



2009 Samuel J. Crumrine Consumer Protection Award Recipient

Columbus Public Health

Teresa C. Long, MD, MPH, Health Commissioner



National Association of County and City Health Officials

Annual Conference, June 2009, Orlando, FL

Accepting Award: Keith L. Krinn, RS, MA, DAAS, CPHA
Environmental Health Administrator, Columbus Public Health Environmental Health Division

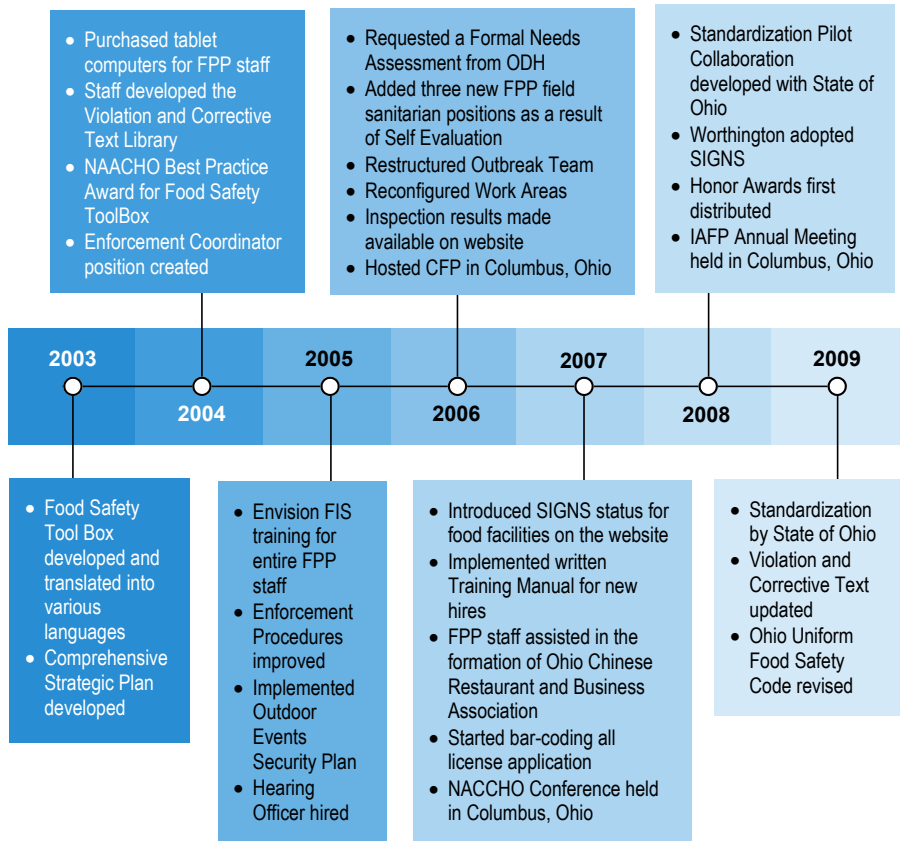
Established in 1833, as the local public health agency for the City of Columbus, Columbus Public Health (CPH) has continually strived for “healthier, safer people”. A comprehensive strategic plan using an all-hazards approach was developed in 2003, to affect fundamental change to the Food Protection Program (FPP), for the needs of the community it serves. The comprehensive plan initially addressed the following issues: 1) Food safety education and training; 2) Knowledge and understanding of the changes in the new risk-based code and the science of food safety; 3) Bridging the language and cultural barriers presented by a diverse community and workforce; and, 4) Providing easy access to public information. As the implementation progressed, new goals were identified that dove-tailed and complemented the original goals and included: 1) An increase in the number of inspections to meet state-mandated frequency of inspection criterion; 2) Addressing the concerns of food security and defense by developing emergency response for threats to the food supply; and, 3) As increased inspections resulted in increased follow-up inspections, the need to develop an improved enforcement model became apparent.

The FPP developed a “Food Safety Toolbox”, which was provided to all licencees. It includes a copy of the current Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code, which is based on the FDA Model Food Code, along with food safety posters. The Food Safety Toolbox is provided in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Somali and received a Best Practice Award from NACCHO in 2004.

The FPP conducts risk-focused outreach programs by presenting regularly scheduled food safety training classes in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Somali.

Regular contact with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Department of Health is maintained and

Food Protection Program Timeline: 2003-2009



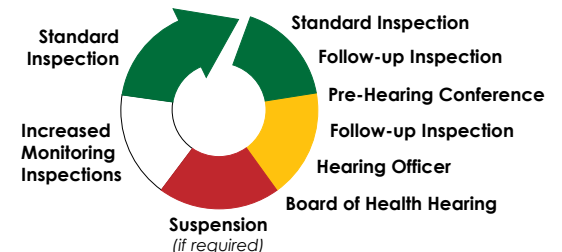


a pilot standardization program, designed to be replicated state-wide is underway. Science-based health and safety training is emphasized, and focuses on the five CDC risk factors associated with foodborne illness.

The FPP has been communicating these risk factors to the operators and the public by performing risk-based inspections, emphasizing critical violations on the inspection reports, providing extensive food safety information on the CPH website, and developing the SIGNS Public Information Initiative to promote transparency and better disclose compliance and enforcement information to the public. A durable plastic sign which uses a color-coded system to inform the public of the facility's compliance and enforcement status is posted at the entrance of licensed facilities. As part of this public outreach initiative, consumers can search the website (www.publichealth.columbus.gov) for details of critical violations observed during previous inspections which empowers consumers to make informed choices regarding patronage.

Columbus Public Health

SIGNS Public Health Initiative



The FPP wanted a public disclosure system that accurately represented information regarding compliance and enforcement activity on the placards. Their research demonstrated it should be a color-coded, low-literacy system that could be easily understood by the public, so were attracted to the “traffic light” colors, first used in Toronto, since they are universally recognized. Eventually, a fourth color was selected to denote facilities on an increased frequency of inspection following a license suspension. The plan reflected the program’s enforcement protocol and allowed for due process. The “Healthier, Safer People Honor Award” was concurrently created with the SIGNS initiative to recognize facilities that performed above the criterion established for the green sign.



The initial response to terrorism or natural disasters begins at the local level. CPH together with local partners developed an Outdoor Events Security Plan which utilizes an all-hazards approach. The plan has been utilized during preparations and inspections at the many outdoor festivals held in Columbus, and the large venues of the Ohio State Fair, and The Ohio State University home football games.

About the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award

For 54 years, the Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award, named for one of the United States most renowned public health sanitarians, has been presented to a local public health unit by a jury of leading environmental health officials and public health sanitarians and is the most prestigious recognition that a public health unit can receive. Crumbine winners serve as models for other public health and safety programs across the nation.



The Crumbine Award is supported by the Conference for Food Protection, in cooperation with the American Academy of Sanitarians, American Public Health Association, Association of Food & Drug Officials, Foodservice Packaging Institute, International Association for Food Protection, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Environmental Health Association, National Restaurant Association Solutions, National Sanitation Foundation International and Underwriters Laboratories Inc. Please visit www.fpi.org for more information about the Crumbine Award and to view Columbus Public Health’s award-winning application.