



St. Mary's County Health Department

NEWS RELEASE

www.smchd.org

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ST. MARY'S COUNTY LAUNCHES IMPROVED WEBSITE

LEONARDTOWN, MD (December 19, 2006) -- St. Mary's County Health Department is launching a new Web site to improve county residents' access to important public health information and services.

"Our major goal" is to provide a customer-friendly site that is easy to use," said Public Information Officer Leslie Payne. "For this reason, the new site offers improved navigation and many short-cuts to find the information you need."

For instance the home page navigation bar guides you to major points of interest like women and children's health services, or the medical transportation program, or job opportunities. But there are also special buttons for the health department's calendar of events, and the latest Health Alerts, which is expected to be a popular highlight where residents can get the latest urgent public health information relevant to St. Mary's County.

(more)

New St. Mary's County Health Department Web-site, p. 2

Other highlights include an expanded Environmental Health Services section that is expected to enhance the ease in which county residents can learn about environmental health requirements, and take advantage of easy access to environmental health permits and application forms. In addition, a number of Environmental Health Services fact sheets, as well as fact sheets on a variety of public health topics, have been created just for the new site.

According to Payne, the site took months to develop. "We took a look at the current site, and asked each program to evaluate the information already there, and reassess what people visiting their program page really needed." In many cases, she said, the program director scratched the original page and made a fresh start.

John Roth, Web master for St. Mary's County Government, did the creative work on the new site. Site maintenance will be the responsibility of the public information office and the information technology services staff. "Site development is an on-going process," said Payne. The priority in this phase was to create a more welcome Web presence that would compliment our current communications efforts.

"We are already thinking about improvements in the future," said Payne, which includes the possibility of making online payments for environmental health and other services, as well as online registration for classes.

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New St. Mary's County Health Department Web site, p. 2

The address for the Web site has not changed. Visitors to the new site will find St. Mary's County Health Department online at <http://www.smchd.org>.

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