



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Celebrating Public Health Partners & Heroes**

**Galveston County and Cities** – The Galveston County Health District's observance of *National Public Health Week* and *National Immunization Week* will include recognition of Hurricane Ike Public Health Heroes, presentation of Gold Ribbon Awards to food service establishments recognized for quality food safety practices, and free immunizations. Events will take Place April 8<sup>th</sup> at Mall of the Mainland in Texas City, Carbide Park in La Marque, and GCHD Immunization Clinics in Galveston and Texas City.

A public health celebration will be held at Mall of the Mainland beginning at 12 noon. There will be a variety of health information available from community health partners and FREE immunizations for adults and children. At 2 p.m. there will be a ceremony recognizing "Hurricane Ike Public Health Heroes." Many organizations have employees that contribute to public health on a regular basis and may not even be aware of it. These employees became critical during and following Hurricane Ike by keeping city water systems operating, organizing debris management, assisting with animal control, or many other things that help protect the public's health.

Those public health heroes already identified for recognition include: Galveston County Judge James Yarbrough; Brent Walker, Galveston County Sheriff's Office; Clint Wayne Brown, Precinct 7 Deputy Constable; Mr. Don Kemp, Galveston County Sheriff's Office; Bill Kerber, City Manager, City of Kemah; Jim & Lynda Guidry, Guidry News Service; Tim Turner, General Manager WCID 8; David Loop,

Chief, Crystal Beach Volunteer Fire Department; Lloyd Rinderer, Assistant City Manager, City of Galveston; Joe Sullivan, R. Ph., Sullivan Pharmacy, Bacliff; Ted Zompa, MD, FACEP, West Isle Urgent Care, Galveston; Myrna Reingold, Galveston County Legal Department.

Assistance in planning the event has been provided by preventive medicine residents from UTMB's Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health, Coastal Area Health Education Center (AHEC), and Galveston County Regional Outreach Public Health and Education Services (R.O.P.E.S).

Free immunizations will also be available in the Galveston Immunization clinic at 4700 Broadway, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.; and in the Texas City Immunization clinic at 2000 Texas Avenue in the Family Community Center from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

"As Hurricane Ike showed us, it takes the whole community to protect the public's health. Our partners are essential and we are pleased to recognize them. When protecting the public's health is done well and there are no illnesses, the important daily efforts of partners and staff may be invisible and unrecognized by the general public. Much valuable effort goes on behind the scenes to keep our community safe and healthy." says Dr. Mark Guidry, CEO of the Galveston County Health District. "We hope that this event will make visible the excellent work of many people in our community dedicated to assuring that our community is as healthy and safe as possible."

"Gold Ribbon" awards for excellent food service will be presented during a ceremony at the Wayne Johnson Community Center in La Marque beginning at 6:30 p.m. Galveston County Judge Jim Yarbrough and County Health Authority, Dr. Mark Guidry will be on hand to congratulate 49 2009 recipients, while Health District staff distribute the awards. The awards were initiated 13 years ago to identify food service establishments that show exemplary compliance with the Texas Food Establishment Rules as enforced by the Galveston County Health District.

Health District sanitarians inspect more than 1,500 licensed food service operations in Galveston County to assure food safety and protect the health of consumers. Award criteria includes: establishment must actually prepare food, maintain a record of satisfactory food temperatures, must have no confirmed food borne illness complaints, must have at least one certified food service manager employed, must have no significant number of demerits, must have a good cleaning and maintenance program, have evidence of staff discussions or training, and show special effort to comply with the rules by the use of food safety aids.

After going through an approval process, environmental management staff examines the nominated establishment's file and sanitation history. They then visit the nominee for an on-site evaluation of the operation.

"We take this opportunity every year to let people know there are food service operators in the community that do a great job," say Martin Entringer the District's manager of Consumer Health Services. "Community feedback tells us that people like to know which restaurants and food service providers have safe and exemplary practices. This good news is shared annually through Gold Ribbon Awards."

**2009 Gold Ribbon restaurants and preschool recipients by community are:**

**Bacliff:** Big D's Texas Style BBQ

**Dickinson:** Bay Area Recovery Centers #3 & #4, Children's Choice Child Care, Dickinson BBQ, Sesame house Chinese & Vietnamese

**Friendswood:** Primrose School of Friendswood, Starbucks Coffee #6400

**Galveston:** Café Michael Burger, Gino's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria, McDonald's #16167, Rainforest Café

**Hitchcock:** El Sombrero Restaurant, Harborwalk Yacht Club Restaurant

**La Marque:** Galveston County Department of Parks and Senior Services

**League City:** Kid City #1 & #2, Kids R Kids #29, Panda Express #1244, Primrose School of South Shore

**Santa Fe:** Kids & Company

**Texas City:** Ashton Parke Care Center, Childworks, COM Child Development Lab, LMC Child Development Lab

**Gold Ribbon schools by District:**

**Dickinson ISD:** K.E. Little Elementary, Dickinson High School, Dunbar Middle School, Hughes Elementary, San Leon Elementary

**Clear Creek ISD:** Brookside Intermediate, Stewart Elementary, Wedgewood Elementary, Goforth Elementary, Gilmore Elementary, Ross Elementary, Hyde Elementary, Victory Lakes Intermediate

**Friendswood ISD:** Windsong Intermediate, Zue Bales Intermediate

**Galveston ISD:** Gladnieo Parker Elementary, Rosenberg Elementary, Weis Middle School

**La Marque ISD:** Simms Elementary

**Santa Fe ISD:** Kubacak Elementary, Cowan Elementary, Santa Fe High School

**Texas City:** Roosevelt Wilson Elementary, Texas City High School