

BUENA VISTA COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH \ ZONING

Kim Johnson, Director
Phone: 712-749-2555
Cell: 712-299-4195
Fax: 712-749-2566

Courthouse
215 East 5th
P.O. Box 301
Storm Lake, IA 50588

Email: kjohnson@bvcountyiowa.com

February 24, 2015

Dear Senator Segebart;

The Buena Vista County Board of Health is asking for your support of Senate File 265, a bill relating to licensure, regulation and complaint procedures for hotel, home food, and food establishments and processing plants. These bills also modify fees and penalties. This bill was prepared in conjunction with DIA, the local contracts and most importantly industry.

Buena Vista currently is inspecting in addition to BV, Sac and Pocahontas Counties. We recently have taken on these two counties as a way to increase our funding. We changed staff around, trained our septic inspector to conduct food inspections for the winter season. However, we still are using \$27,000 in taxpayer money to support this program.

In 2009, DIA inspected 23 counties. Today, DIA inspects 52 of Iowa's 99 counties. Because fees were and are not covering the costs of inspections in the other counties. Some of the counties that currently are multi county facilities will have to be looking at returning the contract if fees are not increased.

The Environmental Health Department educates, develop corrective action plans, conduct follow up visits, responds to complaints and review facility plans prior to openings. Today's inspection system is vastly improved and more advanced than twenty years ago and requires a higher degree of education and training. In addition to the code changes, they are now required to meet many of the FDA retail food inspectors standards. These standards are valuable and create consistency among programs and inspectors, they also cost more in time and travel.

One of the changes in this file is to start charging Schools a fee for inspections. They never have been charged for a license or inspection. While the county could absorb the cost of an annual inspection for the schools, they are now asked to conduct at least two inspections a year on the lunchroom facilities plus the concession stands ran through the activity's programs. In addition, many of the schools foods programs are now running mini restaurants once a week where you can eat at their establishment.

A second major change is the removal of the Certified Food Protection Manager discount. In 2007 this \$50.00 reduction in fees was put in place as an incentive to industry to train the staff. It has never been used in these three counties, and with the last code change, every establishment is now required to have a CFPM by January 1, 2018.

Our final point for you is that at the time of this letter, no lobbyists have registered against these bills including: the IA Restaurant Assn, The Iowa Lodging Assn, Casey's, the Grocery Industry Assn, Kum and Go and Tyson.



Jon McKenna, Chairman
Buena Vista County Board of Health