



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CANVAS



COUNTY OF KINGS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES





Kings County Department of Health
Environmental Health Services :
Touching Everyone's Life Every Day

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www.countyofkings.com/health/ehs

The Kings County Division of Environmental Health Services (KCEHS) is the agency designated by the State of California and the County of Kings to enforce laws and regulations regarding food protection, recreational health, vector control, safe drinking water, housing, body art, medical waste, wastewater, solid waste, land-use, and emergency operation response. Through inspections and educational efforts, KCEHS helps facility operators and other stakeholders achieve compliance with these laws and regulations. In addition, KCEHS provides consultative services in occupational health and health education on environmental issues such as tobacco control. Environmental health affects everyone, whether it is drinking water, dining out at restaurants, swimming in a public pool or simply walking outdoors. The services provided by KCEHS are crucial to promoting public health and safety.

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NOTICE

THIS WATER IS UNSAFE TO DRINK

AVISO

ESTA AGUA NO ES BUENA PARA BEBER

NOTICE

PLEASE WASH HANDS BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK

AVISO

POR FAVOR LAVASE LAS MANOS ANTES DE VOLVER AL TRABAJO

10:30 AM



Food Protection

Food Protection in Kings County

The major goals of this program are to prevent foodborne illness and to assure that all retail food facilities are operated in a clean, safe, and sanitary manner. All food and beverage facilities including restaurants, bars, food vending vehicles, school cafeterias, food vending machines, bakeries, produce stands, and retail food markets are inspected by Kings County Environmental Health Services (KCEHS) on a routine basis throughout the year.



»» DID YOU KNOW?

More than 54 billion meals are served at 844,000 commercial food establishments in the United States each year. Restaurant meals make up 46% of the money Americans spend on food. **On a typical day, 44% of adults in the United States eat at a restaurant.**



Environmental Health Officers prevent contaminated food from reaching your plate.

Due to the high volume of food served, a food service establishment faces hygiene and sanitation challenges every day. One lapse in safe food handling can potentially cause many consumers to become ill and can negatively affect business.

The best line of defense against foodborne illness is prevention.

The environmental health staff conducts routine inspections as well as investigates food operation complaints and reported cases of foodborne illness. Classes in proper food handling and sanitation techniques are available for all food establishments, and assistance is provided to community organizations for the planning and implementation of special events involving food booths.



Cottage Food?

Assembly Bill (AB) 1616 became effective on January 1, 2013. The bill allows individuals to prepare and/or package certain non-potentially hazardous foods in home

kitchens referred to as “cottage food operations” (CFOs). KCEHS regulates these food vendors to ensure compliance with the California Health and Safety Code.



Cold storage and kitchen of a cottage food vendor.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each year, 1 in 6 Americans (48 million people) gets sick from, and 3,000 die of, foodborne diseases. Reducing foodborne illness by just 10% would keep 5 million Americans from getting sick each year. Preventing a single fatal case of [*E. coli*](#) O157 infection would save an estimated \$7 million.

» Routine Inspections

There are well over 500 permitted food facilities of all types in Kings County, making the Food Protection program a substantial part of our workload. In addition to restaurants, KCEHS routinely inspects

- Mobile Food Vendors
- Cottage Food Operations
- Cafeterias (Schools, Jails)
- Community Events
- Retail Food Markets
- Bars
- Caterers
- Farmers' Markets
- Produce Stands



Food Safety Evaluations

KCEHS prioritizes the top food safety concerns - those most likely to cause foodborne illness - and works with food facilities to ensure compliance. The top 5 risk factors for foodborne illness include:

- Improper hot/cold temperature management of potentially hazardous food
- Improper cooking temperatures of food
- Dirty and/or contaminated utensils and equipment
- Poor employee health and hygiene
- Food from unsafe sources

KCEHS proactively addresses these risk factors through education and maintaining a positive relationship with local food facilities, as well as rapidly addressing any existing or potential violations through routine inspections.

Want to know more?

Find your favorite restaurant's inspection reports online!

www.countyofkings.com/health/ehs

To report a foodborne illness complaint:

559-584-1411



» KCEHS Inspection Evaluation System

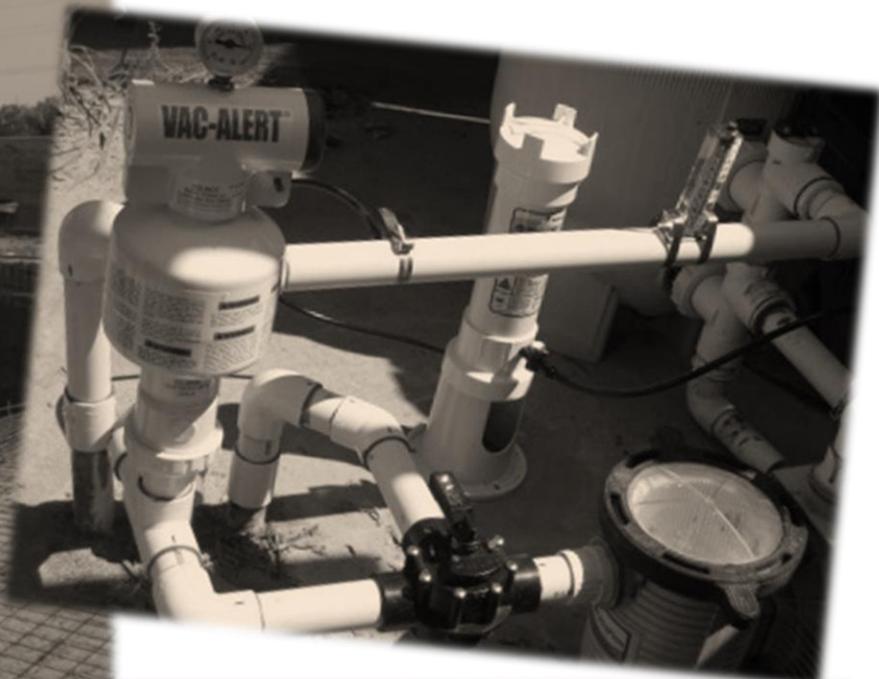
When performing routine food facility inspections, Environmental Health Officers assess the facility as **Pass**, with minimal or no violations, **Needs Improvement**, with moderate violation(s) or **Fail**, having multiple and/or serious violations.

» Silver Star Food Safety Awards

Every year, KCEHS recognizes local food facilities with outstanding food safety practices through the Silver Star Food Safety Award. The food establishments selected for the award, which consistently exceeded expectations with regard to public protection from foodborne illness, receive certificates and window recognition stickers for public display. To receive the award, facilities must:

- Receive a *Pass* rating on all food safety evaluations for the past calendar year.
- Have a written ongoing internal self-evaluation program.
- Use an electronic thermometer to monitor internal cooking temperatures in instances that require precise temperature location readings.
- Have no confirmed complaints relating to foodborne illness outbreaks or food handling practices that could lead to a possible outbreak.
- Have managers and key food handling personnel that understand and implement advanced food safety concepts such as HACCP (Hazard Analysis - Critical Control Points) in their daily operation.







Recreational Health

Swimming Pool Safety

The Recreational Health Program ensures the proper operation, safety, and maintenance of public swimming pools and spas. "Public" pools and spas include those at gyms, motels, and apartment complexes and mobile home parks with 5 or more units. **The main goal of this program is to prevent drownings and injuries at public swimming facilities, as well as illnesses related to their use, by ensuring that they are safe, clean, and healthful.** We also seek to increase knowledge of pool operation and maintenance principles among managers and employees of public facilities, commercial pool service companies, and owners of private pools.



DID YOU KNOW?

Poorly operated swimming pools and spas may transmit infectious diseases and skin disorders, including eye, ear, nose and throat infections.

An Ounce of Prevention

KCEHS regulates over 110 public swimming facilities. Public Pool and Spa operators are required to keep a daily log of pool chemistry readings, which include chlorine and pH levels and any maintenance activities.

This is just one way KCEHS helps operators identify changes in pool water composition early on, to help prevent unnecessary illness or injury to the public. Serious accidents can be prevented if all pools are equipped with a lifeguard or safety signs, artificial respiration instructions and emergency phone numbers are posted, and safety equipment is accessible. KCEHS ensures these safety measures are in place!



Pool Operator Trainings

Biennially, KCEHS holds a county-wide event to train pool operators on routine inspection procedures, basic water chemistry, water sampling, recreational water illness, chemical handling and storage, common violations, and drain cover requirements. The main goal of the training is to increase knowledge of pool operation and maintenance principles for employees and managers of facilities operating public swimming pools, wading pools, and spas. Each participant who satisfactorily fulfills course requirements receives a card certifying course completion.

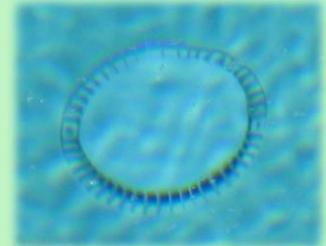


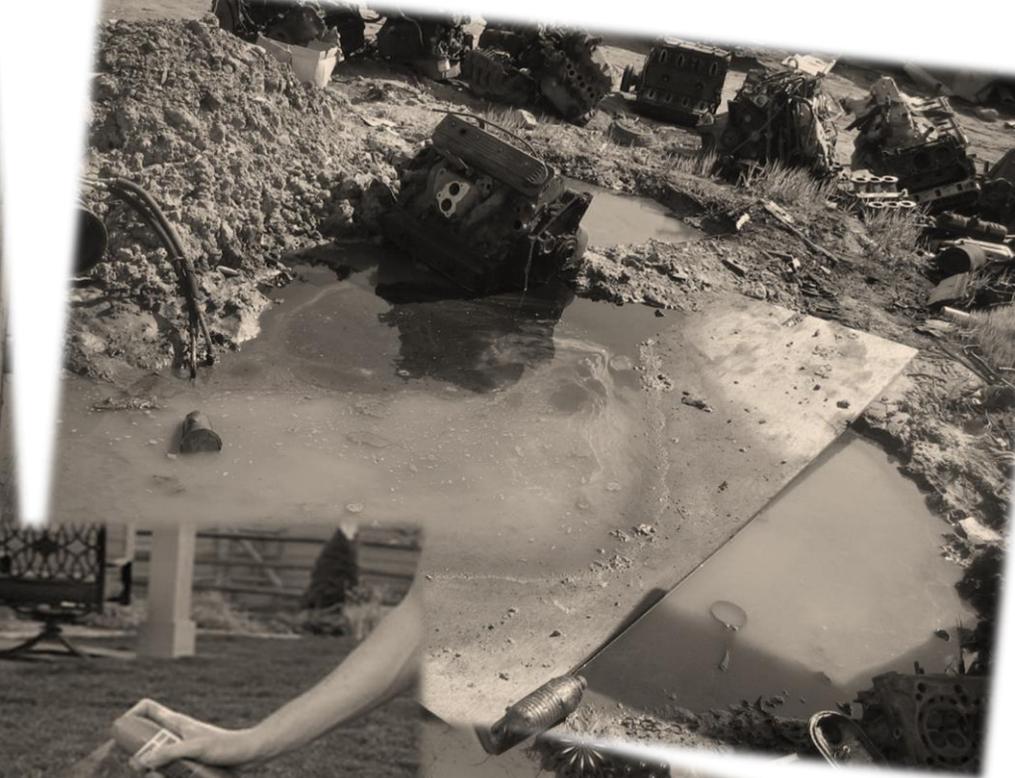
BID YOU KNOW?

The CDC estimates that 10 people drown each day, many of them children. For every death caused by drowning, up to ten nonfatal pool accidents result in hospitalization or emergency care.

Preventing Injury and Death

KCEHS ensures compliance with the *The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act*, which requires all public swimming and spa facilities to have anti-entrapment drain covers and other safety devices as needed. *The Act* takes its name from Virginia Graeme Baker. A member of her community swim and diving team, Graeme was able to swim without assistance since she was 3 years old. In 2002, the young girl became stuck to a hot tub drain and was unable to pull herself free. Efforts by her mother to pull Graeme from the drain proved unsuccessful. Two men who eventually freed Graeme from the spa pulled so hard that the drain cover broke from the force. Graeme died from drowning, though the cause of her death was suction entrapment due to a faulty drain cover.





Mosquito & Vector Control



Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are small parasitic insects turning up more frequently in hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains and on the furniture of people across the country. Bed bugs feed on the blood of animals and humans while they sleep, and the cleanliness of a living space does not determine where they take up residence. Reddish-brown in color, wingless, and at their largest roughly the size of an apple seed, they can live several months without eating, remaining undiscovered until they begin to wreak havoc.

While bed bugs are not known to spread disease, they do create a public nuisance.

Bed bug bites cause itching, sometimes severe, and can cause a rash and/or other allergic reaction in the person bitten.

KCEHS regularly inspects hotels and motels for the presence of bed bugs to ensure infested rooms are not used and proper abatement procedures are followed.

KCEHS also performs home inspections on a complaint-driven basis.



Vector-borne Diseases

Flies, cockroaches, fleas, mosquitoes, rats, and mice are all examples of vectors, which may transmit a number of diseases as well as create a public nuisance. The most widely known story of destruction fueled by vectors is that of the bubonic plague. The “Black Death” killed over 25 million people in the 14th century; an infection spread to humans via fleas who had fed on infected rodents. Keeping vectors at bay and monitoring vector populations that pose a threat helps to stem the spread of illness and injury. Current threats to human health via various vectors include West Nile Virus, Yellow Fever, and the epidemic of bed bugs seen spreading across the United States. **KCEHS investigates vector complaints from the public, works to eliminate breeding places and sources near human habitation, and partners with local and state agencies to monitor certain vector populations.**

Emerging Threats

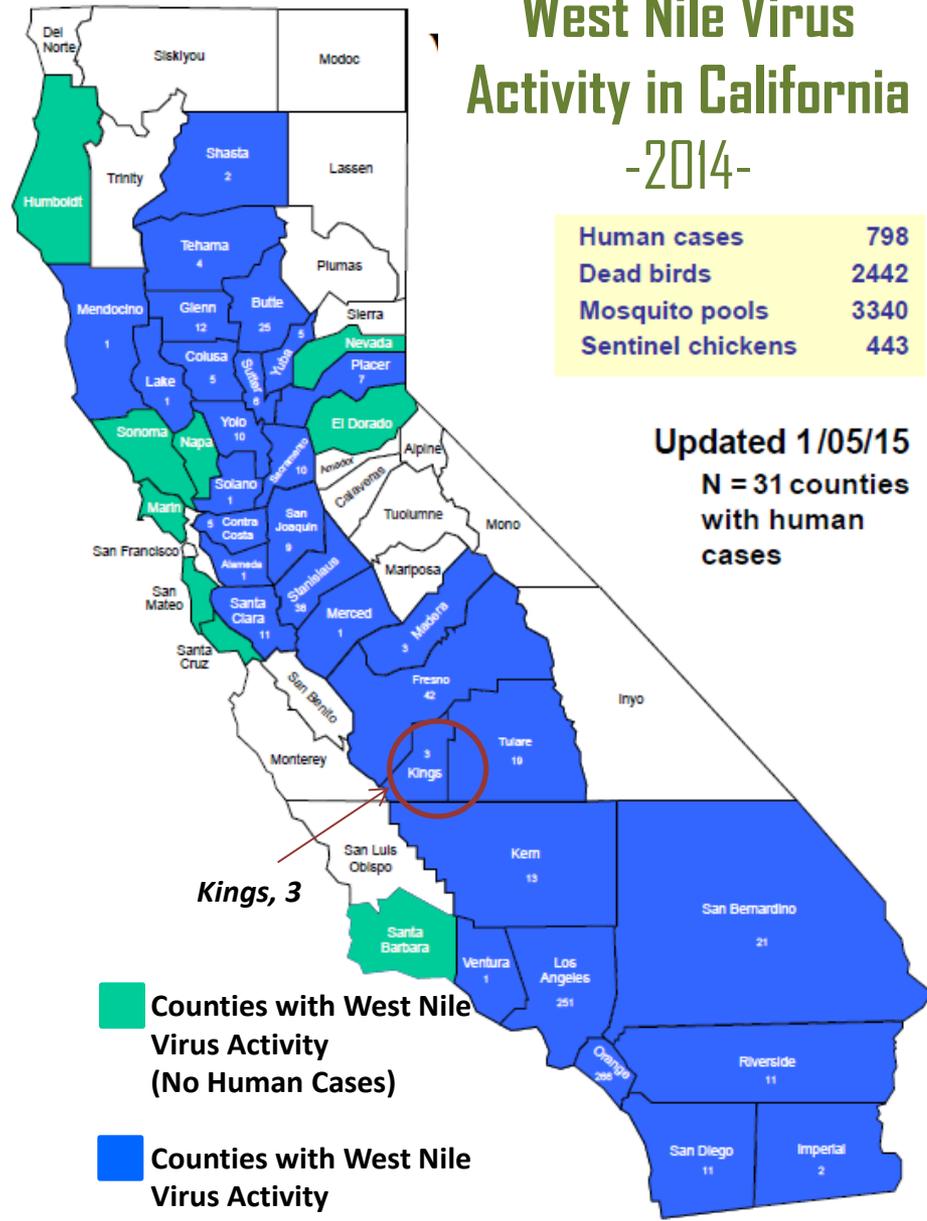
The Yellow Fever Mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, can transmit a number of potentially dangerous diseases, including yellow fever, dengue, and chikungunya. The Yellow Fever Mosquito (pictured right) is an aggressive day-biting mosquito, not native to California. Though not yet found in Kings County, the mosquito has been identified in neighboring counties including Madera, Fresno, Tulare, and Kern. No reports of disease associated with this vector have been confirmed within California, though reports are widespread throughout South America, including countries as close as Mexico and northern portions of Latin America, where there has been a recent increase in chikungunya and continued dengue infections.



West Nile Virus Activity in California -2014-

Human cases	798
Dead birds	2442
Mosquito pools	3340
Sentinel chickens	443

Updated 1/05/15
N = 31 counties with human cases



Prevention and Control

KCEHS partners with agencies such as the Kings Mosquito Abatement District to help to control the spread of West Nile Virus through environmental health protections discussed on the previous page. As you can see on the map to the left, there were only 3 confirmed cases of West Nile in Kings County last year. Were it not for mosquito abatement and vector control efforts, West Nile Virus may be much more widespread.

Here are a few additional steps individuals and families can take to protect themselves:

✓ Avoid Mosquito Bites

- Use insect repellents when you go outdoors.
- As weather permits, wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors.
- Wear protective clothing and avoid outdoor activities during peak mosquito biting hours, dawn and dusk.

✓ Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- Use your air conditioner and install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Help reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home by emptying standing water from flowerpots, gutters, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and birdbaths on a regular basis.



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Solid Waste



What is KCEHS's Role?

Kings County Environmental Health Services (KCEHS) is designated by the Kings County Board of Supervisors and the state of California as the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) for solid waste. As part of this role, KCEHS conducts monthly inspections of landfills, transfer stations, material recovery facilities, and composting operations to enforce state regulations for their



operation. The division also reviews plans and issues permits for new waste facility sites, or when changes of ownership occur. In addition, there is a comprehensive 5-year permit review process during which the operation plans and procedures of each site are thoroughly reviewed to ensure compliance with state and local laws. Part of the permitting and renewal process also includes an Environmental Impact Report, developed by the facility with input and approval from KCEHS, which must be in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Currently Regulated Solid Waste Sites:

Active Sites:

- ❖ Kings Waste & Recycling Facility
- ❖ Chemical Waste Management Inc. (Hazardous and Municipal Solid Waste)
- ❖ Kochergen Farms
- ❖ Avenal Landfill



Closed Sites:

- ❖ Corcoran Landfill
- ❖ Hanford Inert/Fillipi
- ❖ Hanford Landfill
- ❖ City of Corcoran
- ❖ 11th & Houston Landfill (Hanford)
- ❖ Kettleman City Landfill
- ❖ Lemoore City Landfill
- ❖ Stratford Disposal Site
- ❖ Volpa Landfill



Areas of Concern

During routine inspections, Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) ensure compliance with state minimum standards and the permitted operational plan that is specific to each site, as well as observing for any potential violations or areas of concern such as:

- Gas monitoring and control
- Vector and bird control
- Proper daily and intermediate cover
- Dust, litter, and noise control
- Site Security

DID YOU KNOW?

If a day's worth of all the solid waste collected in the U.S. were in a line of average-sized garbage trucks, that line of trucks would be long enough to cross the country from LA to New York more than 100 times.

Illegal Dumping

KCEHS conducts surveillance and enforcement against illegal, closed, and abandoned solid waste sites, as well as other illegal dumping on public and private property. EHOs have the authority to issue citations when appropriate, and the division maintains a strong working relationship with local partners, such as the Kings River Conservation District, to help facilitate site clean-ups.

Farm and Ranch Clean-up Grants

The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery administers the Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Grant Program, which provides grants for the cleanup of illegal solid waste dumping on farm or ranch property. A site may be eligible for funding if the parcel is zoned for agricultural use, unauthorized solid waste disposal has occurred, and the site is in need of cleanup in order to abate a nuisance or public health and safety threat and/or a threat to the environment.

KCEHS can help determine program eligibility and initiate the grant application process.

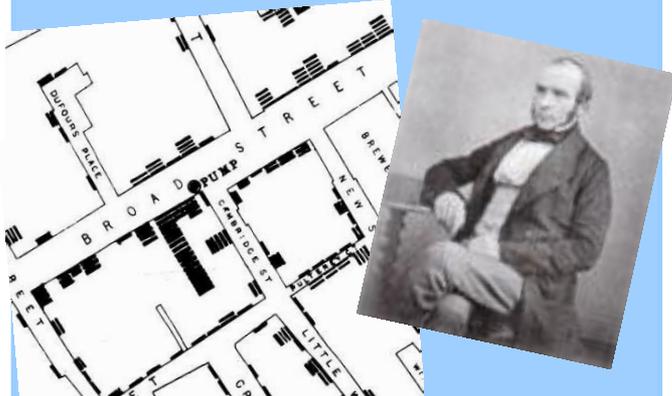




Safe Drinking Water

JOHN SNOW AND THE BROAD STREET PUMP ON THE TRAIL OF AN EPIDEMIC

John Snow, once an anesthesiologist by trade, is now known as one of the founding fathers of epidemiology, and a true pioneer in environmental health. In the mid-19th century, London suffered a series of cholera outbreaks, and due to the prevailing disease theory of the time (that diseases were spread by “Miasma” in the air), nothing much was done to contain them. On August 31st of 1854, a particularly horrific cholera outbreak spread through the Soho neighborhood near where Snow lived; just over a week later, by September 10th, over 550 people had died. Snow mapped the epidemic and the 13 public wells in the area, theorizing that the outbreak stemmed from tainted water at the Broad Street Pump. Despite severe resistance from the Board of Health at the time, Snow was able to have the pump handle removed; the outbreak quickly stalled, and was over by the end of September.



What is KCEHS's Role?

The objective of this program is to assure that domestic water supplies are, at all times, safe, potable, and available in adequate quantity and at sufficient pressure. We accomplish this through periodic inspection, evaluation, surveillance and sampling of public water systems, together with an enforcement and education program designed to improve the operations of these systems.

The California Department of Public Health has delegated local enforcement of the state drinking water requirements to KCEHS, for water systems supplying 5-199 service connections, or serving 25 or more people 60+ days per year. Larger systems, with 200 or more connections, are issued permits by the state's Drinking Water Field Operations Branch.



DID YOU KNOW?

Water systems inspected by KCEHS are those in outlying (unincorporated) areas of Kings County, and include places like stores that sell food, businesses providing water to employees, mobile home parks, schools, and farms.

Partners in Prevention

KCEHS recognizes our responsibility for public health protection within Kings County, even in areas that may not fall under our legal jurisdiction. One way we continually work to protect public health is to partner closely with various agencies doing related work, as well as private individuals. A prime example of this is our partnership with the state's Drinking Water Field Operations Branch. When a problem occurs with the water system in the City of Hanford, for example, KCEHS fields calls from the public to relay information from the State, who is the regulating body for the City water system. If we receive public water inquiries for which we have little or no information, we refer people to the appropriate resource, helping ensure their questions are answered. KCEHS also offers information, education, and referrals for owners of private domestic wells, letting people know about water quality, where they can have their water tested, and the types of testing that are often most useful.



Water Conservation Efforts

The State of California is currently experiencing one of the worst periods of drought in recent history. In September of 2014, the well serving the Hamblin Mutual Water Company of Hanford went dry. The City of Hanford, Kings County Health Department, Kings Office of Emergency Management, and the State Water Resources Control Board worked collaboratively to provide a temporary water connection as quickly as possible. While there have been additional reports of private wells going dry, we have been fortunate that, to date, this is the only community water system outage incident in Kings County attributed to the drought. As summer approaches, these same collaborative partners are working together to increase conservation efforts, and assure all residents of Kings County have access to safe drinking water.



Liquid Waste Management



KCEHS's Role in Wastewater Management

KCEHS works to ensure the disposal of sewage, industrial, and agricultural waste water is done in ways that will not cause significant degradation of water quality, threaten public health, or create nuisance conditions. KCEHS accomplishes this goal through regulation, enforcement, and education.

Commercial septic tank and chemical toilet cleaning vehicles must be registered through KCEHS; their vehicle and disposal sites approved. Plans for commercial, industrial, and multi-family onsite sewage disposal systems such as septic tanks may also require the Division's review and approval. In addition, complaints about failing individual sewage systems are investigated and resolved.



KCEHS conducts routine inspections of septic pumping vehicles, and reviews commercial septic installations. The Division also evaluates and issues approvals for systems that don't meet standard set-back requirements. When responding to a complaint regarding open sewage, KCEHS works with property owners to achieve proper remediation of contaminated areas.

>>> DID YOU KNOW?

A key reason to maintain septic system is to save money. Failing septic systems are expensive to repair or replace and pose a threat to public health, and poor maintenance is often the culprit.

Land Use



Ensuring Proper Land Use

Through proper land-use planning, KCEHS aims to prevent environmental hazards and promote healthy development in order to maintain safe and thriving communities in Kings County. Environmental Health Officers review proposed subdivisions and parcel maps to ensure each land use project meets applicable state and local land use standards for:

- Domestic water supply
- Sewage and solid waste disposal
- Hazardous Material Handling
- Vector Control
- Food provision
- Other factors related to environmental health and safety

As part of a collaborative process, KCEHS is represented on the Kings County Environmental Review Committee, which reviews all proposed projects and determines whether Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) are necessary. When an EIR or other environmental document, such as a negative declaration, is prepared for a proposed site, KCEHS thoroughly reviews it for adequacy, completeness, and accuracy. The commentary provided on such proposals also helps to ensure environmental compliance can be incorporated into the final approval process.



How Does Land Use Impact Health?

Land use choices significantly influence the underlying determinants of community and environmental health. Where commercial buildings are located in relation to housing, the availability and accessibility of open space, and the general safety of the built environment all impact the physical, emotional, and social wellbeing of individuals in the community. As part of the land use planning and approval process, KCEHS provides input on practices to reduce environmental hazards and encourage healthy lifestyle choices among the residents of Kings County.





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DROP, DON'T FORCE SHARPS INTO CONTAINER. FORCING, COMPRESSION OR OVERFILLING CAN CAUSE CONTAINER PUNCTURE AND RESULT IN INJURY.

INFECTIOUS WASTE

SINGLE USE ONLY



Hazardous Materials & Medical Waste



Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)

There is a large volume and variety of hazardous materials that are generated, stored, transported, treated and disposed of throughout Kings County. These hazardous materials pose potential threats to human health and the environment. KCEHS is a designated Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), responsible for implementing a unified hazardous materials and hazardous waste management regulatory program. The primary goal of the CUPA is to ensure hazardous materials are handled properly, from generation to disposal. The division provides oversight of businesses that generate, treat, or store hazardous materials through permit and business plan review and approval, site inspections, and education. KCEHS also provides oversight for the remediation of contaminated sites.



Underground Storage Tanks

Underground storage tanks or pipes leaking gasoline or other hazardous substances can result in soil and groundwater contamination, which can be dangerous and costly to clean up. To prevent and monitor this issue, state law requires that underground storage tanks have permits and be monitored for leaks.

KCEHS enforces state and local underground tank regulations which include: the permitting of all underground storage tanks containing hazardous substances, construction standards for new tanks and piping, tank tightness testing requirements, monitoring standards for new and existing tanks, and closure requirements. Remedial measures are implemented when underground storage tanks are found to leak.

Aboveground Storage Tanks

Similar to underground storage tanks, aboveground tanks holding hazardous material may pose an environmental or public health threat if not properly operated and maintained. Aboveground tank owners and operators with storage capacity of 1,320 gallons or more of petroleum on a single site must:

- file a storage statement with KCEHS disclosing the contents of the tank(s),
- prepare a spill prevention control and countermeasure plan, and
- implement spill prevention measures accordingly.

Sites are subject to routine inspection by KCEHS to ensure compliance.



CUPA Cont.

Hazardous Materials Business Plans

Under state law, all industries and agricultural operations that store or handle specified quantities of hazardous materials must provide the Division with a hazardous materials business plan detailing the location and quantities of those materials. The information is then available to emergency responders such as firefighters and medical personnel.

Certain facilities that pose a potential hazard to the surrounding area in the event of a chemical release are also required to prepare a Risk Management Plan, which must be submitted to and approved by KCEHS.



Hazardous Waste Generators

Hazardous waste generators, such as auto shops and large scale home improvement stores (Lowe's, Home Depot) are routinely inspected to confirm that operations are handled in accordance with state law. This component of CUPA is carried out in conjunction with the Hazardous Materials Business Plans section.



California Accidental Release Protection (CalARP)

The purpose of the CalARP program is to prevent accidental releases of substances that can cause serious harm to the public and the environment, and to minimize the damage if releases do occur. This is accomplished by requiring businesses that handle more than a threshold quantity of hazardous materials to develop a Risk Management Plan (RMP). An RMP is a detailed analysis of the potential accident factors present at a business and the mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce this accident potential. The RMP contains:

- Safety information
- A hazard review
- Operating procedures
- Training requirements
- Maintenance requirements
- Compliance audits
- Incident investigation procedures

As the local CUPA, KCEHS determines the level of detail in the RMPs, reviews RMPs, conducts facility inspections, and provides public access to most of this information.

Common Hazardous Materials:

- Gas
- Diesel
- Propane
- Ammonia
- Latex Paint
- Used oil and fuel filters
- Chlorine



Medical Waste Management:

Through regular inspections, KCEHS provides oversight of the handling, storage, treatment, and disposal of medical waste to protect the public and the environment from unintended harm. KCEHS ensures all medical waste facilities, including hospitals and clinics, are in compliance with the Medical Waste Management Act.

The Division also provides education on proper storage and disposal of *household*-generated sharps and pharmaceutical waste, as well as free sharps containers for the public. As with large facilities, educating consumers helps to prevent needle-stick injuries, groundwater contamination, and accidental injury or poisoning from misused medications.

As a further measure of environmental and individual health protection, the Kings County Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office, now provides Kiosks throughout the County for safe disposal of sharps and pharmaceuticals.



DID YOU KNOW?

Sharps make up just 1% of the total waste generated by healthcare facilities, yet they are the leading source of disease transmission and injury when improperly handled.

Safe Disposal of Pharmaceuticals

Safely disposing of pharmaceuticals is not only environmentally responsible, but directly contributes to the health and safety of children and young adults. Discarded prescription drugs are often flushed down the toilet, where they can contaminate water sources and subsequently increase exposure for humans and wildlife. Taking leftover or unused pharmaceuticals to the drop-off sites provided by the County prevents environmental contamination, and can also help reduce accidental poisonings, an issue which disproportionately impacts children and the elderly. Take-back programs also help reduce drug use and abuse. In California, reported deaths involving opioid prescription medications have increased 16.5 percent since 2006, and use is increasing among teens and young adults, for whom these medications are often a gateway to illegal street drugs.

Body Art



A Growing Industry

The tattoo industry grosses about \$1.65 billion per year, and represents the 6th fastest growing industry in the American economy. There are an estimated 16,000 body artists and 21,000 tattoo studios operating in the US, and at least one new shop opens every day. Here in Kings County, there are 8 tattoo studios and 23 registered tattoo artists. As the profession and the popularity of tattoos continues to expand, KCEHS work to ensure the industry is held to high environmental health and safety standards.



What is KCEHS's Role?



AB 300, the Safe Body Art Act, establishes requirements for certain businesses involved in tattooing, branding, body piercing, and permanent cosmetics. The bill requires practitioners in these areas of body art to register with the county in which they practice, comply with statewide safety standards, and pay registration and inspection fees to the county health department. Body art facilities are inspected at least once annually and on a complaint-driven basis to ensure compliance with AB 300, as well as general safety and cleanliness standards.

Ongoing Safety Efforts



KCEHS's efforts to ensure body art facilities in Kings County remain safe and professional sometimes extends beyond individual tattoo shops, where artists are permitted and must follow strict health and safety guidelines. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) also monitor illegal tattooing by artists that are not permitted and/or tattooing from an unregulated area, such as their home. When these illegal operations are identified, EHOs issue violations and cease and desist orders. KCEHS also provides education to tattoo supply vendors (stores selling needles, ink, and machines), who often have little or no training on sterile handling, and may sell the products to minors and unpermitted artists.



Housing



Housing Regulation: Hotels, Motels, and Beyond

All residents of Kings County need safe, sanitary housing to maintain good health. The goal of the KCEHS housing program is two fold:

- 1) To eliminate or upgrade all deteriorated and dilapidated housing and ensure that existing housing is maintained in compliance with state housing law, and
- 2) To ensure all hotels and motels in Kings County are operated in a way that supports the health and wellbeing of their visitors.

The division accomplishes these goals through routine inspections of all 40 of the hotels and motels in Kings County, monitoring unsafe dwellings to assure they are unoccupied and (when necessary) destroyed, and investigating substandard housing complaints. In addition, KCEHS conducts lead investigations and lead testing for homes suspected of having lead based paints.



How Does Housing Impact Health?

There is much research being done into how housing impacts the health of residents, particularly children. Lisa Sturtevant, vice president for research at the National Housing Conference, cites improvements in asthma and a reduction in visits to the emergency room among children who move from substandard or unsafe housing conditions to clean, safe, well-maintained housing. For adults, there appears to be many physical health benefits, including reduced obesity and heart disease, along with improved mental health.

DID YOU KNOW?

Substandard Housing also results in injuries around the home, over 13.5 million nonfatal injuries each year, leading to 4 million emergency room visits and over 70,000 hospital admissions. Many of these injuries could be prevented with improved housing conditions.

Substandard Housing Complaints

KCEHS regulates specific parts of California state housing law, the California Health and Safety Code therein, and Kings County housing ordinances. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) inspect housing and issue notices of violation to the property owner when necessary. During inspections, EHOs assess key health and safety issues such as:

- *Lack of hot and cold water to plumbing fixtures*
- *Lack of adequate heating*
- *General dilapidation or improper maintenance*
- *Infestation of insects, vermin, or rodents*
- *Broken, rotted, split, or buckled exterior wall or roof coverings*
- *Defective or deteriorated flooring or floor supports*
- *Use of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors*

These same conditions, and others within the Code, are evaluated within hotels and motels as part of routine inspections.



DID YOU KNOW?

*According to the National Institutes of Health, “two million Americans occupy homes with **severe** physical problems, and an additional 4.8 million live in homes with moderate problems.”*

Lead-based Paint

According to the California Department of Public Health, lead poisoning is the most common environmental illness in California children. Children under six years old are at greatest risk of harmful health effects from lead poisoning because their brains and nervous systems are still forming. KCEHS helps to identify sources of existing or potential lead-poisoning in homes suspected of containing lead, through complaint- or referral-driven inspections and testing. Through this process, KCEHS enforces health and safety codes defining acceptable levels of lead and regulating its removal, helping to prevent lead poisoning in Kings County, and mitigate its harmful effects.





Emergency Operations Response

KCEHS as Emergency Responders

KCEHS mitigates public health risks from disasters such as wildfires, earthquakes and other emergencies, and plays a major role in disaster recovery efforts. The Kings County Area Plan for hazardous materials emergency response, developed by KCEHS, is one example of the guidance provided to staff on how to respond to such emergencies. The role of KCEHS staff in an emergency will vary according to the location, type, and severity of the situation. KCEHS's emergency response role focuses on food safety, vector surveillance, safe drinking water, waste management, and public outreach.



Emergency Response Partnerships

KCEHS works closely with the Kings County Office of Emergency Management to coordinate activities and services to the public. The Office of Emergency Management develops various preparedness plans such as the Emergency Operations Plan and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan in coordination with KCEHS, whose disaster-related role is response-oriented.

DID YOU KNOW?

KCEHS has a trained Terrorist Liaison Officer on staff; an individual that functions as a principal point of contact for a public safety agency in matters related to terrorism information.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE CONCERNS



Food Protection

In an emergency, KCEHS conducts field surveys to assess damage to food storage and handling facilities. KCEHS acts in a consultative capacity to food facilities, hospitals, feeding centers, and shelters to ensure proper food handling practices, and provides information to industry and the public regarding protection of perishable foods under emergency conditions. KCEHS also monitors food safety practices at emergency shelters and food distribution points.

Waste Management

KCEHS works with waste management entities affected by a disaster. The Division also processes emergency waivers and permits, reviews and approves the altering of existing permits, and oversees the establishment of temporary solid waste handling facilities. This process allows debris from a declared state or local emergency to be disposed of at a solid waste facility.

Safe Drinking Water

Following a public health emergency, KCEHS Environmental Health Officers assess damaged areas to determine if water services have been affected by a disaster. KCEHS assists in the assessment of compromised water systems, documents damage, and performs appropriate testing/sampling. The division also works with local public health partners and the media to inform residents of damaged water systems and works with water purveyors to issue boil water orders.

Vector Control

During a disaster, KCEHS assesses the potential for increases in fly, rodent and mosquito populations that may result from damage to the infrastructure. Damaged sewer systems, solid waste that cannot be properly disposed of, and stagnant water from broken water pipes are monitored, and the pests that they attract are controlled.



Occupational Health & Safety





KCEHS's Role in Occupational Health

The overall goal of the Occupational Health and Safety program is to prevent occupational injuries by controlling hazards in the workplace. The costs associated with occupational injuries and illnesses are much higher than the limited attention devoted to their prevention. The Division currently offers a wide variety of Occupational Health & Safety services to both the public and private sector upon request. Our services range from indoor air quality evaluations and environmental sampling to compliance audits and employee health and safety training. All services in this program are consultative rather than enforcement oriented.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012, 4,628 workers were killed on the job in the United States, and an estimated 50,000 died from occupational diseases, resulting in a loss of 150 workers each day from hazardous working conditions. Over the past four years, the job fatality rate has largely been unchanged with a rate of 3.4 deaths per 100,000 workers in 2012.



The health of employees has a direct impact on the health of a business. By investing in prevention of illness and accidents related to occupational hazards, businesses can increase competitiveness, profitability, and employees motivation.

Maintaining A High Standard of Occupational Health and Safety:

- Helps demonstrate corporate social responsibility
- Protects and enhances brand image and value
- Helps maximize productivity of workers
- Enhances employees' commitment to the business
- Helps build a more competent, healthier workforce
- Can reduce business costs and disruption





Community Outreach & Education

Health Education in Environmental Health Services

KCEHS is unique among environmental health departments across the state for several reasons. One is that the Environmental Health Officers within KCEHS are generalists, meaning each of them can offer support and education to the community on a wide variety of environmental health issues. While each may have a focus area, they work collaboratively to share information and ensure the whole team is apprised of issues and regulations within every area the division covers.

A second distinctive characteristic of the department is the inclusion of health education programming within EHS. The Kings County Tobacco Program, the Kings Carseat Program, and other health education initiatives that address environmentally-based public health issues are housed within KCEHS. This structure helps maintain a focus on prevention, and broadens the scope and breadth of information and education we can provide to the public on environmental health issues.



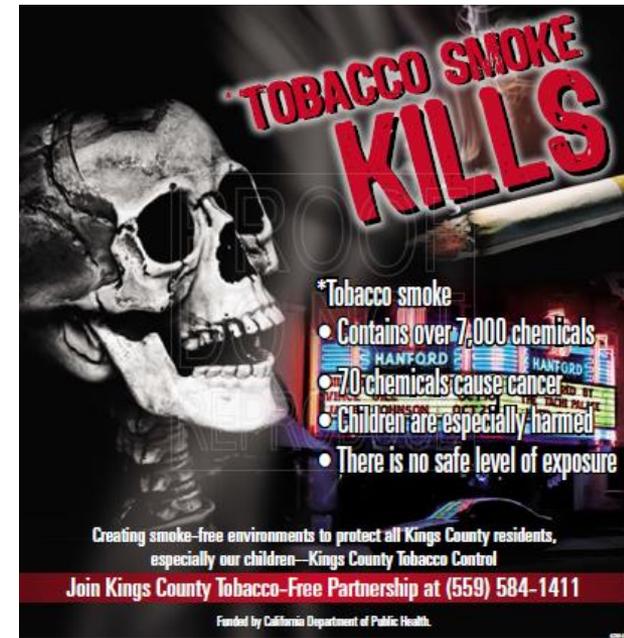
>> DID YOU KNOW?

Almost every program area within KCEHS has a community outreach or education component. This helps to strengthen relationships within the community and prevent negative environmental health impacts beyond the scope of regulation.



Kings County Tobacco Control

The Kings County Tobacco Control Program works to promote healthy, tobacco-free environments for all residents. Through education and collaboration, the program seeks to inform residents about the dangerous impact of tobacco products and offer solutions for a healthier community. The Tobacco program is a Proposition 99 (tobacco tax) funded initiative, managed by the California Department of Public Health on the state level. Currently, the program is focusing on supporting the creation of smoke-free environments, reducing exposure to tobacco advertising, and engaging youth in tobacco education efforts.



Tobacco Advertising

Over a million dollars a day is spent on tobacco advertising and promotion in the U.S. According to the California Department of Public Health, exposure to such advertising “increases the likelihood that youth will start to smoke,” while promotional discounts make tobacco more accessible to youth, whose use is largely price sensitive. KCEHS seeks to help create an environment within Kings County that supports youth in making positive, healthy decisions. By working with retailers, law enforcement, and community leaders, we hope to reduce the amount of negative advertising youth are exposed to within Kings County.

Second-hand Smoke

The tobacco program has recently launched a public advertising campaign to raise awareness around the dangers of secondhand smoke (SHS). SHS is a known human carcinogen, containing more than 70 chemicals known to cause cancer. Children and teens, whose brains are still developing, are most vulnerable to the impact of nicotine, the main neurotoxin in SHS and secondhand aerosol (from e-cigarettes). By addressing SHS exposure in public environments, such as downtown events and public spaces, the KCEHS Tobacco Program hopes to contribute to a safer and healthier Kings County.



Kings County Tobacco-Free Partnership

The Kings County Tobacco-Free Partnership is the coalition arm of the Kings County Tobacco Control Program. The partnership is a committed group of residents and professionals working together to reduce the harmful impact of tobacco in Kings County. We accomplish this goal through increased community awareness, collaboration, and education.



» Kings Car Seat Program

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, car accidents are the number one killer of children ages 1-12. While using the proper restraint system for a child's age and size can *greatly* reduce their risk of injury in an accident, an estimated 9 out of 10 child restraint systems are used improperly. KCEHS offers a free car-seat education program for Kings County residents, taught by a nationally-certified Child Passenger Safety Technician. Upon successful completion of the 2-hour course, participants have the opportunity to buy a voucher for a discounted car- or booster-seat, helping to ensure their child is appropriately restrained for his or her age and size. Courses are held year-round in Hanford, Lemoore, Avenal, and Corcoran, and available in both English and Spanish.



Kings River Clean-up

Each year KCEHS holds a Kings River Clean-Up event, bringing together youth groups and various community partners to draw attention to the negative impact litter and illegal dumping can have on one of the most treasured and beautiful green spaces in the county. Youth and adult leaders spend the day learning about the impact of litter on their community, and helping remove large quantities of debris from the river bank.



The Division of Environmental Health Services is one of four divisions of the Kings County Department of Public Health. Our goal is to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment by working with the community to prevent, solve and mitigate environmental health problems.

Thank you for your continued support



**Kings County Department of Public Health
Division of Environmental Health Services
April 2015**