

Chipley Bugle Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Vernon Citizens Invited to Participate in Environmental Health Study

The Washington County Health Department was recently awarded a grant from the Environmental Health Division of the Florida Department of Health to study the environmental health status of the Vernon area. The Division has awarded the grant to several counties in the State of Florida to participate in the Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH).

The PACE EH program is intended to identify avenues for improvement of the overall health of the community – specifically Vernon for this project. The program is primarily designed to strengthen community ties and promote environmental health awareness between the Department of Health and the local community in the assessed area. There will be representatives reaching out and talking with community members in Vernon through a door to door process beginning this month.

Residents, community leaders, business owners, agencies and those with faith-based organizations in the Vernon community are invited and encouraged to actively participate in this process. The project duration will extend through January 2007. Teams will be formed and should expect to commit to at least one meeting per month. The PACE EH coordinator, Jennifer Plass, will facilitate the meetings, provide necessary support, complete follow-up activities, and other additional support functions.

Vernon is the first town in Washington County to be targeted for the PACE EH program. The Department of Health is confident that with strong community participation this project will be successful. Should the program prove successful, there is anticipation that additional funds will be awarded in succession for neighboring communities in Washington County.