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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **NATIONAL WEEK RECOGNIZES ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS**

January 18 to 24 is Environmental Public Health Week, an annual event held by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) to recognize the work of Canada's certified Public Health Inspectors. Public Health Inspectors ensure Canadians are protected from health risks such as infectious diseases, chemical contaminants and physical hazards.

“A basic cornerstone of a healthy population is the protection of the public from environmental hazards that affect our daily lives,” says Mike Duncan, Manager of Environmental Health for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit. “The work of public health inspectors sometimes goes unnoticed unless there is a crisis, which brings attention to the work of these health professionals.”

At the Health Unit, Environmental Public Health Inspectors apply provincial public health protection standards in a variety of community settings. Duties include:

- Inspecting food premises where food is prepared, served or stored such as restaurants, supermarkets and healthcare facilities
- Ensuring everyone has access to safe drinking water
- Protecting you from contact with rabies

For example, in 2009 Environmental Public Health Inspectors in our district:

- Offered 16 food safety courses
- Certified 335 food handlers

- Investigated 358 incidents of possible rabies exposure
- Investigated 228 complaints about a variety of other environmental health issues.

Public Health Inspectors are highly trained individuals whose training generally includes a four-year university degree in Environmental Health followed by certification by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors.

More information about the work of Environmental Public Health Inspectors is available online at [www.ciphi.ca](http://www.ciphi.ca), or by contacting the Health Unit at (705) 474-1400 or toll free at 1-800-563-2808.