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TCHD also implemented health inspection report e-filing which attaches the report to the facility’s database record and hard copies no longer need to be filed by business support staff. This new approach eliminates these multiple steps, brings increased time efficiency, and is more customer-friendly to our operators.

The EH Division made a significant change that became effective May 1, 2016. The EH inspectors are generalists and work in many programs, including restaurant inspections, childcare facility inspections, tattoo facility inspections, swimming pool inspections, and on-site wastewater treatment system (septic system) inspections. However, after receiving feedback from EH staff, a decision was made to limit the number of programs staff are involved with in an effort to increase efficiency and depth of knowledge.

A group of five inspectors from different TCHD EH offices were selected to move into the water-related programs and the remaining 29 inspectors would comprise the Consumer Protection program for the Division.

The Consumer Protection program has a focus on restaurants, childcare, disease control, vector, solid waste and landfill complaints, and several other programs. The Water program focuses on on-site wastewater treatment system permitting and inspections, non-community water system inspections for facilities that use well water, swimming pool inspections, and Environmental Site Assessment requests.
Awards

EH received a Promising Practice Award from the National Association of City and County Health Officials for our Retail Food Program Quality Improvement (QI) process that was undertaken in 2015! While we started with a goal of reducing our follow-up inspection rate through process improvement, the Lean process created a wealth of additional program improvements along the way. It opened the door for a new approach to retail food establishment inspections, incorporating a more appropriate risk-based methodology. This methodology allows our inspectors to focus valuable time and energy into those retail food establishments that pose the greatest risks to unsafe food practices, and allows inspectors more latitude for educational opportunities within these establishments. This has fostered new and better working relationships with facility operators and allows buy-in from both parties to achieve food safety compliance.

As the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has observed the integration and positive outcomes of this practice into TCHD’s retail food program, it has adopted the risk based methodology created by TCHD through the Lean process. This methodology has now been distributed and encouraged to other health departments statewide and in turn, is promoting uniformity of application throughout the state—a goal that the state of Colorado has set as a priority, and is supported as a Colorado winnable battle.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Consumer Protection programs focus on restaurants, childcares, disease control, vectors that may carry disease, body art, industrial hygiene, lead exposure, consumer complaints and several other programs.

Body Art

Body art procedures are intrusive to subcutaneous tissue and poor sanitation and hygienic practices could result in the transmission of Staphylococcus aureus infection, Tetanus, Mycobacterium, or blood-borne pathogens like HIV, hepatitis B or C.

It is the goal of the TCHD Body Art program to reduce or eliminate these risks to public health through regulation, inspection, education, and enforcement.

TCHD officially has its own regulation for Body Art Establishments. The Tri-County Health Department Rules and Regulations for Body Art Establishments (BA-16) went into effect on January 1, 2017. As part of the adoption of the regulation, Body Art Establishments are now required to obtain a license from TCHD to operate in Adams, Arapahoe or Douglas Counties.

Adopting a local regulation can help to reduce the amount of time TCHD staff spend collecting fees due to the formal structure required for licensing and enforcement of the regulation requirements. In addition, compliance issues can also be controlled in a structured way through administrative hearing process and civil penalty assessments. The interest that the industry expressed through informal interviews during inspections regarding the adoption of the local regulation indicated support for a licensure process which could demonstrate that the necessary steps had been taken to operate in an official capacity that meets established sanitary standards.
In Colorado and the continental United States, rabies reservoir species include bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes. Bat variant rabies is found throughout Colorado and skunk variant rabies has emerged on the Eastern Plains and eastern parts of the Front Range. Since 2007, rabies infections in Colorado are of concern for other wild mammals as well as domestic pets because of the “spillover” infections caused by the skunk rabies epidemic in Colorado. Rabies surveillance in Colorado has detected spillover infections in domestic cats, coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions, and livestock. In 2016, TCHD tested 179 specimens for rabies; 16 of those specimens tested positive for rabies. Skunks were the predominant species that tested positive for rabies with 10 positive specimens; six bats were also identified as positive after being tested by TCHD.

TCHD’s working relationships with external entities continued in 2016, and included outreach to the local animal control agencies as well as the Colorado Parks and Wildlife; TCHD sponsored three seminars where 47 animal control and wildlife personnel from 16 different agencies participated in training on “Animal Control and Public Health”.

Tri-County Health Department received a Model Practice Award from the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) for their submission: “Rabies Prevention: A Multi-jurisdictional Collaborative Between Public Health and Community Partners.” The model practice highlighted the efforts that the Environmental Health Division and the Epidemiology, Planning and Communication Division began in late 2014. This continues today as a collaborative effort between the divisions and local animal control agencies to provide training, bring efficiency to bite reporting, and making decisions around roles and responsibilities for each agency involved in rabies control and prevention.

On June 9, 2016, the State Legislature passed House Bill 16-1401, which amended the Colorado Revised Statutes that sets license fees for Retail Food Establishments (RFE). Fees for RFEs have increased by 30% beginning September 1, 2016 and are in effect until December 31, 2017. Beginning January 1, 2018, fees will increase another 10%, and an additional 10% increase will be in effect by January 1, 2019. The increase in revenue will allow EH to add needed FTE resources to the program. The amended statute also requires that at least 70% of Colorado retail food programs meet the Food and Drug Administration Voluntary National Standards. These Standards define criteria that public health agencies must meet in order to be compliant with the ideal performance of regulatory actions.

In addition, TCHD has been an active participant in the stakeholder process for the introduction of a standardized restaurant ratings system in the state of Colorado. This ratings system aims to enhance the knowledge of the public to make informed decisions about where they eat and what food safety risks (if any) may be posed at their favorite dining spots. This process has enabled regulators, industry, and consumers to work together to bring about a communication system for food safety risk based on individual inspections in retail food establishments. In turn, this ratings system will undoubtedly drive improved food safety knowledge for food workers and the public alike.
Vector Control

Bubonic plague, Hantavirus, Tularemia, West Nile Virus (WNV) are just a few of the diseases investigated and monitored by the TCHD Vector team. The team monitors these diseases by performing on-site environmental health assessments, responding to dead animal calls from the public, and collecting samples to monitor potential diseases in the environment that could be spread to humans, domestic animals, and livestock.

Hantavirus (Sin Nombre virus) is an unusual virus contracted by inhaling aerosolized rodent urine and feces. With a mortality rate of 38%, the TCHD Vector team treats each case seriously. In 2016, the Vector team and Disease Intervention Specialist partners in the Epidemiology, Planning, and Communication Division performed an on-site environmental health assessment of a farm in Brighton, CO where a seasonal worker contracted and recovered from Hantavirus. Working closely with the farm owner, the TCHD Vector team made recommendations to improve the quality of health for the seasonal workers in the future. The result: safer living conditions for the workers for the summer of 2017! The efforts by TCHD on this investigation were published in the January 2017 issue of the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

Last year, TCHD offices received 76 dead animal calls. These calls led to three on-site investigations of prairie dog colony die-offs. Prairie dogs are a reservoir for plague and the Vector team responds on-site by collecting fleas to test for the disease, applying insecticides as needed, and monitoring prairie dog activity post-mitigation.

The team also provides educational materials for nearby residents on how to protect themselves and their pets from contracting plague.

In 2016, Colorado ranked fifth in the nation for the most WNV cases and third for the most deaths from WNV. Since WNV arrived in 2003, the TCHD Vector team has been monitoring mosquito populations for the presence of WNV. The team sets weekly traps, counts and identifies mosquitoes, and submits vector species to the CDPHE lab for WNV testing. Last year, 27,515 mosquitoes were collected, 36% of which were two main vector species: Culex tarsalis and Culex pipiens.
Today at least 4 million households have children living in them that are being exposed to lead. There are approximately half a million U.S. children ages 1-5 with blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter, the level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated. Lead exposure can affect nearly every system in the body. Since lead exposure often occurs with no obvious symptoms, it frequently goes unrecognized.

The TCHD Lead Zeppelins team, a collaboration of the TCHD Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Planning and Communication, Nutrition, and Nutrition Divisions, works to address the issue of lead poisoning in the children living in our jurisdiction by developing new strategies to educate the medical community and the public on the dangers of lead poisoning. In 2016, the TCHD Lead team investigated 85 reported cases of children that had a confirmed elevated blood lead level.

During the investigation, the parents of the cases are interviewed to try to determine possible sources of lead exposure and are provided with educational information on potential lead sources, the possible health effects of lead exposure, and are encouraged to re-test the child to monitor lead levels.

In addition, if the situation is warranted, TCHD offers to conduct a full investigation including a home assessment to help families determine a possible source of lead exposure. We’re hoping that with these efforts, the number of children in Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties with elevated blood lead levels will be reduced.

The Industrial Hygiene program also continued to provide support for the Public Health Regional Radon Roadmap effort, a collaborative of five local health agencies designed to decrease exposure to radon through policy or system changes, funded through the Cancer, Cardiovascular and Chronic Pulmonary Disease (CCPD) funds (state tobacco tax revenues). TCHD EH participated in its second year of efforts to support radon education and mitigation efforts with key stakeholders: real estate professionals, current and future home buyers and sellers, home builders, building officials, and local elected officials.

Lastly, the IH program continued to explore a potential program with the Colorado Healthy Housing Coalition to conduct environmental health home assessments for asthma triggers for asthmatic children covered by Medicaid. In 2016, EH staff has conducted approximately 24 home visits to identify asthma triggers at the request of Denver Health and Clinica and will continue to work as part of the Coalition in hopes of securing reimbursement from Medicaid as a funding mechanism for the program.
Did you know Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs) can be spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols, or having contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, water play areas, and other aquatic venues? These types of illnesses can cause various infections including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic and wound infections.

TCHD works to prevent RWIs by educating aquatic facility operators and conducting inspections of public aquatic facilities in Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas Counties. In 2016, TCHD conducted 292 routine inspections and 261 chemical checks to verify compliance with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Regulations Pertaining to Swimming Pools and Mineral Baths. TCHD also investigated 28 complaints from the public regarding aquatic facilities.

In 2016, EH engaged in a collaborative effort with the Colorado Directors of Environmental Health, Jefferson County Public Health, and El Paso County Public Health, as well as partnership from the National Swimming Pool Foundation and the National Association of County and City Health Officials, to move an initiative forward for the revision of Colorado Revised Statutes 25-5-801 (Swimming Areas) and the Colorado Swimming Pool and Mineral Bath Regulations. In preparation for a regulation revision, draft legislation has been developed to modify the current state statute to include additional definitions of aquatic facility types, an updated reference of authority of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to establish and enforce sanitary standards for swimming pools and public baths.

The completion of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC), developed through a national collaborative effort led by the Centers for Disease Control in partnership with public health, industry, and academic partners from across the United States, provides a strong working foundation to move forward with a local regulation revision. While the current Colorado regulation has served the State for almost 20 years, there are many areas that need to be updated to reflect the today’s technology, designs, facility functions, and scientific research of aquatic venues.
An improperly designed, installed, or maintained Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) can impact ground and surface water supplies, and can also create a health nuisance. TCHD’s Regulation O-14 governs the design, installation, inspection, and use of OWTS in the TCHD jurisdiction. The TCHD Water program has been busy with an increase in OWTS related permitting activities in the area. In 2016, TCHD led all local health departments in the number of permits issued with 405 permits for new systems, 177 for system repairs, and 911 Use Permits.

TCHD continues to increase efforts to better educate and inform homeowners on the proper use and maintenance of their OWTS. In 2016 TCHD revised the current OWTS Homeowner Guidelines which is distributed to all new homeowners with homes serviced by OWTS. Along with this educational resource, TCHD responds to numerous questions from the general public on their OWTS and in 2016 investigated 127 wastewater related complaints.
In alignment with the TCHD Strategic Plan Goal 8, Strategy (a), to support community resiliency through promotion and protection of water quality, water supply, reuse, and conservation opportunities, the Water program has made efforts toward achieving this goal through the development of educational materials on water quality, well testing, and well permitting in Colorado, and through presentations given to school food program directors in Adams County, a rural homeowners’ association in Douglas County and real estate professionals from the Tri-County area.

In addition, fact sheets on private well testing, bacteria in well water, water hardness, lead in drinking water and rainwater harvesting have been created and are posted on TCHD’s website.

“Graywater” is wastewater that can be put to a beneficial use. Sources of graywater include bathroom and laundry room sinks, bathtubs, showers and washing machines. It does not include wastewater from toilets, urinals, kitchen sinks, dishwashers or non-laundry utility sinks. In response to some local interest in graywater policy, TCHD has initiated work on a draft model graywater ordinance/resolution for any city or county interested in implementing a graywater program.

The draft ordinance/resolution focuses on the direct reuse of laundry graywater to subsurface irrigation as this reuse of graywater is the most straightforward to implement and administer. Aside from drafting a model ordinance/resolution, significant work will need to be done to help educate the public and other stakeholders such as developers and homebuilders about the benefits of installing a graywater system.

TCHD Water program staff is assisting with Source Water Protection Plans for Sedalia and Castle Rock, and with a Hardness Advisory Committee in Adams County to address potential remedies for excessive levels of calcium carbonates in a local water supply.

The 2016 Sanitary Survey season was successful in ensuring that all 17 non-community water systems that were inspected met state regulations and requirements.
SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

The TCHD jurisdiction is home to a variety of active solid and hazardous waste disposal sites and two EPA designated Superfund cleanup sites, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA) and Lowry Landfill.

Lowry Landfill

TCHD has provided oversight of the Lowry Landfill Superfund site for decades in many different capacities such as responding to citizen complaints, conducting solid waste and air quality inspections, reviewing technical documents, and providing input into the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund Five-Year Reviews.

The Superfund Five-Year Reviews are prepared by the EPA to evaluate the implementation and performance of the site remedies to determine if they remain protective of human health and the environment. The Lowry site has had 3 Five-Year Reviews and has been found to be protective. The 4th Five-Year Review will be completed by the EPA in 2017.

Since 2006, TCHD and the Responsible Parties have sampled private drinking water wells north of the site along East Jewell Avenue for general field parameters such as nitrate, fluoride, hardness and specific conductance. TCHD observes and provides oversight that the sampling for 1,4-dioxane is conducted in accordance with site specific monitoring plans.

1,4-Dioxane is a chemical of concern that has been found off-site at low levels but above the current CDPHE groundwater standard of 0.35 micrograms per liter. Sampling of these wells is done to provide assurances to the well owners that are proximal to the shallow groundwater plume that their drinking water does not contain 1,4-dioxane. The private wells north of the site have tested non-detect (ND) for 1,4-dioxane.
Tri-County Health Department has been involved in the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA) clean-up for over three decades in a variety of capacities. Wastes that were generated at the RMA during production years were disposed of using widely accepted practices of the time which later lead to the discovery of contaminated groundwater. In 1987 the RMA was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) of Superfund Sites.

Over the years TCHD has been involved in many of the remediation projects at the RMA including oversight of the construction of the hazardous landfills that were built on-site to properly contain the wastes that were found on the property. Much of the remediation at the RMA is now completed.

TCHD monitors off-post private wells north and northwest of the Arsenal. Each summer a selection of off-post, private wells are chosen for routine sampling as an effort to help track the groundwater contamination plumes north and northwest of the Arsenal property. The main chemical that is sampled for is Diisopropylmethylphosphonate (DIMP) which is a waste by-product of chemical weapons manufacturing processes.

TCHD continues regulatory oversight of ongoing and completed remediation activities and provides an annual report on our activities to the Adams County Commissioners.

Today, about two-thirds of the former RMA property has been transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is one of the largest urban refuges in the country. It is home to many types of wildlife including deer, coyotes, prairie dogs, eagles, bison, burrowing owls and black-footed ferrets.
The Household Chemical Roundup (HCR) program serves the residents by providing an opportunity to dispose and recycle hazardous chemicals from their homes in a safe, legal, and environmentally-sound manner. The HCR program in Adams and Douglas Counties provides an appropriate outlet for wastes that might otherwise end up in our creeks, storm water systems, sanitary sewers, and septic systems, or disposed of illegally on public or private property.

Additionally, decreasing and removing hazardous products from residential homes reduces the risk of fire hazards and the potential for accidental poisonings. Throughout the year, the HCR Program provides information regarding the best practices to reduce the generation of household hazardous waste (HHW), including the most current methods to recycle and dispose of items.

In 2016, during the five HCR events, 3,449 vehicles (an estimated 3,698 households) dropped-off 478,339 pounds of waste. As an option to the one-day events currently provided, permanent HHW sites are being proposed by the TCHD HCR program to each county to serve as a more convenient option for residents; these sites could also aid in addressing hard-to-recycle waste streams such as electronics, appliances, mattresses, etc., in a more direct manner.
The Land Use and Built Environment program works with local government agencies, community organizations and special districts to encourage health-promoting considerations in policies and projects that shape the built environment. We continue to utilize and advocate for a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach to land use, transportation, and built environment policy development. HiAP is a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across sectors, and at all levels, to improve the health of all communities and people.

TCHD’s ongoing upstream policy development and system change advocacy has spurred tremendous interest at the local level. TCHD’s work, over the last ten years, raising awareness of the public health implications on built environment patterns is paying off. More communities are interested in actively collaborating with TCHD on projects to pursue health-promoting policies.

As an example, in 2016, the Cities of Northglenn and Thornton adopted a new station area plan for the 112th Ave station that includes many health-promoting policies such as the prioritization of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, increased access to recreational opportunities and promotion of greater access to healthy food options. The planning process was a regional initiative between the City of Northglenn and the City of Thornton since the station sits on the border of the two cities. TCHD provided technical assistance, health data and best practices to optimize health considerations in the planning process.

One of the foundational functions of the Land Use Program is to respond to referral requests for land development applications in our three counties and many of the cities within TCHD’s service area. Over the last several years, the LU Program has seen a steady 10 to 15% increase in the number of land development case referrals and a total increase in number of cases of 54% over the last four years.
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AT A GLANCE

In support of the TCHD Strategic Plan, the Environmental Health Division was active in the participation of Goal 8: Improve and Expand Efforts to Promote Healthy Human Environments and worked closely with other Goal areas to improve population health. Specific examples include:

• As part of the Cancer, Cardiovascular and Chronic Pulmonary Disease Grant (CCPD), TCHD continued its partnership with Boulder County and three other Front Range health departments (Denver, Jefferson and Broomfield) on a 3-year regional radon grant designed to promote adoption and implementation of evidence-based methods to reduce radon exposure. After initial focus groups were held with various stakeholders including Realtors, building officials, home builders, and new homebuyers and sellers, a communication plan was developed and executed for outreach efforts with these groups with the goal of reducing the number of homes in the region in which occupants are exposed to radon.

• TCHD completed significant work towards meeting all requirements of the Food and Drug Administration Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standard 5 which pertains to Foodborne Illness and Food Defense Preparedness and Response. Meeting this standard strengthens our already well developed policies and procedures through a more systematic approach for the detection, investigation, response, documentation and analysis of food-related incidents involving illness, injury, and unintentional or deliberate food contamination.

• In promoting Health in All Policies, TCHD worked collaboratively with three other local health departments to cultivate partner support for health promotion in the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Metro Vision. The Metro Vision is regional plan that provides an aspirational vision, objectives and action steps for local and regional initiatives for future development in the Denver region. For the first time in Metro Vision’s history, community health is incorporated into the vision, the objectives, the action steps, and the metrics for the regional plan. Over the 5-year planning process, TCHD provided technical expertise and review throughout plan development, and coordinated local health department leadership to ensure health remained a focus in the recent update of Metro Vision.
### Environmental Health Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Health Program</th>
<th>Inspection Type</th>
<th>Adams</th>
<th>Arapahoe</th>
<th>Douglas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Protection</td>
<td>Total Retail Food Inspections</td>
<td>2802</td>
<td>4479</td>
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<td>Retail Food Facilities Dismissed from the Enforcement Process</td>
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<td>Food Safety training classes (Paid Service)</td>
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<td>Child Care</td>
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<td>Pools and Aquatic Venues</td>
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<td>Body Art</td>
<td>Total Body Art Inspections</td>
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<td>Disease</td>
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<td>Wastewater</td>
<td>Total Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Inspections</td>
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<td>178</td>
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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>Arapahoe</th>
<th>Douglas</th>
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<td>Land Use</td>
<td>Total Land Use Plan Reviews</td>
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<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td># of landfill construction inspections</td>
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<td># of new reports of Meth labs</td>
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<td>3,450</td>
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<td>Paint products - recycled latex paint (Lbs.)</td>
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<td>Solid Waste (HCR)</td>
<td>Tires (each)</td>
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<td>660</td>
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<td>Vector</td>
<td># of specimens (+) positive for plague</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Vector</td>
<td># of animals (+) for tularemia</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Vector</td>
<td># of human (+) positive for WNV</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal Control</td>
<td># of animals (+) for rabies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Environmental Health Complaints

* Animal Bites include animal vs. animal and animal vs. human. Industrial Hygiene includes asbestos, chemical exposure, indoor air, lead, mold, noise, radon. Vector includes bed bugs, cockroaches, lice/scabies, mosquito, rodent, prairie dog colony. Wastewater includes biosolids, OWTS, public, septage, sewage spills, stormwater. Retail Food does not include suspect foodborne illness complaints.
The Environmental Health Division is funded through a variety of revenue sources including fees, grants and contracts, and general funds. The largest program of the Environmental Health Division is the Retail Food Program and is partially funded through license fees as well as from general funds. The Environmental Health Division also received state funding through the Cancer, Cardiovascular and Chronic Pulmonary Disease grant for the Public Health Regional Radon Roadmap collaboration, a CDPHE grant (CDC funded) for elevated blood lead level investigations, and State Indoor Radon Grant funding for radon testing in child care centers. The majority of the division funding goes directly to staffing of our programs followed by indirect and operational costs.