

Oregon Public Health Connection

An e-bulletin co-produced by the Oregon Public Health Division, DHS, and the Conference of Local Health Officials

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Volume 4, Number 7

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Top Priority:

Food safety and healthy eating - latest reports nationally, regionally



Raw refrigerated, prepackaged cookie dough.

(Photo courtesy CDC.)

For the latest information regarding

E. coli outbreak investigations:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/recentincidents.asp>

For the latest Oregon information, see:

[Oregon Disease Outbreak Home](#)

Recent multi-state outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7

Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

One of the most recent food-related outbreaks this summer affected people in Oregon and the surrounding region. A recent multi-state outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 infection has been linked to eating raw refrigerated, prepackaged cookie dough. As of June 30, 2009, 72 persons infected with a strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 with a particular DNA fingerprint have been reported from 30 states, including Oregon.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are warning consumers not to eat any varieties of prepackaged Nestle Toll House refrigerated cookie dough due to the risk of contamination. *E. coli* O157:H7 has not been previously associated with eating raw cookie dough. CDC, state health departments, and federal regulatory partners are working together in this ongoing investigation.

For more information: <http://www.cdc.gov/ecoli/2009/0630.html>



Case Study: Product recall presents challenges for food safety agencies

Information provided by Matt Jaqua, Office of Environmental Health, Oregon Public Health Division, DHS

Lost in the flurry of nationwide food product recalls over the past year was the recall of a regionally distributed product that presented some unique challenges for state and local food safety agencies.

A cluster of the rare Salmonella Rissen serotype began emerging late in 2008 across Oregon, Washington, California and Nevada, and after months of intense and tedious epidemiologic investigation it was determined that ground black pepper was the cause. While interviews with ill individuals steered investigators toward spices used in Asian restaurants, black pepper was confirmed as the culprit when Public Health Division (PHD) epidemiologists working with Multnomah County Environmental Health staff collected a black pepper sample from an Asian restaurant in SE Portland that tested positive for the outbreak strain.

This discovery resulted in a recall of black and white pepper products produced by Union International Food Co. of Union City, CA. under the Lian How and Uncle Chen brand names. Most food recalls are handled through the media and the distributors of the product, but since the pepper was distributed primarily to Asian restaurants, local environmental health programs that inspect those restaurants were brought into the process.

Rapid mass communication with restaurants is a challenge for county health departments, as many facilities do not have email or fax capabilities, and language barriers are often an issue with ethnic restaurants as well. To help with possible language issues, PHD and the Multnomah County Health Department developed a flyer that included pictures of the recalled product and explanations of the situation in English, Mandarin Chinese, and Vietnamese. The flyer was made available to all counties to help them communicate information accurately to affected restaurants. Many counties had environmental health staff visit all the restaurants that might have received the recalled product, and some also assisted with the investigation by collecting samples of recalled product for lab testing. An early problem with the recall effort was the limited information provided by the distributors of the product. The distribution lists only had the name of the restaurants and possibly the city – no address, owner name or phone number was available. That meant each county had to search distribution lists for restaurants in their jurisdiction.

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Hot Topics: WIC staff prepare for big changes, August 1st

Kudos to more than 300 WIC employees for participating in the statewide annual meeting held in Portland, June 22-23. This event helped equip WIC staff with knowledge and resources to successfully implement *Fresh Choices* – a project name reflecting an updated WIC food package more aligned with current Dietary Guidelines. Dr. Jane Heinig, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and professor in the Department of Nutrition at UC Davis, was the guest speaker. Dr. Heinig has been instrumental in helping WIC and Early Head Start staff understand infant cues and their relationship to feeding, particularly breastfeeding. Some of the breakout sessions included learning new computer screens, educating participants about new foods and vouchers, and adopting new tools for working with local medical and vendor partners. WIC staff across the state are using their participant-centered skills while preparing for the many changes of Fresh Choices. It's an exciting time to be working in WIC! For more information on Fresh Choices' WIC food package changes: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/wic/freshchoices.shtml>

Hot Topics: Oregon Summer Food Service Program serves children

In 2008, the Summer Food Service Program (SPSP), a federally funded summer meal program, served more than 1.6 million meals to children in Oregon! All kids ages 18 and under are eligible to receive a nutritionally balanced meal free through the SFSP – no questions asked. Meal sites, which are often hosted by schools, churches and community organizations in areas that have 50% or greater eligibility free or reduced priced meals, often offer safe and fun activities for children as well. Though participation has increased in recent years more work needs to be done to increase awareness and access to this important nutritional resource. Despite the large number of meals served statewide in Oregon, only 31 of every 100 kids who eat free or reduced priced meals during the school year ate meals in the summer in 2008. This summer there are still five counties with no meal sites: Crook, Gilliam, Grant, Sherman and Wheeler. This program is structured such that it can expand to meet the need and in tough times this program, among others, is helping families stretch tight food budgets. Information on individual sites can be found at: <http://www.summerfoodoregon.org/> or by calling 1-800-SAFENET. If you are interested in outreach material, learning more about SFSP or SNAP/Food Stamps, please contact Robyn Johnson at robyn@oregonhunger.org.



County Perspective: Summer food for children in Washington County

Sunny Ross is happy about what she does. In 2006, the Summer Food Program she coordinates served 100,000 meals to children 1 – 18 years of age at 25 sites. This year, there are 45 sites and more than 210,000 meals will be served. "Getting nutritious meals to children is really satisfying," she says. Ross is a Program Specialist with Washington County's Commission on Children and Families, in her fourth year leading the food program. Her duties call for her to line up meal sites, coordinate with the school districts that provide the USDA funded meals, and arrange the activities that go with the meals. She also supervises six interns, whose positions are funded with federal "stimulus" money.

"My main job is to create awareness about the program, so that parents know that there is somewhere they can send their children to get nutritious meals." Sunny gives presentations to groups like faith communities, where she can reach families herself and to food bank meetings, where she gives information for others to spread. They send out flyers in food boxes and at shelters, and give them to case managers, food stamp clients, WIC program participants and Head Start families. Ross also works with libraries and literacy programs. "One of the reasons our program is growing so much is that there are 'enhanced components' to the meals, things like nutrition education, arts and crafts, and organized games." These are mostly coordinated by community partner groups. Additionally, the WIC program sends representatives who distribute toothbrushes to children. Six program interns visit different sites to speak to children about physical activity, trying new foods and the value of fruits and vegetables.

"The idea is to bring food to where the children are," says Ross. "It's a burden on many parents, who have to leave their children alone during the day, to get them to food programs. By having them in 45 sites around Washington County, the children get fed and don't have to go far from home. Parents don't have to worry that their kids are safe." Meal sites are at schools, parks, apartment complexes, anywhere children can congregate. "In this economy, I expect that there are many families who depend on this program for their children," says Ross. And to make the meals more accessible, kids don't have to "pre-register," they just need to be between 1 and 18 years old.

Some sites are large: one of the Beaverton schools hosts 300 – 400 children each day, others as few as 20 – 50. Sites at school kitchens offer hot meals with a salad bar. Other sites without kitchens offer lunches that consist of a sandwich, fruit, a vegetable and milk. All the meal sites are inspected by the County Environmental Health staff and those involved in meal preparation and delivery are trained in safe food handling.

Information provided by Kent Burtrner, Washington County Department of Health & Human Services, kent_burtrner@co.washington.or.us

PH: In the News

Drink in pool stirs conflict (Milton-Freewater, OR.) – Two Oregon laws appear to clash on breastfeeding at swimming pools, but the activity has the green light now. (Courtesy Walla Walla Union-Bulletin.)

Waterfall Center gathers a windfall (Coos Bay, OR.) – The Waterfall Community Health Center can patch its leaky roof, update its computers and ultimately treat more patients thanks to a federal stimulus grant. (Courtesy The Coos Bay World, Coos County, OR.)

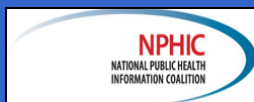
Adderall alert: Students use drug to stay sharp (Lane County, OR.) – On college and university campuses across the country, students have been turning to Adderall. The use comes at a price – prescription stimulants can be dangerous when used and when taken with alcohol proven deadly. (Courtesy The Register-Guard, Eugene, OR.)

H1N1 Case reported: Crook County (Courtesy KVAL CBS 13, Eugene, OR.)

H1N1 Cases reported: Tillamook County (Courtesy Tillamook Headlight Herald, Tillamook County, OR.)

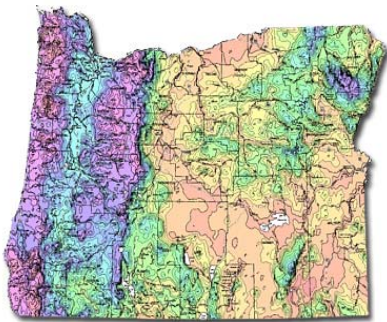
H1N1 Case reported: Umatilla County (Courtesy Willowa County Chieftan, Willowa County, OR.)

Marion County child dies from H1N1 flu (Courtesy Salem Statesman Journal, Marion County, OR.)



The Oregon Public Health Connection has been recognized by NPHIC with the Bronze Award for Excellence in Public Health Communication.

Hot Topics: A Triennial Review field guide for administrators



By Rebecca Clark and MaiKia Moua, nurse consultants, Office of Community Liaison, Oregon Public Health Division, DHS. Thanks to the additional contributors of this article: Kathleen O'Leary, Washington County, Andy Walker, Polk County, and Mitch Anderson, Benton County.

The current Triennial Review process started about 20 years ago when the Conference of Local Health Officials (CLHO) recommended program reviews be done all at once and on a schedule of one county per month, every three years. With 34 counties and 32 local health departments/districts this works out perfect. Surviving a Triennial Review is like reaching the top of Mount Everest. Since about a third of our public health administrators are new to their positions in the last three years, we thought we would share some tips from administrators who finished with their boots on, from administrators who are still strapping on their boots to those who have worn the path ahead. This Field Guide is to support your journey through the Triennial Review process; an adventure you will look back on with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 1: Start preparing early.** Begin to assemble the policies and procedures that are required, update them and assure that they are still relevant. If you find you need to write a policy or procedure there is a good chance someone else has done it before. Collaborate with neighboring counties or review the Community Liaison's web site for samples.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 2: Send the link for program elements and review tools to your program managers early.** Have your program managers be well prepared by using the resources here - <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/lhd/index.shtml>. (Stay tuned for next month's release of a Field Guide for Program Managers.)
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 3: Take the time to read the entire contract from DHS.** This includes reading the program elements and the exhibits as there are over-arching requirements.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 4: Delegate, delegate, delegate.** You can not do this alone. Distribute activities accordingly. For example, program managers can assure policies, procedures, and standing orders are up-to-date and office administrators can help organize general policies that affect all employees and functions of the health department. You, the Administrator, will then craft the final drafts, with edits and approvals.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 5: Prioritize your work based on the list of compliance findings from your last Triennial Review.** Take time to review the last triennial report to avoid repeat findings. The Triennial Review process is improving follow-up on compliance finding resolutions, but if your last review was in 2006 or 2007, there is no guarantee that all the findings got resolved.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 6: Plan to attend the exit interviews for the programs with your managers and supervisors.** This is a great opportunity to support staff and ask questions.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 7: Use your resources at the Oregon Public Health Division.** Community Liaisons and Program Reviewers offer a pre-review visit to help new leadership understand the process and offer technical assistance. Many counties who have taken advantage of this visit have commented that it was very helpful and they used this opportunity as a springboard to begin preparing for their review.
- ✓ **SURVIVAL TIP # 8: Have readily accessible comfort food.** We recommend dark chocolate.

New Staff: State Public Health Community Liaison Office welcomes newest member



MaiKia Moua enjoys a famous Umpqua milkshake on the way to her first site visit.

From the 10,000 lakes of Minnesota, we have snatched up our most recent addition to the Oregon Public Health Division Community Liaison Office.

MaiKia Moua received her nursing degree at Linfield College and then attended the University of Minnesota for her MPH. As a home visiting nurse and supervisor, she attended to families from diverse communities and participated actively in community partnerships. She has a passion for public health and research and is looking forward to applying herself as a PHN consultant and County Liaison.

"Each site is unique in its own way; I can see why from the dynamic staff and the communities they serve. I'm looking forward to visiting all the different landscapes of Oregon and finding the special people that make public health work well." She has visited Washington and Hood River Counties thus far. Please stop in to say hello and share your favorite spots around the state with her.

PH-County Bulletin: Opportunity for New Editorial Board Members for Fall 2009 program year

The monthly Public Health-County Electronic Bulletin, *Oregon Public Health Connection*, would like you to consider joining our editorial board! Editorial board members serve for one-year terms, at a minimum, and include representatives from state public health staff and county health departments. The editorial board meets four times each year, and distance participants have the option of participating via videoconference or conference call. If you are interested, please contact e-bulletin editor Trish Neiworth at latrissa.l.neiworth@state.or.us by July 31, 2009

PH Calendar

AUGUST 2009

PH Workforce Conference
The Annual Oregon Public Health Workforce Development Conference is Aug. 26-27 at the Portland State Office Building, 800 NE Oregon St., Portland, OR. Registration is free. Register for course C01337 at the Learning Center website: <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us>
Contact: Catherine Southern, catherine.southern@state.or.us, Oregon Public Health Division.

Summer Institute for Public Health Practice 2009

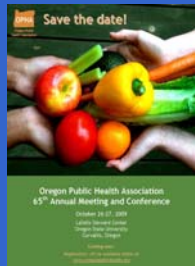
Join us for the 18th annual Summer Institute, Aug. 10 – 14, at the William H. Gates Hall on the University of Washington campus, Seattle, WA. The goal of the 2009 institute is to enhance the public health system capacity to respond to public health threats and emergencies. Registration deadline is July 31, 2009.

SEPTEMBER 2009



2009 Oregon Flu Summit
The 2009 Oregon Flu Summit will be held 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sept. 1-2 at the Amridge Events Center, Portland, OR. For more information, see: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/mm/adults/OAIC.shtml>

OCTOBER 2009



OPHA Annual Conference
Oregon Public Health Association 65th Annual Meeting and Conference, Oct. 26-27, LaSells Steward Center, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR. Last call for submissions – the deadline to submit an abstract is July 31, 2009.



Case Study: Food product recall challenges state, local health departments -- from pg. 1

Some recalled product was also sold in Asian grocery stores, so it was possible that the pepper was in restaurants not on the manufacturer's distribution list. Because of the less-than-precise information about distribution, many counties took the time to contact all Asian restaurants in their jurisdiction whether or not they were on the distribution list. An additional source of confusion emerged when county staff discovered spices provided to restaurants that were in almost identical packages, but produced by a separate company. This required further clarification, as did the subsequent recall of all the spices distributed by Union International because of concerns about potential cross contamination during processing. While county staff is routinely notified to look for recalled food products during the course of their regular food service inspections, this situation was unique in that an effort was mounted to actively contact restaurants about a recall. It was also unique in that federal agencies were only peripherally involved, with the four states collaborating to coordinate efforts and communicate information.

Crack the Case of Good Health

Public Health @ OMSI
August 10-15, 2009



Where does good health start?
Join public health partners on a fun-filled adventure to find out!

Your quest will take you past a giant nose and inside a human brain!

- Hunt for hidden hazards and learn how to make a healthy home.
- Learn to vary your veggies and focus on fruit by making a fun, new button.
- Learn the secrets of good health. Is it fresh food? Clean air? Clean water?
- Become a food detective, tracking snacks to their source.
- You may meet Elliot the Elephant or a masked flu fighter!
- How's your hearing? Come listen. Dezi Bell the Manikin wants to keep your ears safe. Bring your ipod to check the volume.
- Picture yourself in a neighborhood that is built to support healthy choices. You can also use one of our cameras to capture public health the way you see it.
- Go on a scavenger hunt and find out how to keep yourself free from viruses!

Come spin our giant prize wheel when you think you've cracked the case!

Sponsored by...

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For more information, visit oregon.gov/dhs/ph/spotlight or contact Oregon Public Health Division at 971-673-0206.



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