

# NALBOH Thanks Engaged Boards of Health

by Marita Chilton, NALBOH Project Coordinator

Across the country, boards of health are learning about and using evidence-based interventions found within The Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Guide). NALBOH would like to recognize these boards of health and their health agencies for their hard work and dedication to improving community health outcomes:

- Board of Health of Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency (MI)
- Central Michigan District Board of Health (MI)
- Ingham County Board of Health (MI)
- Mid-Michigan District Board of Health (MI)
- Monroe County Board of Health (MI)
- Clay County Board of Health (MO)
- Jefferson County Board of Health (MO)
- Kansas City Board of Health (MO)
- Ozark County Board of Health (MO)
- Reynolds County Board of Health (MO)
- Alamance County Board of Health (NC)
- Chatham County Board of Health (NC)
- Durham County Board of Health (NC)
- Forsyth County Board of Health (NC)

- Granville-Vance District Board of Health (NC)
- Clark County Board of Health (WA)
- King County Board of Health (WA)
- Kitsap County Board of Health (WA)
- Snohomish County Board of Health (WA)
- Spokane County Regional Board of Health (WA)

As we continue to follow the enthusiastic work of these boards of health, as well as others around the country who are promoting and using evidence-based approaches, we would like to highlight just a few of the things these boards are doing:

- The Central Michigan District Board of Health (MI) supports the intentions of the health agency to integrate several Community Guide topic areas into their community based collaborative, *Together We Can*, an initiative that seeks to improve health and promote wellness in the six county district.
- Reynolds County Board of Health (MO) is using the Community Guide as a tool to orient a youth organization to public

health and has plans to encourage these youth to continue using the Community Guide to engage in outreach to the community.

- The Chatham County Board of Health (NC) continues to deal with a lead issue in their community; a leadership team used the science of evidence-based public health to justify to their county commissioners why the lead program could not be removed from the health agency budget.
- The Spokane County Regional Board of Health (WA) has plans to use the Community Guide to supplement regular health officer and program updates and will continue to use evidence to assist in prioritization of efforts during tough economic times.

NALBOH would like to thank all of the individuals who have dedicated their time and effort to promote evidence-based public health and those who use evidence-based approaches to improve the health of their communities.

## Model Aquatic Health Code Promotes Safe Swimming and Pools

by Carrie Hribar, NALBOH Project Coordinator

Summer is quickly approaching, and with summer comes the busiest time of year for public swimming pools. While swimming is supposed to be fun, pools and water parks can present very real challenges to community health: Waterborne disease outbreaks are on the rise and fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1 to 14 years.

The good news is that local public health, especially boards of health, can play a role in reducing these threats and keeping swimming healthy. May 23-29, 2011 marks the seventh annual Recreational Water Illness and Injury (RWII) Prevention Week, an initiative spearheaded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's epidemiology, environmental health, and injury prevention staff. Recreational Water Illness and Injury Week is a great time for boards of health to examine their jurisdiction's health codes for pools and other aquatic venues.

The Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) is a great asset for boards of health. MAHC is a collaborative effort by public health and industry professionals to develop guidance

based on the latest science and best practices for protecting families and communities from costly and unnecessary waterborne diseases and injuries. Developing evidence-based codes can take a significant amount of time and expertise. By adopting the Model Aquatic Health Code, jurisdictions can benefit from this expertise without having to go through a similar time and resource-intensive process.

The complete code will be available by the end of 2011 but modules on specific topics are being released for public comment as they are available. Boards of health should encourage their environmental health units to review the code and provide input to this important initiative. Some localities have already adopted sections of the code that are available if they have a limited opening for code revisions.

Local boards of health are key partners for adopting recreational water policies and programs that reduce risks to community health and keep swimming fun. Check out the following websites to learn more or sign up for email updates to stay up-to-date on these issues:

- Model Aquatic Health Code [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/pools/mahc/](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/pools/mahc/)
- Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week [www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/rwi\\_prevention\\_week.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/rwi_prevention_week.htm)

### IN THE NEXT NEWSBRIEF . . .

The 3rd Quarter 2011 issue of the NALBOH NEWSBRIEF will feature articles on the use of community health assessments. A community health assessment entails collecting data on the community's health and then establishing priorities for improving the health of the assessed population. The results of the assessment are very valuable to the board of health as it provides direction on what the public health issues are in the community. What actions has your board of health taken as a result of a community health assessment? Share your successes today with NALBOH. Email Mark Schultz ([mark@nalboh.org](mailto:mark@nalboh.org)) or call the NALBOH office for more information about submitting an article to the NEWSBRIEF.