



A message from Dr. Nancy Cameron, Medical Officer of Health

On August 21, 2011 a powerful F3 tornado devastated Goderich and area and changed the lives of many. Many organizations responded to this disaster, including our health unit.

The primary focus for the health unit was ensuring **food safety**. At the numerous food premises, our health inspectors went into action assessing, organizing and cataloguing and monitoring the disposal of affected food. At the reception centre the health unit monitored the food donations as well as the safety of food preparation.

There were many challenges to work through and hazards to be aware of. Staff could only work in buildings that were deemed safe by the Ministry of Labour. They were also exposed to hazards such as glass, debris, cold weather, rain, smell of rotting food, insects and bees.

Many of our staff live in and around Goderich and were also personally affected by the tornado. Despite many unanticipated challenges, our staff worked together and we commend them all for their commitment.

We were also pleased this year to launch our Breastfeeding Facebook page, **BreastfeedingConnectionsinHuron**. It has been very successful and continues to grow. In October during Canadian Breastfeeding Week we hosted a Virtual Latch-On, with over 50 members virtually latching on. According to Facebook, we reached 1,038 people during the online event.

As always in public health, 2011 was a busy year. The health unit responded to the public health needs of Huron County residents as well as continued to align our programs and services with the **Ontario Public Health Standards**.

*Nancy Cameron*

**2,222** private drinking water samples received and reviewed.  
**Test your well water.**

**1,140** inspections of restaurants, grocery stores, arenas, camps etc.

**61** health hazard complaint investigations.

**238** people certified in Safe Food Handling courses.  
**Keep your food safe.**

**178** animal bite investigations.  
**Protect yourself.**

**2,535** beach water samples taken from 14 Huron County beaches.

**Tobacco Cessation** - The health unit was part of forming the Huron County Community of Practice for Tobacco Use. This group of health professionals and service providers share information and resources to help Huron County residents quit tobacco.

**SPARK** launched its new look in the fall of 2011. The website, designed by youth offers credible and interesting health information for youth. Along with its launch of a new brand and look, SPARK unrolled contests to draw youth to the site and to their **Facebook page**. Almost 1,300 facebook 'likes' were generated from the contests.

**Supporting New Parents** - Almost 600 Huron County women gave birth and 94% received postpartum telephone contact from the Family Health team. Public health nurses visited 268 mothers during the post partum period.

**Pregnancy Supports** - The **Pregnancy section** of our website got a makeover with early pregnancy information. Topics include nutrition and physical activity in pregnancy, pregnancy dangers, prenatal care and postpartum information.

**New Vaccines Introduced** - The health unit promoted several new vaccines which became available free of charge to all residents of Ontario.

- Rotavirus vaccine for infants
- A second chickenpox vaccine for all children up to 11 years old
- A combined vaccine for measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox for children 4 - 6 years old
- All adults 19 - 64 years old can now receive vaccine that protects against pertussis (whooping cough). This vaccine also contains tetanus and diphtheria and would replace one of the boosters for tetanus which are recommended every ten years.

The vaccines are available at our **Immunization Clinics**.

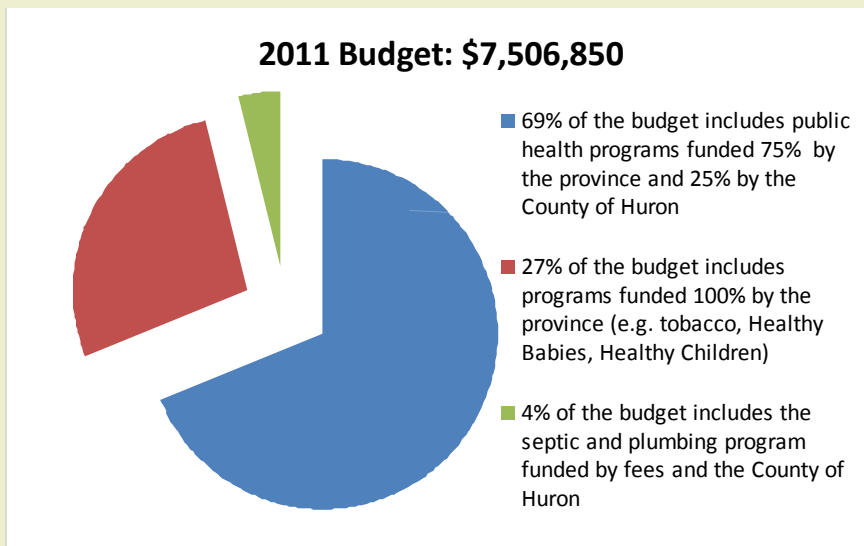
**470** three-year olds screened for developmental growth to assess for any need for referrals to community resources.

**1,360** people vaccinated by the health unit against seasonal influenza at 7 community clinics.  
**Learn more.**

**4,139** packs of birth control were handed out at low cost or no cost.

**22** Life After Baby sessions were held across the county. This is a 6 week information and peer support group for parents of infants under 1 year of age.

**221** tests for sexually transmitted diseases were done by the health unit.



County of Huron funding, including Septic and Plumbing \$2,015,338

