



NIAGARA COUNTY
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REARDON NAMED COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH PRESIDENT
TELLS COUNTY RESIDENTS 'WE'RE THERE TO HELP'

LOCKPORT—The new president of the Niagara County Board of Health wasted no time in vowing to work closely with the Niagara County Health Department to address public health concerns in the coming year.

John J.M. Reardon, the chief operating officer of Niagara Cerebral Palsy and the Niagara County Board of Health's former vice president, formally took over management of the board, vowing to residents the Board of Health would continue to place a high value on public health and hygiene efforts. He was welcomed to Lockport by County Public Health Director Daniel J. Stapleton this weekend and given an overview of ongoing County Health Department initiatives.

"We're there to help," Reardon said in remarks delivered at a joint appearance with Stapleton at the County Public Information Office's press briefing area. "Public health really affects each and every citizen in the county, one way or another. Our primary goal at the Board of Health for 2010 is to help the Health Department with its mission to serve the public."

Reardon has a long career in public health-related fields. Before signing on at Niagara Cerebral Palsy, where he has served as chief operating officer for nearly a decade, he spent 21 years as director of the Niagara County Health Department's Speech, Hearing and Language Center.

The Board of Health serves in an advisory and oversight role, directing and advising the county's public health system on policy. This past year, the Board of Health was instrumental in devising the county's response to the H1N1 flu outbreak.

Reardon said he expects to form an active partnership with the County Health Department.

"Our role at the Board of Health is to help the Health Department, advise them, work with them, provide our guidance, and help them succeed to protect the public's health," Reardon said. "We know there are challenges coming down the line that we'll be dealing with as they come up in the Health Department."

Reardon said he is confident with how county health workers will handle public health challenges, offering heavy praise for the Health Department's conduct over the last year.

"2009 was certainly a very active year for us, with the H1N1 virus, and I think the public knows how successful the Health Department was in dealing with that," Reardon said. "We've gotten accolades and many positive comments from the public saying how well the Health Department performed, and we expect that will continue in 2010."

Following Reardon's remarks, Stapleton said he looks forward to working closely with Reardon, relying on his more than three decades of healthcare-field knowledge to devise new strategies for public health policy.

"We're very happy to have John here," Stapleton said. "He's worked in public health for a number of years and at Niagara Cerebral Palsy deals with many of the same issues the Health Departments does...and this comes at a really important time for the Niagara County Department of Health and the Board of Health."

John Gotowko, a North Tonawanda pharmacist, will serve as vice president of the Board of Health. Reardon succeeds Dr. Thomas Hughes, a Lockport physician, as president.

"Dr. Hughes was invaluable, with his experience, his expertise, and his commonsense approach," Stapleton said. "Without his knowledge, it would have been very difficult to deal with H1N1."

Stapleton urged residents with further interest in public health matters to visit the County Health Department's website at www.niagaracounty.com/health.

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