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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN SANTA ROSA COUNTY PROTECTS OUR COMMUNITIES FROM EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS THROUGH NATIONAL “PUBLIC HEALTH READY” RECOGNITION PROGRAM



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Milton, FL– The Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County (DOH-Santa Rosa) has been recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. DOH-Santa Rosa demonstrated these capabilities by meeting the comprehensive preparedness benchmarks required by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a unique partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. DOH-Santa Rosa joins a cohort of nearly 450 local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR, either individually or as part of a region.

“We are proud to have been recognized by Project Public Health Ready for our efforts in community preparedness,” said Sandra L. Park-O’Hara, ARNP, DOH-Santa Rosa administrator. “A project of this magnitude would not be possible without the help and support of our community partners and I want to recognize them for their commitment to this project. I especially want to thank our Public Health Preparedness Planner Michelle Hill for her dedication to the project and her commitment to our communities.”

“PPHR recognition by NACCHO is an honor and a reflection of the high level of cooperation and support we receive from our community partners. With their continued support I am confident the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County will continue to improve our level of preparedness,” said Michelle Hill, RN, BSN, DOH-Santa Rospublic health preparedness planner for DOH-Santa Rosa.

PPHR recognition confirms that DOH-Santa Rosa has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place and that staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency. Local health departments recognized by PPHR undergo a rigorous evaluation by peer review to assess their ability to meet a set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices.

PPHR recognition also requires health departments to collaborate with their state, local, and community partners to develop plans that account for all the constituents in their

jurisdictions. The Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County works closely with Santa Rosa Emergency Management, Santa Rosa Medical Center, the Santa Rosa All Hazards Health and Medical Group, the Emerald Coast Health Care Coalition, and the Florida Departments of Health in Escambia, Okaloosa and Walton Counties.

“When disaster strikes, it affects local communities, and local health departments are a critical part of any first response to disease outbreaks, emergencies, and acts of terrorism,” said Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, NACCHO Executive Director. “NACCHO commends the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County for being a model of public health emergency preparedness.”

NACCHO, the voice of the 2,800 local health departments across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

For more information on the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County’s role in emergency preparedness and response, visit our website at <http://santarosa.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/index.html>

For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR> .

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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