



**February
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A Drop of News...

..from CDC's Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch (WDPB)

A Drop of News is a forum for highlighting state and local public health activities related to waterborne diseases and outbreaks and for sharing informal updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) programs about waterborne diseases, outbreaks, and other water-related disease prevention initiatives.

Welcome to the first *A Drop of News* for 2012! On page 2, meet WDPB's new drinking water epidemiologist, Julia Gargano, and learn about resources for National Ground Water Awareness Week 2012. Read about the Healthy Swimming Video Contest winner, and get a preview of Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week 2012. On page 3, learn about Ohio's multi-agency response to harmful algal blooms in 2010. See page 4 for an update on the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) and for CDC-specific information about waterborne disease outbreak contacts and related links.

Email NORSWater@cdc.gov if you have an idea for a future article! To read previous issues, visit http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/statistics/wbdoss/drop_of_news. Thank you for your feedback and contributions to *A Drop of News* in 2011.

Actions and Alerts!

- 2007-2008 national waterborne disease outbreak surveillance data were published in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) on September 23, 2011. Find these and previous MMWR surveillance summaries for recreational water and drinking water outbreaks on the Healthy Swimming website at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/statistics/wbdoss/surveillance.html>.
- The deadline to review and provide input on the Regulatory Program Administration module of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) is February 5, 2011. To provide comment on this and future modules, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/pools/mahc/structure-content/>.

Mark Your Calendars!

WASH Webinar:
February 21, 2012

National Ground Water Awareness Week:
March 11-17, 2012

World Water Day:
March 22, 2012

WASH Webinar:
April 17, 2012

National Drinking Water Week:
May 6-12, 2012

Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week:
May 22-28, 2012





Please welcome WDPB's new domestic drinking water epidemiologist, Julia Gargano! Julia has taken over for Joan Brunkard, who has transitioned to a new position focused on cholera in Haiti. Julia earned her MS and PhD in epidemiology from Michigan State University, where she conducted research on chronic diseases and reproductive health. Julia joined CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) in 2009, assigned to the Chronic Viral Diseases Branch. As an EIS officer, she applied epidemiologic methods to diverse public health problems, ranging from human papillomavirus and cervical cancer in the U.S. to HIV/AIDS mortality in Kenya. During EIS, Julia became interested in domestic drinking water issues while leading an Epi-Aid investigation of a water service interruption in rural Alabama. A report on the investigation was published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* and is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6006a1.htm>.

Julia will be coordinating research studies on the burden of disease associated with drinking water distribution system failures, developing a national estimate of the burden of waterborne illness, supporting outbreak investigations, and serving as the subject matter expert on giardiasis.

National Ground Water Awareness Week 2012

National Ground Water Awareness Week 2012 (March 11-17) is an opportunity to promote public health via groundwater and water well stewardship. The National Ground Water Association (NGWA) invites the public health community to borrow from or link to its Ground Water Awareness Week page at <http://www.ngwa.org/Events-Education/awareness/Pages/default.aspx> or its <http://www.wellowner.org> web site. For additional information or to be listed as a "promotional partner," contact NGWA Public Awareness Director Cliff Treyens at 800-551-7379, ext. 554, or ctreyens@ngwa.org.

Healthy Swimming Video Contest Winner



CDC's Healthy Swimming Program launched its first video contest in May 2011 to encourage the public to create original videos promoting healthy swimming behaviors in an effort to prevent recreational water illnesses (RWIs). Individuals from around the country submitted forty-nine videos between May 16th and July 4th. CDC judges selected the top five videos based on communication of healthy swimming messages, creativity, and appeal to a wide audience, and the public was then given the opportunity to choose the winner among the top five by voting for their favorite video. The winning video, *Recreational Water Illness Police*, is a spoof on the television show "Cops," and was created by David Matthews of Vicksburg, MS. The Healthy Swimming Program staff were excited about the enthusiastic public response to the contest, since they believe that public engagement is critical to promoting healthy swimming behaviors and preventing RWIs. To watch the winning video, visit www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/rwi/video-contest.html.

Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week 2012

Recreational Water Illness and Injury (RWII) Prevention Week 2012 (May 22–28) is fast approaching. The two themes will be drowning prevention and recreational water illness health communication. CDC's Injury Center is working to compile existing resources that can be used by state and local public health colleagues in their efforts to prevent drowning. The Healthy Swimming Program is working on improving and developing new recreational water illness prevention resources by updating posters, creating the *6 Steps of Healthy Swimming for Pool Operators*, and developing a document with answers to an extensive list of frequently-asked healthy swimming questions. RWII Prevention Week 2012 will be the topic for the Water, Hygiene, & Sanitation (WASH) webinar in April 2012. Please contact HealthySwimming@cdc.gov with any questions.

Ohio: Multi-Agency Response to a Harmful Algal Bloom

Submitted by Greg Stein (Ohio Department of Health) and Lorrie Backer (CDC/NCEH)

In July 2010, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) began receiving reports of dead fish, scum, and unpleasant odors surrounding the lake in Grand Lake St. Marys State Park, Ohio. Subsequent testing determined Grand Lake St. Marys was experiencing a harmful algal bloom (HAB) with microcystin levels ranging from 250 to 2,000 parts per billion (ppb). The World Health Organization guidelines indicate a moderate health risk associated with microcystin levels >20 ppb.

By August 2010, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) began receiving reports of illnesses among humans and animals that had occurred after contact with Grand Lake St. Marys waters. Working with CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), ODH determined that the reported illnesses were likely caused by exposure to microcystins. Eight (33%) of the 21 reported illnesses among the humans met the case definitions for suspected or probable microcystin intoxication. Four dogs, including three that died, were likely sickened also by microcystins.

Representatives from ODH, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), ODNR, and HAB experts from NCEH, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the U.S. Geological Survey collaborated to create HAB-related public health fact sheets. ODH also produced a Harmful Algal Bloom Communications Toolkit for local public health departments to use as part of an educational campaign. The Toolkit included:

- Key public health messages
- Frequently asked questions
- Two template press releases
- Facebook and Twitter messages
- HAB fact sheets for physicians and communities

ODH, Ohio EPA, and ODNR coordinated sampling for all suspected HABs during the 2010 summer recreational season. Ohioans were encouraged to find out which lakes had advisories posted on the state Web site at <http://www.ohioalgaefinfo.com>. Residents could also view the most recent sampling data, report potential algal blooms, and get additional information on HABs.

"I encourage all Ohioans to follow all posted advisories," said Ohio Department of Health Director, Ted Wymyslo, M.D in 2011. However, Dr. Wymyslo noted that an advisory might not have been posted if a HAB had started very recently. To ensure public safety, Dr. Wymyslo warned, "When in doubt, stay out!" Although Grand Lake St. Marys' microcystin levels were elevated during the summer of 2011, only one probable human illness and no animal illnesses were reported to ODH. To educate the public additionally about HABs, ODH made a short video that is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XF-j8hdMQOY>.



Above: At left, a boat dock during an algal bloom on Grand Lake St. Marys in 2010. At right, an image of the lake's shoreline during the same time period.

The Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) Steering Committee is asking you to add your voice by reviewing draft MAHC modules and providing comments. The Steering Committee and appropriate Technical Committee(s) review and address all comments and revise MAHC modules, as needed.

- Open for public comment: *Regulatory Program Administration* (closes February 5, 2012)
- Under review and revision following public comment: *Ventilation & Air Quality*
Risk Management/Safety
Facility Maintenance & Operation
Hygiene Facilities
- Revised following public comment and re-posted at state and local request: *Operator Training*

Drafts of the remaining six MAHC modules (Disinfection & Water Quality; Contamination Burden; Facility Design & Construction; Lifeguarding/Bather Supervision; Recirculation Systems & Filtration; and Monitoring & Testing) will be posted for public comment in 2012. Once all 12 of the MAHC modules have been reviewed and revised, the entire MAHC will be posted for another round of public comment. Once the complete version of the MAHC is finalized, the MAHC will continue to be regularly updated to incorporate the latest science and best practices

To learn more about the MAHC, visit www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/pools/mahc/. To receive automatic email updates on the MAHC, look for the “Get email updates” heading on the right-hand side of the page. Enter your email address in the text box provided, then click ‘Submit.’

Contact Us

CDC is available to provide assistance regarding waterborne disease outbreaks and illnesses. Please contact us to report an outbreak or to request information about waterborne illnesses related to drinking water, recreational water and other water uses. State health departments can also contact CDC to obtain epidemiologic and laboratory assistance for waterborne disease outbreak investigations. Additional resources are available for recreational water inquiries and outbreaks involving *Legionella*.

Contact information:

Phone: 404-639-1700
Email: NORSWater@cdc.gov

Training and resources for reporting waterborne disease outbreaks to CDC via the electronic National Outbreak Reporting System (NORS):
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/statistics/wbdoss/nors/index.html>

Outbreak Response Toolkits: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/toolkit/index.html>

Healthy Water website: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/>

Please contact NORSWater@cdc.gov to submit content or suggestions for A Drop of News or the WASH Webinar series.

Legionella:

All travel-associated Legionnaires' disease cases should be reported directly to the *Legionella* team by emailing travellegionella@cdc.gov or by sending a completed Legionellosis case report form within the seven days following state notification to CDC 1600 Clifton Road, MS C-25, Atlanta, GA, 30333, Attn: *Legionella* Team. All legionellosis cases and outbreaks that are not associated with travel may be reported by sending completed case report forms to the above address within one month of state notification or as soon as possible thereafter. Case report forms and *Legionella* information can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/legionella>. Contact information for additional questions, including assistance with outbreak investigations: travellegionella@cdc.gov, 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). Please also report outbreaks of legionellosis in NORS when the outbreak investigation has been completed (see links to training and other resources for NORS at left).