



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NAME CHANGE TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REFLECTS EXPANDED FOCUS, ROLE**

*St. Charles County, Missouri* – To better reflect an expanded focus toward improving the well-being of residents and businesses, the St. Charles County Council enacted an ordinance that officially changed the name of the Department of Community Health and the Environment. Effective Jan. 1, the Department of Public Health emphasizes the services the three divisions (Environmental Health and Protection, Health Services and Humane Services) provide beyond that of simply being a health clinic for those in need.

“While we will continue to provide the high-quality services our residents expect, our new name signals a transition toward a broader and more encompassing future for 2016 and beyond,” Department Director *Hope Woodson* stated. “We intend to show the importance of health in all aspects of county government actions and for all of our customers and community partners. Our divisions enhance the lives of residents, their businesses and their pets each day, and this fresh, streamlined department name better reflects our themes and objectives.”

For the last six years, a national report has ranked St. Charles County among Missouri’s healthiest counties, and health department staff collaborates with other departments, agencies and individuals to build upon this success. The department contributes to residents’ well-being through programs such as the WIC supplemental nutrition and education program for mothers and growing families; routine inspections of restaurants and other public service providers; distribution of no- or low-cost vaccinations; the successful adoptions of dogs, cats and other animals that enhance the enjoyment of pet owners; and much more.

In the coming weeks, the department will introduce new programs that spread successful healthcare initiatives, participate in plans that further county residents’ physical, mental and social well-being; and work with community leaders to better serve the needs of our county. Here is just a sampling of those efforts:

- Partnering with the Prosecuting Attorney, County Police Department and others on a Regional Drug Task Force designed to minimize the heroin epidemic
- Hosting an Emergency Planning Summit to help St. Charles area non-profit and human service agencies prepare themselves and their clients for future disasters
- Contracting with several area municipalities to extend Animal Control and Sheltering Services throughout St. Charles County
- Coordinating Public Health Education and Community Outreach with the St. Charles City/County Library District
- Presenting the Second Annual St. Charles County Earth Day Celebration with the Parks Department
- Introducing a Passport Processing department to serve as a “one-stop shop” for residents seeking to travel outside the United States
- Managing the licensing and permitting of St. Charles County lodging establishments

**(MORE)**

**(Department of Public Health – continued, p. 2)**

The St. Charles County Department of Public Health is committed to the protection and enhancement of health and the quality of life for all members of our community. Through three divisions — Environmental Health and Protection, Health Services and Humane Services — the department provides a wide range of services that have a profound impact on the lives of St. Charles County’s residents and visitors. To discover ways that the department assists this region or to learn about volunteer opportunities with any of the divisions, please visit <http://www.sccmo.org/394/Public-Health> or call 636-949-7400.

The three divisions include:

- Led by Director **Ryan Tilley**, the Division of Environmental Health and Protection protects the public and businesses of St. Charles County through programs that promote healthy environmental conditions and reduce risk from services provided to the public. This is accomplished through routine inspection and licensing of food-service retailers and providers, daycare centers, aquatic and recreation facilities, body art businesses, and lodging establishments. In addition, the division operates two drop-off Recycle Works facilities that complement curbside recycling programs and enforces St. Charles County’s solid waste ordinances. To allow residents opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors, division staff assists agencies in the management and protection of natural resources and oversees mosquito control efforts for much of the county. For information on the services provided through the Division of Environmental Health and Protection, please call 636-949-1800 or visit <http://www.sccmo.org/760/Environmental-Division>.
- Assistant Department Director **Alison Tucker** heads the Division of Health Services, which encompasses programs that enhance the physical well-being of residents. Services include an Immunization Clinic for children and adults; WIC, the Women, Infants and Children nutritional education and supplement program; an STD Prevention, Treatment and Education clinic; Communicable Disease reporting and investigation coordinated through the Epidemiological program; the distribution of Vital Records such as certified copies of Missouri birth or death records (and will soon offer U.S. passport processing); health education programming; and public health emergency preparedness and response planning. For more information on the services provided through the Division of Health Services, please call 636-949-7400 or visit <http://www.sccmo.org/398/Health-Services-Division>.
- The Division of Humane Services is directed by **Theresa Williams**. Through its Pet Adoption Center (located at 4850 Mid Rivers Mall Drive), the division shelters and adopts animals — having found loving homes for tens of thousands of pets since opening in 1999. In addition, division staff educates pet owners on care and behavior training, provides animal control services and investigates incidents involving animal cruelty or neglect in our community. To ensure proper treatment of animals and to protect St. Charles County residents, the division is responsible for enacting and enforcing the St. Charles County Animal Control Ordinance. To learn more about the efforts of the Division of Humane Services, please call 636-949-PETS (7387) or visit <http://www.sccmo.org/783/Humane-Division>.

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