



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2007 – Michigan's Year of Public Health Dickinson-Iron District Health Department Kicks off Pollution Prevention Month in September

Kingsford and Iron River, Michigan, September 10, 2007 – What are two essential ingredients for healthy living? Clean air and clean water. However, everyday we pour or release harmful substances such as poisonous gases, chemicals and garbage into our environment. These substances are called pollutants and they damage our natural resources. The residents of Dickinson and Iron Counties may suffer from a variety of ill health effects if the necessary steps are not taken to protect these valuable resources.

Pollution prevention looks at ways of reducing the creation of pollution and waste by changing the way we buy, make or discard of things. Pollution prevention looks for ways to use less toxic or less hazardous materials in place of more toxic ones; and where energy, water or other raw materials can be saved or conserved. Pollution prevention has grown from a good idea many years ago to one of the principal ways to protect the environment. As a result, our land, air and water are cleaner and safer.

“Your local health department is a great resource for information and consultation on various types of pollution and their ill effects on personal health”, said Ron Matonich, Environmental Health Director.

Matonich recommends the following tips for pollution prevention:

- ▶ Walk, cycle, carpool or use public transportation
- ▶ Turn off lights, TV, radio and other electrical items when not in use
- ▶ Use low-energy or energy-saving light bulbs
- ▶ Keep your car tuned and schedule routine maintenance checks
- ▶ Turn off your engine when waiting - do not idle!
- ▶ Install "low-flow" shower heads and faucets to reduce water use
- ▶ Only run the dishwasher when it is full and use dishwasher soap that does not contain phosphates
- ▶ Disconnect the down spout from your eaves trough if it discharges into a sewer system
- ▶ Install a rain barrel to collect rain for watering plants and your lawn.
- ▶ Plant plants that can grow with low moisture content in soils and do not need to be watered very often
- ▶ Take your car to a car wash facility rather than washing it in your driveway or on the street
- ▶ Don't pour chemicals down the storm sewer
- ▶ Buy biodegradable or environmentally friendly soap and other cleaning supplies
- ▶ Fix taps, faucets and pipes that are leaking

“Opportunities can be found at home, when you shop at the store, when you go to school or when you go to work. You can take steps every day to help stop pollution, said Matonich. “Once you get in the habit of thinking about the pollution you are creating, you will soon recognize more and more opportunities for preventing it.”

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is committed to promoting wellness, preventing disease, providing health care, and protecting the environment. For additional information visit our website at www.didhd.org.

Additional information about the “**Public Health – For Michigan. For You**” slogan and “2007: The Year of Public Health” can be found at www.malph.org.

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