



NEWS



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Walt Howe to Retire from the McLean County Health Department

BLOOMINGTON, IL- Walt Howe has announced that he will retire from the McLean County Health Department after leading the organization as director for nearly eight years. Howe will remain available to work with the health department through February 24th to help ensure a smooth and successful transition of the leadership role while a permanent successor is sought.

Says Howe, "It has been a great honor to work with the talented and dedicated staff at the McLean County Health Department. The organization has been deeply committed to addressing the public health needs of McLean County residents for the past 70 years and I am confident the Board of Health will choose a new leader who will remain true to the health department's mission and long-held values while taking the organization to new heights."

Howe joined the McLean County Health Department in 1991 as an assistant administrator and was appointed director of the health department in May of 2009 by the McLean County Board of Health. While at the helm of the health department, Howe helped usher in many successes including the recent Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan cooperative with Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, and the United Way of McLean County; the mass vaccination of 20,640 residents by health department staff when the H1N1 virus threatened; the establishment of an adult dental clinic serving adults on Medicaid; the launch of a new electronic medical record and billing system and an electronic food inspection reporting process; and, other initiatives too numerous to list.

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Howe's passion for public health will continue to have an outlet even after retiring from the health department. States Howe, "My long-term objectives after retiring from the health department have always included more time with family and friends while finding a way to still contribute to public health. Rather amazingly, all the pieces came together for me sooner rather than later.

"The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) is a program that supports all public health providers in Illinois and is an organization that I have respected since I became a member over 20 years ago. I was lucky enough to be offered an opportunity to assist them in managing the \$3.5 million Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) grant and the vaccine purchasing consortium. In the newly created position of preventive health services manager, I get to stay involved and potentially have a hand in helping to shape many initiatives that will benefit not just the McLean County Health Department, but health department statewide. It is the perfect arrangement."

It is anticipated the McLean County Board of Health will begin their search for a new health department director in the coming weeks. The McLean County Health Department is dedicated to the prevention and control of disease through health promotion, early intervention and health protection within the county. More information about health department services can be found at: <http://health@mcleancountyil.gov>.

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