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## **YEAR 2011 COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

As you will see in this report, the Albany County Department of Health (ACDOH) successfully delivered essential public health services in the core program areas of family health, disease control, health education, environmental health and emergency preparedness in 2011, with a number of notable accomplishments.

The public health services and activities, as outlined in this report, helped to prevent diseases, promote healthy behaviors, and protect residents from hazards that could affect their health and safety. I credit an outstanding health department staff that carried out the broad array of public health services in 2011 to assure the health and well being of Albany County residents. It is a privilege for me to highlight these activities.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Crucetti, MD, MPH  
Commissioner of Health

### **Public Health Emergency Preparedness**


In 2011 the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program continued to develop/enhance local public health preparedness plans and improve the County's capacity for responding to public health threats such as acts of terrorism, pandemic influenza, and other public health emergencies. The PHEP program worked with community partners to promote citizen preparedness and worked with other local, state and federal partners to ensure an integrated and cohesive approach in its public health preparedness efforts.

#### **Cities Readiness Initiative –**

To ensure continued readiness to dispense needed medical countermeasures to Albany County's entire population within 48 hours of the decision to do so, should there be a catastrophic public health emergency, CDC and state public health personnel conduct annual technical assistance reviews (TAR). The TAR scores are on a scale from zero to 100. In 2011, Albany County received a score of 100 on the TAR. Albany County's TAR score contributed to the Albany MSA being designated as 4<sup>th</sup> most disaster ready city in the United States by Forbes Magazine (December 2011).

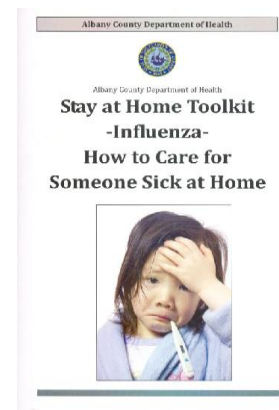
In addition to preparing for the TAR, Albany County utilized CRI funding to support annual drills to test the County's capacity to provide medical countermeasures to the public. In November 2011, ACDOH partnered with the United States Committee on Refugees and Immigrants to conduct a Point of Dispensing (POD) to refugees with limited to no English proficiency. More than 300 refugees were vaccinated, with 50% being children under 18 years of age.

### **Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) –**

Preparedness activities funded by the PHEP cooperative agreement are targeted specifically for the development of emergency-ready public health departments that are flexible and adaptable. These efforts support the National Response Framework (NRF) , which guides how the nation responds to all types of hazards including infectious disease outbreaks; natural disasters; biological, chemical, and radiological incidents; and explosions.

New York State requires that local health departments (LHD) complete 10 specific grant deliverables on an annual basis. In addition, the PHEP grant requires LHDs to maintain capacity to meet the requirements of 29 additional maintenance deliverables, all of which were met.

As part of the PHEP grant, ACDOH engaged in seasonal influenza educational activities. PHEP staff developed a valuable resource to educate the public about seasonal influenza. The Stay at Home Toolkit was distributed to community partners and members of the public. It was also distributed as part of thermometer kits that are assembled by volunteers each year. The thermometer kit contains a digital thermometer, instructions on use and cleaning, tissues, and hand sanitizer. The intent of the thermometer kits is to reach Albany County households that may not otherwise have such a resource in the home. A total of 15,000 thermometer kits and Stay at Home Toolkits have been distributed through our community partners. The toolkits were also available in Spanish, Karen and Burmese.



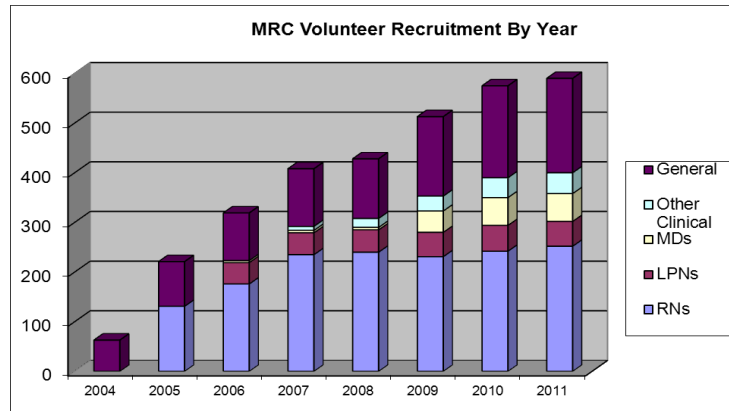
### **Urban Area Security Initiative –**

The Albany-Schenectady-Rensselaer Urban Area Working Group (including jurisdictions of the Counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Schoharie and the cities of Albany, Schenectady, and Troy) was established to collaboratively build its capacity to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from any manmade or natural catastrophic incident. A goal of the Urban Area Security Initiative is to strengthen medical surge and mass prophylaxis capability between local health departments and the business community. ACDOH has established relationships with businesses, community organizations, and municipalities to create a network of Closed Point of Dispensing (POD) partners. In a large-scale public health emergency, the county would utilize this network to push medical countermeasures out to Closed POD sites which will be run independently.

In 2011, the ACDOH utilized 1000 free doses of flu vaccine from the NYSDOH to test and strengthen the County's Closed POD network. ACDOH worked with Albany County Municipalities to test the Community Dispensing Plans created in the fall of 2007-2008. In addition, ACDOH worked with community partners to establish new closed POD locations and to push vaccine to special needs providers in the community.

## Albany County Medical Reserve Corps –

The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) enhances Albany County’s emergency preparedness efforts by ensuring that a trained group of healthcare professionals and community volunteers are ready to assist the County in response to a public health emergency. The MRC currently has over 575 clinical and nonclinical volunteers registered to assist the county in a public health emergency. In 2011, MRC volunteers were deployed to American Red Cross Shelters following Hurricane Irene.



## Albany County Citizen Corps Council –

The role of the Albany County Citizen Corps Council is to create a collaborative approach to increase community and individual participation in emergency preparedness, response and recovery. The Citizen Corps Council consists of various community partners and utilizes a multi-discipline approach to bring together stakeholders to enhance public health preparedness, citizen preparedness, and volunteer recruitment in Albany County. The Albany County Citizen Corps was formally established in 2003 and was reactivated in 2009 at which time quarterly meetings were conducted with over twenty regular attendees. Members of the Albany County Citizen Corps recently completed a collaborative project to create a website to recruit volunteers before, during and after an emergency. The [www.registeredandready.com](http://www.registeredandready.com) website was launched in the spring of 2011.



## State Homeland Security –

The State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) helped to build capacities that enhance homeland security at the local level. Efforts included security enhancements, medical volunteer training, medical exercises, local training needs assessment, citizen preparedness education and training, and information sharing and dissemination activities. ACDOH utilized SPSH funding to support PHEP personnel, staff and volunteer training, volunteer recruitment, and exercises.

In August 2010, ACDOH commissioned a community preparedness survey with Siena Research Institute (SRI). SRI found that while 66% of those surveyed (n=1300) feel they are very or somewhat prepared, only 17% are fully prepared for an emergency. As a result,

ACDOH is working with the Sheriff's Office to create a media campaign focused on increasing the level of household preparedness in the County. Following the execution of the campaign in the spring of 2012, Siena Research Institute will execute an additional survey to assess the impact of the media campaign.

SHSP funding targeted to Local Health Departments (SHSPLHD) was utilized to create the Albany County Community Outreach Information Network (ACCOIN). ACCOIN meets bi-monthly to develop a community-based capacity to more effectively meet the public health emergency preparedness needs of special, vulnerable and at-risk Albany County residents. ACCOIN's goal is to increase the County's ability to quickly communicate with special, vulnerable and at-risk residents through community-based service providers.

## **Public Health Education**

### **Public Health Programs –**

Through presentations, health fairs, answering inquires, active involvement with community partners and dissemination of health promotion material to the public through various media, public health educators and nurses promote lifestyle change by enhancing public awareness of prevention services and encouraging environments that support good health practices.

2011 activities are as follows:

- Public health educators and nurses conducted health and wellness presentations for school age children, adult community groups, and faith based organizations on a variety of topics including nutrition, diabetes prevention, cardiovascular disease, heat safety, arthritis, falls prevention, Lyme disease. Evaluations indicate that all program met their educational objectives.
- Distributed health education information at health fairs and community events throughout the County of Albany
- Provided information throughout the year to callers inquiring about topics and concerns such as human tick-borne disease, rabies, head lice, scabies, bed bugs, and mold.
- Sponsored Albany County School Nurses workshop attended by approximately 35 school nurses to discuss NYSIIS, epidemiology, sexually transmitted diseases, public health preparedness, brain injury/concussions, asthma.
- Actively participated in HCDI (a coalition of area hospitals, health insurers, county health departments, catholic charities and others in Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady counties to identify some of the major barriers to health services and develop initiatives to greatly reduce them). HCDI activities included health planning, facilitated enrollment for public health insurance, elementary school-based preventive oral services, reducing minority health disparities, and the Poverello Center which provides free adult health services. HCDI partners concluded an examination of primary, urgent and emergent care services related to patient utilization of emergency rooms.



- Distributed **HEALTHtoday** newsletters to the public.

### **Injury Prevention –**

- In collaboration with the Albany County Department for Aging, promoted falls prevention (i.e. falls risk assessment integrated into home nursing visits, falls risk assessment information distributed to primary care providers, education materials distributed to home delivered meals clients, falls prevention incorporated into Capital YMCA activities).
- Participated as an active member of SNUG a violence intervention program to reduce shootings and killings in the City of Albany.
- Supported the Safe Kids Coalition led by the Albany Medical Center, whose goal is to prevent accidental childhood injuries and accidents. Activities included health fairs and child passenger safety initiatives.
- Promoted safe medication disposal events



### **Chronic Disease Prevention –**

- Participated in the Healthy Hearts on the Hill initiative with Koinonia Primary Care and the Center for Excellence in Aging & Community Wellness at the University at Albany, School of Social Welfare. Healthy Hearts on the Hill encourages primarily Arbor Hill and West Hill residents to live a healthier lifestyle by providing incentives to stay active, see a healthcare provider, and eat a well-balanced diet. Healthy Hearts on the Hill established local activity sites (called Healthy Spaces) as follows:
  - Koinonia Primary Care
  - Trinity Alliance of the Capital District
  - Salvation Army
  - Capital District Center for Independent Living
  - Townsend Park Housing Association



- In recognition of the Great American Smoke Out, the Albany County Department of Health collaborated with the Center for Smoking Cessation at Seton Health to provide free smoking cessation information and services (i.e. pre-counseling intervention, screening assessment, therapy dispensing) to thirty one (31) Albany County residents and Albany County employees.



- Participated in the Capital District Tobacco Free Coalition, whose mission is to reduce adolescent and adult use of tobacco through cooperative programs in prevention, cessation, advocacy and community education. Initiatives of the group include pursuing smoke-free parks and smoke-free housing in six municipalities in the Capital Region; reducing point of purchase advertising for tobacco products and encouraging businesses and organizations to sign a “commitment to health pledge” to neither accept nor solicit any financial contributions, sponsorships, or gifts from any tobacco company, executive, or activity that promotes tobacco use.

- Installed bike rack at 175 Green Street, Albany to encourage physical activity for Albany County Department of Health and Albany County Department of Mental Health clients and staff.
- Participated in the Capital Region Healthy Communities Coalition (CRHCC), including Rensselaer County and Schenectady County’s local health departments, whose missions are to promote healthy living by encouraging regional coordination and advocacy of policies and environmental changes that promote healthy living. Educational seminars for the public included Complete Streets and Calorie Menu Labeling.
- Participated in the New York State Museum “Smart ‘n Healthy” program for children (in conjunction with national “Let’s Move” initiative) providing education on the benefits of nutrition, exercise, and healthy lifestyle for 7-11 year olds living in at-risk neighborhoods within the City of Albany.
- Nutrition Education

- Conducted “iChoose 600” calorie labeling awareness campaign in conjunction with the New York State Department of Health including promotion via press conference, billboards, radio ads, Crossgates Mall, Facebook, and print materials. Calorie labeling education was provided directly to over 1,000 individuals at sixty public events / presentations.
- Provided, in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, nutritional information at the National Food Day event at the Shaker Heritage Site.



### Strategic Alliance for Health –



**Creating  
a Culture of  
Healthy Living**

Albany County Strategic Alliance for Health

The Albany County Strategic Alliance for Health (SAH), a Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Communities program, targets residents in specific zip codes where poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and tobacco use are underlying risk factors for a variety of chronic diseases including diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease. The goal of the SAH is to create healthier communities through sustainable, innovative, evidence and practice-based community health promotion and chronic disease prevention programs. Policy, systems, and environmental changes in the City of Albany’s Arbor Hill, West Hill, North Albany, and South End neighborhoods are to our success.

2011 activities of this program include:

- Hosted 11 Alliance meetings to establish initial goals and strategies.
- Conducted over 20 assessments of the community, community based organizations, healthcare providers, schools and workplaces to identify policy and environmental initiatives within the areas of nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use, chronic disease management, and leadership. These assessments provided a “snapshot” of the community that informed Strategic Alliance for Health intervention strategies.

- Increased the availability and visibility of affordable healthier food and beverage options by:



- Introduced six (6) healthy meeting and four (4) healthy vending policies affecting 3,500 persons.
- Implemented a Healthy Convenience Store Initiative in five (5) stores within the City of Albany: 8,464.65 pounds of fresh produce purchased; \$9,887 in sales; 5,000 persons affected.

- Provided breastfeeding policy and breastfeeding resources/supports to three (3) maternal care practices serving the City of Albany's Arbor Hill, West Hill, North Albany, and South End neighborhoods.
- Increased the amount of physical activity in the school day apart from physical education class in seventeen (17) classrooms at six (6) City School District of Albany elementary schools: 400 to 500 students affected; 12 minutes of physical activity burst per day achieved on average 4 days per week.



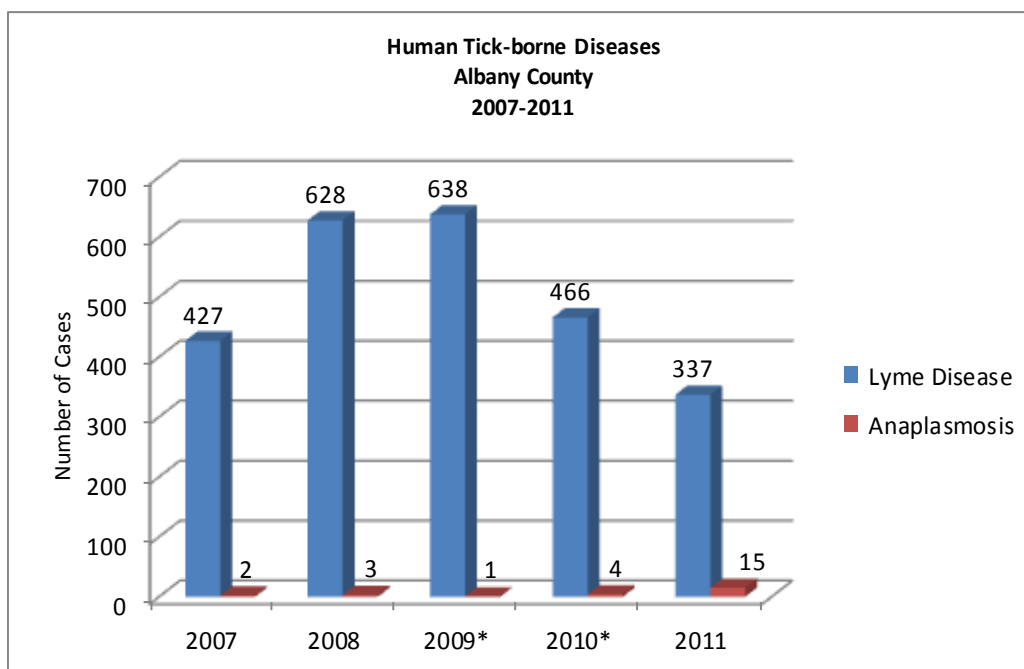
- Reconvened the City School District of Albany Wellness Committee and drafted revisions to Wellness Policy to include physical activity bursts in the classroom. Persons affected: 3,000.
- Enhanced opportunities for walking, biking, and/or other forms of physical activity for community residents of all ages and abilities in the City of Albany:
  - Continued rehabilitation of the North Swan Street Park.
  - Bicycle sharrows maintained along Delaware Avenue and Lark Street. Persons affected: 4,000.
  - Elizabeth Street Park playground equipment acquired. Persons affected: 4,000.
- Decreased exposure to second hand smoke and the social acceptability of tobacco:
  - Thirteen (13) work sites adopted smoke-free outdoor policies. Persons affected: 10,000.
  - Seven (7) affordable housing locations offer smoke-free housing units: Persons affected: 300.



- Engaged community partners to implement local policy and environmental change (i.e. 25 organizations actively participate on the Albany County Strategic Alliance for Health coalition).

### Lyme Disease Education –

The Albany County Department of Health Lyme disease education and surveillance program enhances public awareness of Lyme disease prevention and treatment and encourages provider reporting. Public health educators and a Supervising Public Health Nurse coordinate a public awareness campaign on Lyme disease by disseminating educational materials to camp directors, garden centers, school districts, veterinarians and giving formal presentations to community groups and businesses. Educational visits are made to medical practices located in areas of the highest incidence of Lyme disease emphasizing the importance of disease reporting and providing physicians with education/ prevention materials for distribution to patients.



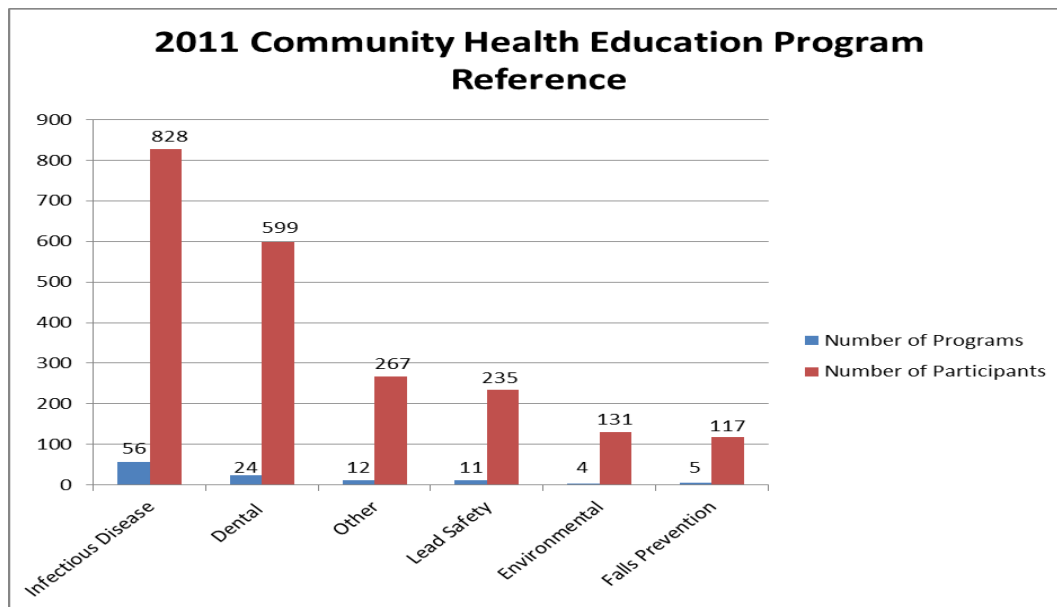
Source: New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Disease Control  
 NOTE: \*2009, 2010 estimated based on sentinel surveillance

Activities in 2011 included:

- Conducted four health education programs on Lyme disease awareness and prevention with approximated 175 individuals in attendance.
- Visited eight targeted medical practices in the areas of Albany County with the highest incidence of Lyme disease, including Delmar, Guilderland, Slingerlands, and Latham to provide them with Lyme disease information and materials.
- Updated health providers on prevention, diagnosis, treatment and reporting of Lyme Disease and other tick-borne illnesses (e.g. anaplasmosis).
- In March 2011, Lyme Disease Prevention messages were placed in Spotlight newspapers serving Albany County.



- Lyme disease prevention message was printed on 24,000 pharmacy bags for distribution at a pharmacy in a high incidence area (Bethlehem).
- Provided twelve health care providers around the county with Lyme disease prevention and awareness education materials and tick remover kits.
- Distributed Lyme disease prevention and awareness education materials via targeted mailings to schools, libraries, municipalities, and high exposure groups. Provided information and over 1,200 tick remover kits to residents by request.



### **Environmental Health Services**

The Environmental Health Services Division provides many services to protect Albany County residents and visitors from potential hazards in our water supply, the air we breathe and in the places where we live, work and play. This mission is accomplished by means of inspections, sampling, investigation, enforcement, engineering, and in all aspects, education. A highly trained staff of public health technicians, sanitarians, engineers and administrators are responsible for the management of these programs.

#### **Restaurants, Schools, Mobile and Temporary Food Vendors –**

Sanitary inspections are performed at restaurants, schools, mobile food vendors and temporary food vendors to ensure compliance with Subparts 14-1, 14-2, and 14-4 of the New York State Sanitary Codes. Public complaints concerning unsanitary issues and vermin are investigated.

On June 13, 2011, Resolution No. 155 of the Albany County Legislature requested that the Albany County Board of Health and the Albany County Commissioner of Health consider a practicable plan to amend the Albany County Sanitary Code to require food service establishments to post inspection results prior to entering restaurants to help consumers make informed choices when choosing where to eat and for giving restaurants incentive to

maintain the highest food safety standards possible. The target date for implementation of this initiative is July 1, 2012.

<b>Inspections included:</b>	<b>2011</b>
Restaurants/Catering Operations	1,385
Temporary Food Svc Establishments/Events	203
Schools and Colleges	154
Mobile Food Svc Establishments	67
Summer Feeding Sites	43
State Office for the Aging Sites	24
Day Care Operations	122

**Residential Environmental Problems / West Nile Virus Prevention –**

This program includes staff evaluations of conditions in homes that are reported as being substandard or inhabitable (nuisance homes). Staff works in conjunction with the Albany County Department of Social Services, Code Enforcement, and Child Protective Services to assist residents in relocation and the rehabilitation of housing. This program also investigates indoor air quality issues such as odors and mold growth and outdoor problems such as sewer odors, garbage and vermin. With surveillance methods reduced and West Nile Virus activity and transmission in Albany County appearing to have diminished from initial outbreak years, Albany County Health Department continues to provide education to the public on preventive measures and address all standing water complaints. For all residential environmental programs, 275 residences were investigated and receiving appropriate follow up in 2011.

\*In addition, in 2011 many bedbug complaints were addressed and education given to tenants, landlords, and homeowners.

**Mobile Home Parks –**

This program provides sanitary inspection of mobile home parks (including water supply and/or septic). In 2011, 33 mobile home parks were inspected.

**Temporary Residences (Hotels/Motels) and Migrant & Farm Worker Housing –**

These programs provide regulatory oversight of hotels and/or motels and migrant farm worker housing camps (including fire safety, water quality, sewer/septic, food service and/or pools). In 2011, 83 hotels and motels and 2 migrant farm worker housing camps were inspected.

**Individual Residential Water and Sewer –**

This program oversees the planning and installation of residential wells and septic systems to ensure adequate sanitation and safety.

<b>Services &amp; inspections included:</b>	<b>2011</b>
Septic layouts and reviews	55
Abated complaints	300
Occupancy Certificates granted	40

### **Pools/Bathing Beaches –**

Staff inspects beach facilities and test water sanitary standards. Staff performs inspections of pools' physical condition, mechanical and water sanitary standards. In addition, staff reviews and approves engineering plans for new and upgraded pools. In 2011, 197 pools, 1 bathing beach and 3 spray parks were inspected.

### **Drinking Water Protection and Realty Subdivision –**

This program oversees the protection of public water systems (PWS) in Albany County. Functions include overseeing PWS compliance with regulations and keeping PWS updated on new and upcoming regulation changes. Staff review and approve engineering plans for new subdivisions with water supply and sewer improvement and back flow prevention. Staff also provide technical guidance and investigate potential water borne diseases.

In 2011, there were 32 community and 36 non-community public water supplies and one bottled water facility being monitored by ACHD. Inspections of all facilities are performed at least once yearly.

### **Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) –**

The ATUPA program employs 15 and 16 year old youths who accompany inspectors to determine vendor compliance with the sale of tobacco products. Violators are fined and may (in the event of repeated violations) have their tobacco license and NY State Lottery license revoked. Under the Clean In-door Air Act (in effect since 1990), staff address work place indoor smoking complaints. The County's database of tobacco product retailers was up-dated and tobacco sales to minor compliance checks were performed at all the retailers. Staff also verified compliance with the County's local law requiring retail tobacco products to be displayed/ located behind sales counters.

#### **Tobacco Sales 2011**

Number of Tobacco Dealers & Vending Machines	337
Sales to Minors	2
Compliance Rate	99%

### **Tattoo and Body Piercing –**

This program inspects and monitors tattoo/body piercing shops and artists to ensure proper infection control practices are in place. In addition, an exam is administered certifying tattooists and artists to practice in Albany County. In 2011, the numbers increased to 34 establishments inspected at one or more times and 75 tattoo artists were certified in Albany County.

### **Environmental Health Assessment and Chemical Emergencies –**

Engineers in the division, in conjunction with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, are available to respond to chemical spills and provide consultation and review of remediation plans for hazardous waste sites. In 2011, the department reviewed and provided guidance on seven (7) hazardous waste sites.

### **Neighborhood (Pesticide) Notification Law –**

Department staff monitors compliance of pesticide application by retail vendors to ensure they provide proper notification and DEC signage that the chemical application is to occur within the next 48 hrs. Under this program resident complaints concerning pesticide

applications are investigated. In 2009-2010, 80 establishments that sell pesticides were inspected and 4 resident complaints were investigated.

**Children’s Camps –**

The Children’s Camps program regulates the operation and permitting of children’s day and overnight camps for fire safety, sanitation, water, sewer, food service, pools, and child health and safety issues. In 2011 respectively, children under the age of 18 attended 42 camps in the County of Albany, all of which were inspected twice per season.

**Clean Indoor Air Act –**

On July 24, 2003, New York State enacted new provisions to the existing Clean Indoor Air Act, which required nearly every workplace (including all bars and restaurants) to be smoke-free. The implementation of this law initially added a substantial workload to the Division associated with education of the public and affected businesses and in response to complaints. The public's awareness and compliance with the law has increased and is reflected in the reduction or stability of the incidence of complaints received and investigated since 2004.

**Complaints Received and Investigated:**

<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
112	60	56	29	31	21	21	27

**Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Lead Primary Prevention Program –**

These programs support and enhance continued efforts to reduce the prevalence of elevated blood lead levels in children. Primary and secondary prevention includes public and professional outreach and education, collaboration with local primary care providers for screening, diagnostic evaluation, medical management, and educational and environmental interventions. The Childhood Lead Primary Prevention Program implements a pro-active plan to prevent exposure to lead based paint in the high risk zip codes of 12202, 12206, 12208, 12209, 12210. This approach is targeting homes before the child is poisoned. In 2011 the Childhood Lead Primary Prevention Program performed 158 inspections clearing 112 homes with either interior, exterior or both lead based paint hazards. The Lead Poisoning Prevention Program addresses intervention when a child has been tested by a pediatrician and is found to have an elevated blood lead level. Both lead programs employ certified lead risk assessors who oversee lead remediation in homes, schools, daycare settings, and anywhere a child may frequent for more than eight hours a week. In 2011, implementing the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, 52 homes were visited resulting in 32 homes being remediated.

**Rabies –**

The Rabies program provides follow up and intervention when necessary to all reported potential rabies exposures to humans and/or animals. Staff interacts with primary care providers, emergency rooms, veterinarians, animal control officers and county residents. Also, rabies immunization clinics are offered for dogs, cats, and ferrets to Albany County residents in cooperation with local veterinarians, their staff, Albany County Health Department staff and volunteers from each municipality. Four rabies clinics are held annually throughout the county (in the town of Berne, the town of Bethlehem, the village of Colonie and the village of Green Island) resulting in the following animal vaccinations for the year 2011.

<b>Vaccinated Animals in 2011</b>		
Dogs	Cats	Ferrets
541	359	2

## **Other –**

In late May of 2011, the New York State Commissioner of Health issued a summary order banning the sale of “Bath Salts” in New York State. This order prohibited the sale and distribution of substances containing certain chemical compounds that are structurally similar to the controlled substance Cathinon, and which produced effects similar to those caused by cocaine and amphetamines. From May 24-27, 2011, 34 establishments were inspected and no “Bath Salts” were found.

## **Nursing Division**

### **Pediatric Dental Program –**

The Dental Program seeks to improve the oral health of Albany County children up through the age of 18 years of age. Since many children, especially in low-income urban areas, do not have the benefit of fluoridated water, dental health in this population is not optimal. Services provided by this program include dental fillings, cleanings, sealants, extractions, and patient education. This program also provides nitrous oxide sedation as needed. Dental education programs are offered to school groups and the community upon request. Also, dental screenings are provided at some Head Start locations.

In 2011, the department provided dental services to 2,236 children including 4,881 comprehensive visits. In addition, 704 elementary children in the Albany City School District received education on the importance of good oral hygiene. Through our partnership with Head Start, 211 dental screenings were conducted resulting in the identification of children in need of dental care as well as those in need of a provider.

### **Maternal Child Health Home Visiting –**

The Maternal Child Health Home Visiting program, through contract with Eddy Visiting Nurses Association, receives referrals for Public Health Nursing Home Visits from local hospitals, prenatal care providers, clinics, clients and/or their families. Public Health Nurses perform nursing assessments and home visits to provide medical follow up, health education, and support to pregnant women, new mothers and their babies, and children who are at risk for or already have health problems that can be managed at home. Recent studies have shown that clients who receive home visiting programs during pregnancy have better pregnancy outcomes.

Public Health Nurses visited many pregnant and parenting residents, as well as children with special health care needs, conducting approximately 981 visits in 2011 where they provided clinical assessments, skilled care, health education, and support and guidance.

### **Community Health Worker Program –**

The Community Health Worker Program is a home visiting program that seeks to prevent premature birth and other poor birth outcomes and to improve overall child health. This program is unique in that it hires paraprofessional Health Workers from the community they serve to engage pregnant women in prenatal care and primary health care services by conducting outreach, canvassing, and home visiting in designated zip code areas in Albany County. The program provides home visits that include education, support, case management, and referral for pregnant and parenting women and their families. In 2011, there was 893 visits conducted focusing on improving birth outcomes of high risk, low income pregnant and parenting families.

## **Immunization Program –**

The purpose of the immunization program is to prevent the spread of vaccine preventable disease by increasing vaccination rates of the population. Services include childhood and adult immunization on-site and off-site for Albany County residents. Outreach educational services provided to professionals and to the community regarding vaccine preventable diseases. The Immunization Action grant provides funds for assessment of immunization rates for public clinic and other identified community providers, for education and outreach activities, for facilitation of free hepatitis A and B vaccine to high-risk groups, and to support the statewide immunization registry.

Activities of the Immunization Program in 2011 included administration of:

- 790 flu and 21 pneumonia vaccines at various locations throughout the community
- 1580 Adult vaccines to prevent disease and control disease outbreak
- 1216 Childhood vaccines in our community to provide immunity and to control disease outbreak.

## **Nursing Wellness/Health Education –**

A Social Worker and professional nurses present health and wellness information to school age children, adult community groups as well as faith based groups. The topics are varied and multidisciplinary responding to the needs of the residents of Albany County. In addition to the presentations, the staff conduct blood pressure screenings, engage people at Health Fairs and plan and consult with wellness committees at various worksites. Specific health education and wellness activities conducted in 2011 included:

- Wellness/Nutrition sessions concentrating on Childhood Obesity, Diabetes, Blood Pressure, Infant/pregnancy nutrition at various sites including LaSalle School for Boys, Sacred Heart Public School, City Mission - public, TOAST elementary school, ALPHA Pregnancy Center for Parents with over 179 participants attended in total.
- 19 BP Screening Sessions were provided. Attendees were educated on Cardio Vascular Health & Wellness. Staff encouraged individuals to follow up with their providers when abnormal blood pressure results were noted.
- Two ten week educational sessions for pregnant or parenting teens focusing on healthy behaviors including self-care, infant care, and family planning, with the goal of being a healthy mom and baby. Both sessions were conducted at the Abrookin-Vocational Technical Center teen parent program for teens who wish to continue their education at an alternate, off site location from the Public Jr and Sr High School.
- 14 Lead Poisoning Prevention presentations to various groups in the community to raise awareness of this public health issue. Groups included daycares, Head Starts, and the community at large through media campaigns. Professional education was provided to Pediatric and OB/GYN Providers.

## **Homecare and Long Term Care Programs –**

### *Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) Skilled Nursing Program*

The skilled nursing program of the CHHA provided health assessments and nursing visits for clients who required nursing skills such as medication management, catheter care, wound care or other procedures that call for this level of care. Albany County provided approximately 204 skilled home care visits to the homebound population in need of such services. In addition, physical therapists provided

approximately 35 visits to the homebound population to address rehabilitation needs. On September 26, 2012, the CHHA closed.

#### Personal Care Aide Program (PCP) Program

The PCP program is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Health where a nursing assessment of Albany County residents who may benefit from personal care aides is conducted to assist clients in their desire to remain independent in their own homes. If personal care aids are deemed appropriate, nurses provide an orientation and supervision for the personal care aides who are assisting clients with their personal care and light housekeeping tasks. Over 1360 assessments and aide supervision visits were conducted through these programs in 2011.

#### **HIV Surveillance and Partner Services Program (HPS) –**

HPS Staff from ACDOH work with Medical Providers and other agency HIV Counseling and Testing agencies to get assistance in reaching and contacting HIV positive individuals so that partners may be identified, and then offered testing and counseling on risk reduction. Additionally, in 2011, 65 presentations were given to 1317 participants on risk reduction strategies.

### **Epidemiology Program / Communicable Disease**

In 2011, the Albany County Department of Health (ACDOH) Epidemiology Program investigated a total of 3022 confirmed communicable disease reports, representing an **increase of 18.4%** over the 2010 communicable disease reporting total. This increase in cases was not attributable to a specific disease as increases were seen among many reportable diseases. Highlights of 2011 communicable disease investigations are as follows:

- Lyme disease cases remained high with 501 confirmed cases reported in 2011. A significant increase was also seen in anaplasmosis cases (another bacterial tick-borne disease) with 17 confirmed cases reported in 2011 compared to 5 cases in 2010.
- In 2011, the Epidemiology Program, working closely with the ACDOH Environmental Health Division, investigated numerous outbreaks of GI illness (probable norovirus) in long term and acute care facilities as well as in schools. Also, the ACDOH Epi Program, Environmental Health Division and NYSDOH investigated an outbreak of Legionellosis at a hotel. As many of the guests were out-of-state residents a call for cases was sent out by the CDC which resulted in finding additional cases in Michigan, Florida and several other states. The hot water tank at the hotel was removed and replaced.
- A rare strain of *Salmonella* Hartford was identified in six Albany County residents (including one patient who was asymptomatic). It was felt that these cases may have been associated with a restaurant but, there was not enough evidence to prove this hypothesis.
- The number of animals from Albany County testing positive for rabies decreased significantly in 2011. In 2010, 49 animals tested positive for rabies and in 2011, only 5 animals tested positive for rabies. Much of this can be attributed to the depopulation of small brown bats due to the white nose fungus disease. The small

brown bat species is one of only two bat species in Albany County known to roost in homes and attics.

### **Sexually Transmitted Diseases –**

The ACDOH offers STD screening and treatment at our STD Clinics three times a week (Monday late afternoon/early evening and Tuesday and Thursday mornings). In 2011, STD Clinic visits were distributed as follows: Monday clinic – 34%, Tuesday clinic – 29%, and Thursday clinic – 37%. At the Monday evening clinic, 38% of the patients were teens, at the Tuesday clinic, 22% of the patients were teens, and at the Thursday clinic, 40% of the patients were teens.

In 2011, a total of 1,307 visits were made to ACDOH STD clinics, representing a 5% decrease compared to 2010. 795 (61%) of the clients were male, and 512 (39%) were female. 189 (14%) of ACDOH STD clinic clients tested positive for an STD. In 2011, 219 (17%) of the STD Clinic clients were in the teenage population. This represents a slight increase when compared to 2010, when 16% of ACDOH STD Clinic clients were in the teen population.

1,466 cases of chlamydia were reported in 2011, an increase of 4% compared to 2010. Gonorrhea cases decreased by 19% with 313 cases reported in 2011, compared to 386 cases in 2010. Due to the high percentage of STDs (particularly among adolescents and young adults) the ACDOH formed a consortium with NYSDOH and other community partners working with teens and young adults, to discuss the issue and develop effective strategies.

### **Tuberculosis (TB) Program –**

- In 2011, the Epi Program oversaw the care and treatment of 11 cases of active tuberculosis (TB). Two of the cases were originally diagnosed in other counties and later moved to Albany County and were added to our case load. Ten of the eleven cases were foreign born; only one was born in the U.S. Nine of these patients received directly observed therapy (DOT) which involved an ACDOH staff member visiting the patient's home daily to watch them take their medications for six months. One of the TB cases was multi-drug resistant and required frequent changes in treatment.
- Also in 2011, 282 persons were evaluated in our Chest Clinic by a pulmonologist. In addition, 356 county residents with latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) made revisits to Chest Clinic for medication refills or reevaluation. Persons with LTBI are not contagious and cannot give TB to another person. These patients are given a single TB medication daily for nine months to prevent them from developing active TB disease.
- Cases of active TB continue to remain at low levels in Albany County. There were 9 cases of active TB diagnosed in Albany County residents in 2011. Six cases were pulmonary TB and 3 cases were extrapulmonary TB. The majority of all active TB and latent TB infection (LTBI) cases continue to be diagnosed in foreign-born residents.
- In 2011, a total of 772 PPDs were placed on Albany County residents by ACDOH program staff, of which 37 (4.7%) were positive.



The following table depicts the number of confirmed cases of reportable communicable diseases of public health significance in Albany County in 2010 and 2011.

<b>Disease</b>	<b>2010 Cases</b>	<b>2011 Cases</b>
Amebiasis	10	7
Campylobacteriosis	44	58
Chlamydia	1404	1466
Cryptosporidiosis	9	1
Cyclosporiasis	0	2
Dengue Fever	0	0
E. coli O157:H7	6	3
Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis	6	19
Giardiasis	32	40
GISA/VISA	0	0
Gonorrhea	388	313
Haemophilus influenzae (invasive disease)	4	7
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	0	0
Hepatitis A	3	1
Hepatitis B, Acute	3	2
Hepatitis B, Chronic	41	55
Hepatitis C, Acute	3	2
Hepatitis C, Chronic	194	180
Influenza	33	120
Legionellosis	10	15
Listeriosis	0	3
Lyme disease	274*	501**
Q fever	1	0
Malaria	5	3
Meningitis, viral/aseptic/other	20	8
Meningococcal Infection	0	1
Mumps	1	1
Pertussis	7	15
Salmonellosis	35	42
Shigellosis	3	8

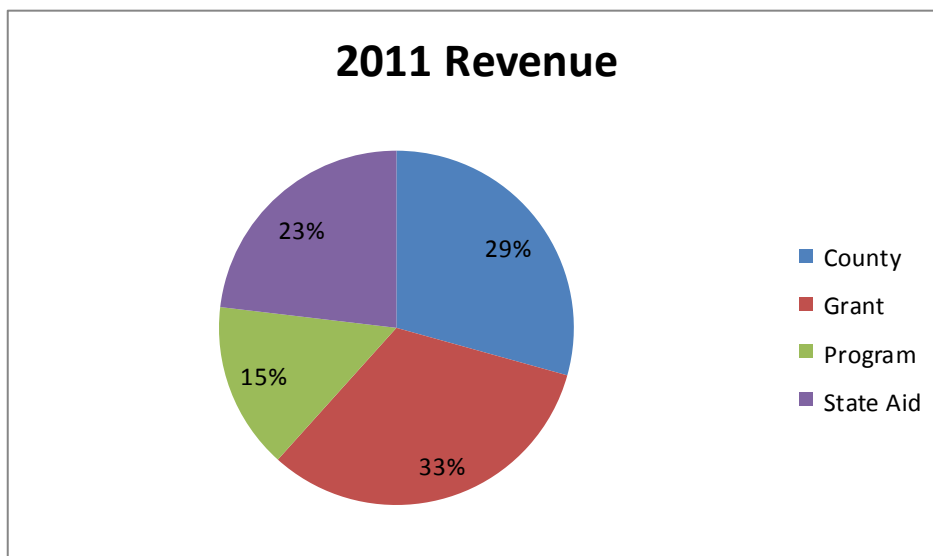
Group A Streptococcus	10	9
Group B Streptococcus	29	34
Streptococcus pneumoniae	39	41
Syphilis, Early Latent	10	6
Syphilis, Late Latent	2	8
Syphilis, Primary	2	3
Syphilis, Secondary	5	13
Syphilis, Unknown Latent	1	2
Tuberculosis (TB)	8	10
Vibriosis	0	1
Yersiniosis	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2552</b>	<b>3022</b>

### Finance and Administration

The Division for Finance and Administration contributed to the operation of the department by processing payroll authorizations, submitting vouchers, transmitting deposits, claiming insurance, submitting grant and State Aid vouchers, paying claims, and processing purchase orders.

Highlights for 2011 include:

- Processed 10,418 claims for insurance.
- Submitted 97 grant and State Aid vouchers totaling \$4,496,304.
- Transmitted 72 deposits totaling \$1,966,233.
- Produced 462 purchase orders and processed 1,100 vendor invoices totaling \$1,966,068.



Albany County  
Department of Health  
2011 Fiscal Summary

Total Expenditures  
\$7,819,667.35

Total Revenue  
\$5,532,885.94