



Happy Holidays from the Health Director

2010 was a year of transition and growth for the Henrico Health District. Old staff and new, including a new Emergency Planner, Epidemiologist, Nurse Manager, and Human Resource Analyst, have done an enormous amount of public health work. Among some of the highlights: tens of thousands of Henrico residents were vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 influenza and seasonal influenza, a highly successful partnership was formed with Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia to provide maternity services for women in Henrico, and Pediatric, Family Planning, and Refugee Clinics, among other clinics and services, successfully served families in Henrico. Through Public Health Bytes, we will keep you informed as we continue to grow, improve, and face new public health challenges. We look forward to working with you in 2011, and wish you and your family very Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

Susan Fischer Davis, M.D.

Director, Henrico County Health Department

Holiday Safety Tips

Article by: Kevin Pannell, Emergency Planner

Whether you observe Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, or other celebrations during this time of year, there are holiday-specific hazards that may be avoided with some preparation and caution. According to the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), more than 12,000 people are treated in the nation's emergency rooms each year due to falls, cuts, electrical shocks and burns from faulty holiday decorations or accidents that occur while putting decorations in place.

During the January and February 2010 snow storms*, 91 falls, sprains, and other similar injuries were reported from Henrico County hospitals. How can the potential for obtaining these kinds of injuries be avoided? To reduce the chance of falls this holiday season, make sure to clear snow, leaves and ice from pathways, and use de-icing materials such as sodium chloride (rock salt) or magnesium chloride. These agents work best at varying temperatures, so consult your local hardware store to be sure to select the optimal product for where you live.

Before undertaking any type of strenuous outdoor activity (e.g., shoveling snow, raking leaves, chopping wood, etc.), make a realistic assessment of your physical health. Are you regularly physically active? Are you used to working outside for extended periods of time? If the answer to these questions is "No," consult your physician and schedule a physical to be sure you do not have any underlying complications that could raise your risk of injury. During the February 2010 snow storms, five Henrico residents reported chest pain, two of these resulted in fatal cardiac arrests. In four of the five cases, the individuals were either shoveling snow or pushing a car that was stuck in the snow.

In addition to safety around the home, safety while traveling is crucial as families hit the highways this holiday season. The importance of wearing seatbelts at all times cannot be stressed enough, but bears repeating, so remember to *always wear your seatbelt*. During the January and February 2010 snow storms, Henrico County hospitals treated patients involved in 16 non-fatal motor vehicle accidents (MVAs). Child seat belts and car seat safety are also crucial to ensure parents and families do everything feasible to reduce the possibility of injury to children if they are involved in an MVA. Children under age 12 should ride in the back seat and small children should be seated in an appropriately sized, government-approved child safety seat.

Fireplace Safety

Before roasting chestnuts by an open fire, have your chimney and fireplace professionally inspected by a Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA) certified Chimney Sweep. A thorough inspection can help determine if fire residue, or creosote, has built up inside your chimney. Since creosote is highly combustible, a Chimney Sweep should perform a thorough cleaning before the chimney is used.

**Injury and fatality statistics were reported to HCHD from local hospitals and are not all inclusive. Data is subject to reporting variability.*

Story Resources:

USFA Fire Safety

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/fswy14.pdf>

CDC Holiday Health Safety Tips

<http://www.cdc.gov/family/holiday/>

Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA)

<http://www.csia.org/>

HCHD Vital Records: What You Need To Know

Article by: Kathryn Sprouse, Human Resources Analyst and Ardetta Johnson, Office Support Specialist

The Henrico County Health Department (HCHD) Vital Records Department is located in the Human Services Building at 8600 Dixon Powers Drive in Henrico, Virginia. HCHD Vital Records files, retains, and provides certified copies of death certificates. A death certificate is filed with the local health department in the city or county in which the death occurred; therefore, HCHD may only file death certificates for deaths that occurred in Henrico County. Generally, Funeral Home Directors or their designated representatives file death certificates. Henrico County does not retain or file vital records such as marriage, divorce, or birth certificates. These certificates may be obtained at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Division of Vital Records located at the Willow Lawn Shopping Center in Richmond, VA. The process for completing and filing a death certificate generally starts with the Funeral Home. The Funeral Home Director or designee will fill out the death certificate, obtain the required physician's signature, and bring it to the health department for filing. A death certificate must be completed in its entirety to be accepted. Death certificates may have no write-overs, cross-outs, whiteout, or any other form of visible modification.

Certified copies of death certificates are available upon request to those persons eligible to receive them. Persons eligible for certified copies of death certificates are immediate family members and the Executor of the Estate of the deceased. The Executor of the Estate must have original notarized documents indicating that they are the Executor of the State at the time of purchase. Funeral Home Directors or designees representing the deceased may also obtain certified copies. The fee for a vital record is \$12.00 for each certificate. HCHD accepts cash, check, money order, and VISA or MasterCard. HCHD Vital Records retains copies of death certificates for five years for deaths that occurred in Henrico County. Requests for death certificates that are older than five years should be referred to the VDH Division of Vital Records. Proper identification is required to obtain certified copies, such as a Driver's License. Questions about proper identification should be referred to the HCHD Vital Records Registrar before obtaining a death certificate.

For more information call (804) 501-4660.

Story Resources:

Henrico Vital Records <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/LHD/Henrico/vital.htm>

Blood Glucose Monitoring and Hepatitis B

Article by: Jessica Watson, MPH, District Epidemiologist

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released alerts in response to an increase in the number of reported outbreaks of hepatitis B transmission associated with fingerstick devices used for blood glucose monitoring (BGM). There are two types of fingerstick devices; those designed for reuse on a single person and disposable devices intended for single-use.

Reusable devices look like a pen and are designed to hold a lancet. These devices are difficult to clean and disinfect. If used, they should only be used by individual persons who perform self-monitoring of blood glucose levels.

Single-use, auto-disabling fingerstick devices are disposable lancets that prevent reuse through an auto-disabling mechanism. These devices should be used when assisted monitoring of blood glucose is performed.

The shared use of reusable devices is a common practice in settings such as long term care facilities, where multiple persons receive assistance with BGM. However, these devices may be used in other settings such as hospitals, residential care facilities, clinics, health fairs, shelters, schools, senior centers, detention centers and camps. CDC and FDA support the following recommendations for persons performing fingerstick procedures:

- Fingerstick devices should **never** be used for more than one person.
- Auto-disabling **single-use** devices should be used for assisted monitoring of blood glucose levels.

Story Resources:

CDC Clinical Reminder <http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/Fingerstick-DevicesBGM.html>

CDC – Infection Prevention during BGM and Insulin Administration <http://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/blood-glucose-monitoring.html>

CDC - Important Information on BGM <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Settings/GlucoseMonitoring.htm>

Select Cases of Reportable Diseases – October 2010

Case Type	# Investigations
Rabies exposure	13
GI Illnesses (Salmonellosis, Giardiasis, Campylobacteriosis, etc.)	8
Tuberculosis (TB)	9

**List is not comprehensive of all reportable diseases investigated by Henrico County Health Department personnel. Contact us for more information at 804.501.4522.*

Main Office: 804.501.4522 / Fax: 804.501.4232 / Website: www.HenricoHealth.org
After Hours Emergency Number: 1.866.531.3068

Page 2

Want this via email? Visit <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/296505/Henrico-HD-Public-Health-Bytes-Communication-Survey> and provide your contact information and feedback. If you do not want Public Health Bytes anymore, please provide your email in the above survey.