Our Mission

“To assure the highest possible level of health for the people of the communities we serve.”

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Health Department Urges all Residents to be Prepared

During September and October, the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department will urge all residents to take some simple steps to make themselves and their families better prepared for emergencies including:

• Get a Kit - Get a kit of emergency supplies that will allow you and your family to survive for at least three days in the event an emergency happens. The kit should include basic items like water, food, battery-powered radio, flashlight and a first aid kit. Go to www.ready.gov for a complete list of recommended supplies.

• Make a Plan - Plan in advance what you and your family will do in an emergency. Your plan should include a communications plan and address sheltering-in-place and evacuation. Go to www.ready.gov for more information and templates to help get you started.

• Be Informed - Learn more about different threats that could affect your community and appropriate responses to them. Contact the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department for more information public health emergencies that may occur in our area at 906-774-1868 or 906-265-9913. Or visit our website at www.didhd.org. Contact the Dickinson or Iron County Emergency Management Offices for more information about the emergency plans that have been established in Dickinson or Iron Counties. (Dickinson County Emergency Management Office– 906-779-1731, Iron County Emergency Management Office – 906-875-0602).

On September 18th at the Breitung Township Hall from 1-2PM, the Dickinson County Local Emergency Planning Committee will be holding an emergency planning informational forum that will introduce the public to the agencies that have been planning for emergencies. Several agencies will be on site to detail the emergency planning that has been occurring in their agencies. The following agencies will be present: Dickinson County Emergency Management, Dickinson County Healthcare System, Beacon Ambulance, the American Red Cross, the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department, Verso Paper, MichCon Gas, Dickinson County Road Commission, Breitung Township Fire Department, and our local school districts. The public is encouraged to attend to learn more about local emergency planning efforts.

• Get Involved - After preparing yourself and your family for possible emergencies, take the next step: get training in first aid and emergency response and get involved in preparing your community. The American Red Cross provides residents with opportunities to prepare, train and support local emergency responders. For more information contact the American Red Cross at 906-774-2494 (Dickinson County) or 906-482-8085 (Iron County).
Think of eight women that you are close to in your life. Now imagine one of them being diagnosed with breast cancer. In the United States it is estimated that one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Breast cancer is the most common cancer that affects women other than skin cancer. It is estimated that 178,480 women and 2,030 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States this year. Of these, 40,460 women and 450 men will die from his disease.

Early detection is very important when it comes to breast health and prevention. Two important practices include monthly self-examinations after age 20, and yearly mammograms after age 40. Following a low-fat diet, regular exercise and being a nonsmoker may also reduce your risk. Mammograms are the best method to detect early breast cancer. And can cut related deaths by as much as one-third.

A few symptoms that may indicate breast cancer include a lump or dimple in the breast, a change in size or shape of the breast or unusual discharge from a nipple. Even when a lump is detected, eight out of ten breast lumps turn out to be benign, or non-cancerous. It is important for all women to take care of their bodies, especially when it comes to awareness and prevention of breast cancer and other diseases.

The health department has a Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) for income eligible women between the ages of 40-64.

For more information on this program contact the health department at 779-7237 or 265-4166.

The American Cancer Society has scheduled the Great American Smokeout (GASO) for November 15, 2007, to encourage smokers to quit for a day in the hope they may quit for good.

Pharmacotherapies, behavioral therapies, and counseling—including telephone counseling—can help patients quit and increase their chances of not relapsing.

Even though GASO officially began in 1977, the event's roots reach back to 1971, when Arthur P. Mullaney challenged the citizens of Randolph, Massachusetts, to give up cigarettes for the day and donate the saved money to a high school scholarship fund. Mullaney coined the term Smokeout.

Later, Lynn R. Smith, editor of the Monticello Times in Minnesota, spearheaded that state's first D-Day, or Don't Smoke Day. D-Day spread like wildfire throughout Minnesota and then blazed west to California, where it became the Great American Smokeout.

For more information or to receive a free Quit Kit, call the health department at 779-7234 or the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.
Today most people have heard the statement "secondhand smoke kills." But in society’s increasing awareness of the health dangers of tobacco, of the lies manufactured by the tobacco industry, and of an emerging body of law supporting smokefree policies, it is not enough to simply state "secondhand smoke kills" without knowing how secondhand smoke is a health danger, whom it affects, where exposure is the most serious, and what can be done to stop it.

Throughout the years, the science of secondhand smoke has driven the secondhand smoke policy engine from separate smoking and non-smoking sections to separately ventilated smoking rooms to 100% smokefree environments. We now know that 53,800 people die every year from secondhand smoke exposure. This number is based on the midpoint numbers for heart disease deaths (48,500), lung cancer deaths (3,000), and SIDS deaths (2,300) as calculated in the 1997 California EPA Report on Secondhand Smoke. And children are at significant risk to many acute and chronic diseases as a result of secondhand smoke exposure.

Since the 1986 Surgeon General's Report titled The Health Consequences of Involuntary Smoking stated that secondhand smoke can cause disease in nonsmokers, hundreds of studies have concluded not only this, but that exposure to secondhand smoke can result in death. Over the past 20 years, scientific research has become even more clear, resulting now in the ability to pinpoint the effects of secondhand smoke not just on particular organs, but on various ethnicities, types of workers, and socioeconomic classifications.

The 2006 Surgeon General's Report on The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke confirmed the known health effects of secondhand smoke exposure, including immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system, and coronary heart disease and lung cancer. The report concluded that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke and that establishing smokefree environments is the only proven way to prevent exposure. The report also finds that many millions of Americans are still exposed to secondhand smoke despite substantial progress in tobacco control.

As the body of scientific evidence becomes larger and more precise, it is now possible to prove that smokefree policies not only work to protect nonsmokers from the death and disease caused by exposure to secondhand smoke, but also have an immediate effect on the public’s health. On a larger scale, a study has confirmed that restaurants and bars located in smokefree cities have 82% less indoor air pollution than restaurants and bars in cities that do not have smokefree protection. Because of the mountain of evidence from these peer-reviewed, scientific studies, the Centers for Disease Control recently issued a warning for anyone at risk for heart disease to avoid smoke-filled indoor environments completely.

Secondhand smoke kills. Knowing the science behind it, as well as how smokefree policies protect the public from secondhand smoke, will help cement this in the minds of the public.

Locally, more and more Dickinson and Iron County restaurants and businesses are opting to go smokefree. If you’re a business that is interested in this topic or implementing a smokefree policy, call the health department at 779-7234 for more information or assistance with policy development and helping your employees to quit smoking.

“Public Health: Be informed, be prepared.”
September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools. National Preparedness Month 2007 is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The goal of the month is to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action.

Throughout September, Homeland Security will work with a wide variety of organizations, including local, state and federal government agencies and the private sector, to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement through events and activities across the nation.

Each week will feature a different focus area as shown below:

- **Week One** – September 1-8: Back-to-School and *Ready Kids*
- **Week Two** – September 9-15: Business Preparedness and *Ready Business*
- **Week Three** – September 16-22: Multicultural Preparedness (coinciding with the beginning of Hispanic Heritage month)
- **Week Four** – September 23-30: Home and Family Preparedness (including older and disabled Americans, as well as pet owners)

To participate directly in National Preparedness Month or for more information about this event, please visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).