clean-up” procedure manual has helped to successfully clean-up/resolve (no longer posing a risk to the public) over 1,000 petroleum contaminated properties in record time. The SAM Manual has received attention nationwide and is now being used as a model for other agencies.

DEH is also taking the lead in simplifying the permit process. In a move to consolidate business permits, we met with State, County, and City regulatory agencies and brought our resources together. As a result of this effort, the San Diego Regional Permit Assistance Center (RPAC) was developed. The RPAC is a “one stop shop” which allows a business to obtain permits and information from all of these agencies at a single location.



# Looking to the Future

---

## ▼Community Needs and Reducing Risks

People want to know about environmental risks in their communities. Environmental influences such as chemical exposures, contaminated food, and disease carrying vectors, play a key role in affecting human health. We have a responsibility to keep the community informed of environmental risks and prevention methods. Our goal is to involve the public in decision making processes so that community concerns are addressed. We continue to expand our community education and outreach activities. This offers the public opportunities to learn about local environmental issues and risk prevention, and to participate in improving the community's quality of life.

## ▼Risk-Based Decision Making

Traditional methods of environmental regulation often emphasize "one size fits all" strategies that can be burdensome and costly. We look at each site on an individual basis and take into account the public health risks. For example, if a property is contaminated from a leaking gasoline storage tank, we first look at the amount of contamination present. We then determine if water resources may become polluted and if the public may be exposed. This information allows us to choose the most sensible clean-up methods using risk-based decision making and a common sense approach.

## ▼Computer Mapping

This year, DEH began utilizing a computer mapping system in cooperation with the Regional Urban Information System (RUIS). With this Geographic Information System (GIS), we are able to examine the environmental data we collect in conjunction with other geographic features such as streets, rivers, and census tracts. Community planning is enhanced with the GIS because it helps in the evaluation of proposed projects, industrial sites, and public health risks. The GIS also provides information quickly. For instance, we can immediately identify whether a hazardous waste or solid waste site is near sensitive populations, such as schools or day care centers. We envision that this system will play an important role in the methods used to evaluate, manage, and communicate environmental risks in the future.

### Did You Know?

- Anything that goes down the street gutter enters our storm drains and does not get cleaned or purified in any way. What goes in is what comes out into our ocean and bays.

*YOUR*  
**County of San Diego**  
**Department of Environmental Health**

*P.O. Box 85261*  
*San Diego, CA 92186-5261*  
*(619) 338-2222*

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



**Board of Supervisors**

Greg Cox  
Dianne Jacob  
Pam Slater  
Ron Roberts  
Bill Horn

**Chief Administrative Officer (Acting)**

Gary R. Stephany

**Director, Department of Environmental Health**

Daniel J. Avera

 Printed on recycled paper  
(4/96)

---

County of San Diego  
Department of Environmental Health  
P.O. Box 85261  
San Diego, CA 92186-5261