



WASHTENAW COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
...focused on prevention

555 Towner St., P.O. Box 0915
Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0915
Phone: (734) 544-6700

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 16, 2008

Contact: **Lily Guzman,** Health Educator, Washtenaw County Public Health Department
E-mail: guzmanL@ewashtenaw.org
Phone: (734) 544-2983

WASHTENAW TO TAKE THE PLEDGE: FIVE STEPS TO HEALTHIER CLIMATE For National Public Health Week, Public Health Experts Join Families, Neighbors in Taking Action on Climate Change

YPSILANTI, Mich., April 16, 2008—Washtenaw County Public Health Department officials today announced the start of National Public Health Week—celebrated in Michigan during the week of April 14-18—and urged residents to commit to taking five steps for a healthier community and a healthier climate.

For over a decade, the American Public Health Association has organized the week to educate the public, policy makers, and the public health community about critical public health challenges the nation is facing. This year, the theme is “Climate Change: Our Health in the Balance.”

Leading public health experts agree that climate change is one of the most serious public health threats facing our nation. We are already seeing the effects of climate change on the health of people across the globe due to changes to vector-borne diseases, impacts on drinking water supply, and extreme weather events. And our most vulnerable populations are disproportionately affected.

As part of a nationwide commemoration of National Public Health Week, Washtenaw residents are invited to sign the Healthy Climate Pledge, committing to small changes in their own lives that can have a big impact.

With the Healthy Climate Pledge, Americans across the country and in Washtenaw County are committing to making everyday changes to:

- **Be Prepared** Prepare for climate change-related emergencies such as extreme heat and floods.
- **Travel Differently** Leave the car at home – use public transportation, carpool, walk, bike, or telecommute.
- **Eat Differently** Eat less meat and buy local produce from our community farmers’ markets.
- **Green Your Work** Use recycled paper, print less, use energy saving computer settings and green your office.
- **Green Your Home** Seal and insulate your homes, reduce, reuse, recycle and use water efficiently.

To take the pledge and for more ideas on helping create a healthier climate, visit the National Public Health Week website at www.nphw.org.

The Washtenaw County Public Health Department also congratulates two local organizations – Packard Community Clinic and the Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition – for joining a total of ten in the state to receive the Hometown Health Hero Award for 2008. They will be recognized by MDCH Director Janet Olszewski and their legislators in a special ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda on April 22, 2008, (Earth Day) at 10:00 a.m. Packard Community Clinic is being recognized for integrating medical and behavioral health systems of care through close collaboration between primary and psychiatric clinicians and treatments. The Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition is being recognized for their work to promote active transportation such as biking and walking – which reduces auto emissions and increases physical activity – through advocacy and education since 1999.

###