



Union County Health Department

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News Release

Health Department awarded accreditation designation

January 19, 2011, Monroe, NC – The Union County Health Department has been awarded the status of accredited health department by the North Carolina Local Health Department Accreditation Board.

“We are very pleased to have completed this process successfully,” said Union County Health Director Phillip Tarte. “It is certainly a validation of the quality of work and public service that the employees of this department have been providing the community for many years. This designation should be seen as recognition of their efforts.”

North Carolina is the first state in the country to mandate accreditation for its local health departments. The purpose of the accreditation program is to assure a basic level of capacity and services in each of the local health departments across the state.

“The accreditation process was very valuable for the agency,” said Agency Accreditation Coordinator Jackie Morgan. “It required a full examination of the agency, both the physical infrastructure, and the non-tangible service level infrastructure. It provided an opportunity to see gaps in service and make the appropriate adjustment, while also shedding light on places where the department was truly excelling. It was a lengthy but very important process with a rewarding outcome.”

Since the pilot program involving six local health departments began in 2001, 55 health departments have been accredited. The process of accreditation includes three major components – a self-assessment completed by the agency, a site visit by a multidisciplinary team of peers to review certain performance standards, and a determination of accreditation status by an independent accreditation board comprised of state and local public health officials, board of health members, county commissioners and public members.

The accreditation process is a collaboration of the North Carolina Division of Public Health, part of the Department of Health and Human Services and the North Carolina Institute for Public Health of the Gillings School of Global Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with input from the North Carolina Association of Local Health Directors.

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