

**Public health inspectors aim to keep you healthy and safe**

**National Environmental Public Health Week marked in York Jan. 15 to 21**

Each year, the third week in January is designated as National Environmental Public Health Week. This year, York is joining communities across Canada in recognizing and celebrating the services provided by public health inspectors in the region.

The 2007 National Environmental Public Health Week theme is Climate Change. Climate change is due to the earth's warming caused by increasing concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions in our atmosphere.

There is growing scientific evidence that suggests if the current greenhouse effect continues as science predicts, it will have a negative impact on human health and the environment.

Through education and enforcement, York Region public health inspectors work diligently to promote and protect the health of residents in their community by fostering a safe environment.

Specifically, York Region public health inspectors are responsible for:

- Inspection of food premises (restaurants, cafeterias);
- Monitoring of public beaches and public drinking water systems for water quality;

- Infection control inspections of long-term care facilities, child care facilities and personal service settings (spas, nail parlours, tattoo and piercing premises);
- Investigation of animal bite cases;
- Public pool, spa and wading pool inspections;
- Inspection of child care playgrounds;
- Indoor and outdoor air quality, environmental inspections and investigations;
- Disease investigation and outbreak management;
- Health promotion and education initiatives;
- Enforcement activities.

Below are some of the 2006 public health inspector's achievements, reported by the Region:

- Conducted 13,942 food premise inspections;
- Certified 1,120 food handlers in the Proton Training Program. This program teaches staff in food premises safe food handling preparation to reduce food-borne illnesses;
- Responded to 1,190 safe water inquiries through Health Connection
- Issued 38 boil water advisories/orders;
- Monitored 18 public beaches for water quality from June to September;
- Inspected 1,049 public pool/spas/wading pool

- facilities;
- Conducted 2,970 infection control inspections of personal service settings, long-term care homes and child care facilities;
- Investigated 890 animal bite cases;
- Investigated 819 cases of enteric diseases (as of November 30, 2006);
- Larvicided approximately 77,000 catch basins four times throughout the West Nile virus season;
- Developed a hand-washing education package for local elementary schools to promote hand-washing as an effective infection control strategy. This program meets school curriculum and has been well received by the schools involved;
- Coordinated and collaborated with other stakeholders to deliver community health promotion events and activities such as: The York Children's Water Festival, iWalk to School Campaign, 20/20 The Way To Clean Air, GTA Idle Free Campaign, Rabies and Dog Bite Awareness Campaigns, PROTON Food Handler Safety Course, and Eat Smart! Ontario's Healthy Restaurant Program;
- Provided thousands of residents with no cost private-water sampling bottles and testing. As well as educational, interpretative and consultative result services.

To learn more about a

career in public health inspection, visit the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors Web site.

To speak with a public health inspector or for more information on this or any other health-related topic,

contact York Region Health Services Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or visit [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)



**A WEE BIT OF SCOTLAND IN NOBLETON**

Councillor Jeff Laidlaw and Mayor Margaret Black were on hand Saturday to help officially open The Scottish Nook on Highway 27, just north of King Road in Nobleton. Owned and operated by Judy and Gerry Duffy, the store actually opened for business last month, offering Scottish baked goods, specialty meats and gift items. Mr. Duffy, who hails from Motherwell in Scotland, said he's planning to have tables outside the store in the spring, creating a meeting place for this "old-fashioned country village store."

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