

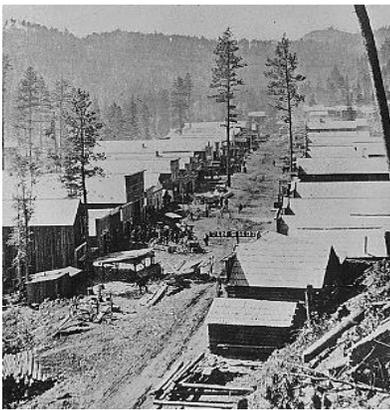


PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

APRIL 7, 2017

CDPH Celebrates its 10th Anniversary July 12th

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Wednesday, July 12, 2017. The Department will host an event on the south steps of the Capitol to showcase public health's important work. As part of its anniversary celebration, CDPH will share messages from Californians who have benefited from public health services. The Department will also launch a photo and video challenge encouraging partners and the general public to answer the question, "What does public health mean to me?" Both the personal stories, and winning photos and videos, will be promoted on social media and the CDPH website.



The Nation's Second Oldest Health Department

Although CDPH is celebrating its 10th anniversary in its current form, California's public health department is actually the second oldest health department in the country, dating back to the California Gold Rush. Thousands of people arrived in California between late 1849 and 1850. During that time, Sacramento City, as it was then called, grew from a small settlement of 2,000 people to a bustling town of about 8,000 in a matter of months. An estimated 9 out of 10 deaths of those early pioneers and gold seekers were attributed to disease and serious injury.

Public Health Changed the Course of History

One Sacramento physician during the Gold Rush noted that "within a few short months, gold seekers produced in Sacramento a collecting point of health tragedy not to be equaled any other place in the world." The cholera outbreak of 1850 killed 1,000 Sacramentans in just three weeks. To tackle the overwhelming number of deaths, California created a state public health department in 1870. It was just the second in the nation, following Massachusetts by just six months. Dr. Thomas Logan was the first Secretary of the Board of Public Health, California's first "state health officer."

The first order of business for the new Board of Public Health was to fight cholera. Dr. Logan ensured that the new public health body completed full scientific investigations on every case of cholera, and the data led to the first significant health improvement in California – sanitation requirements in gold camps. Sanitation requirements lead to a reduction in cholera cases and thus public health changed the course of California history.

Our modern-day public health department continues to rely on science to address existing health challenges and address emerging public health threats. CDPH works every day to protect the health of every Californian and the millions who visit here every year.