

**May 24, 2007
Press Release**

From: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

RE: Health Department receives State Accreditation

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency was formally awarded their Certificate of Accreditation by The Michigan Local Public Health Accreditation Program at the May 24th Board of Health meeting. The certificate was awarded by Jean Chabut, the Michigan Public Health Accreditation Commission Chairperson, to Dale Swift, Chairman of the tri-county Board of Health.

The objective of the Accreditation Program is to assure and enhance the quality of local public health for Michigan's citizens. The Program does this by identifying and promoting the implementation of public health standards for local public health departments and evaluating and accrediting on their ability to meet these standards. The Program's goals are to:

- assist in continuous quality improvement of health services;
- assure a uniform set of standards that define public health;
- assure a process by which the state can ensure local level capacity to address core functions;
- provide a mechanism for accountability to the public.

The Michigan Public Health Code and Minimum Program Requirements (MPR's) serve as the basis for the Michigan Accreditation Program. MPR's were developed to help monitor services delivered at the local level and to serve as a means to assess and enhance public health core capacities. In April of 2006, the Health Department went through a weeklong, comprehensive on-site review from the Michigan Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality and Public Health to review compliance with 163 program indicators. All indicators must be met to receive State Accreditation.

The Local Public Health Accreditation Program began in 1999 and assists health departments in maintaining and improving quality as well as providing a tool for performance improvement.

Your local public health department is proud to have gained this recognition and takes great pride in its certification that high quality services are provided to the citizens of Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties.

Photo attached – persons pictured from L to R: Jean Chabut, Ken Lautzenheiser, Board of Health, Steve Todd, Health Officer, Dale Swift, Chairman of the Board of Health.

