

# Laramie County Wellness



Laramie County, Board of Public Utilities, Cheyenne/Laramie County Health Department

Winhealth and Cheyenne/Laramie County Library

## MISSION STATEMENT

WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING EXCELLENT SERVICE TO LARAMIE COUNTY RESIDENTS BY CREATING AND MAINTAINING AN EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM INTENDED TO IMPROVE LARAMIE COUNTY EMPLOYEES PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Health Week

### Participants

- YMCA
- American Martial Arts
- Fitness One
- Peak Wellness
- Cheyenne Regional Medical Center
- Tobacco Free Wyoming
- Cent\$ible Nutrition

This first quarter of 2008 was a very busy one for the Laramie County Wellness Team. Winhealth sponsored a Blood Draw, Health Risk Appraisals (HRA), and an on-line wellness program called Wellsource for the four agencies involved in the Wellness Committee. Out of all the agencies we had a total of 324 participants in the Blood Draw and HRA's. A big THANK YOU goes out to Tracie Peterson and Linda Davis from Winhealth for all of their hard work helping us put this together.

In addition to the Blood Draws and HRA's we also had our first annual health week. We were able to bring Winhealth back to not only hand out everyone's HRA's but to give a presentation explaining how to read them. At the same time we brought in several health related members of the community in to provide educational information on different health issues.

Overall the events went well. Next year we hope to have even more participants and a bigger health week. Throughout 2008 the Wellness team will be bringing in educational speakers and some different incentives for everyone to participate in.

### Diabetes-Blood Sugar

- 80% Had desired less than 100 fasting blood sugar
- 13-14% Had borderline high 100-125 fasting blood sugar
- 3-4% Has possible diabetes 126+ fasting blood sugar

### Exercise

- 71% Exercise 3 or less days per week
- 60% Do not do strength exercises
- 58% Do not do stretching exercises

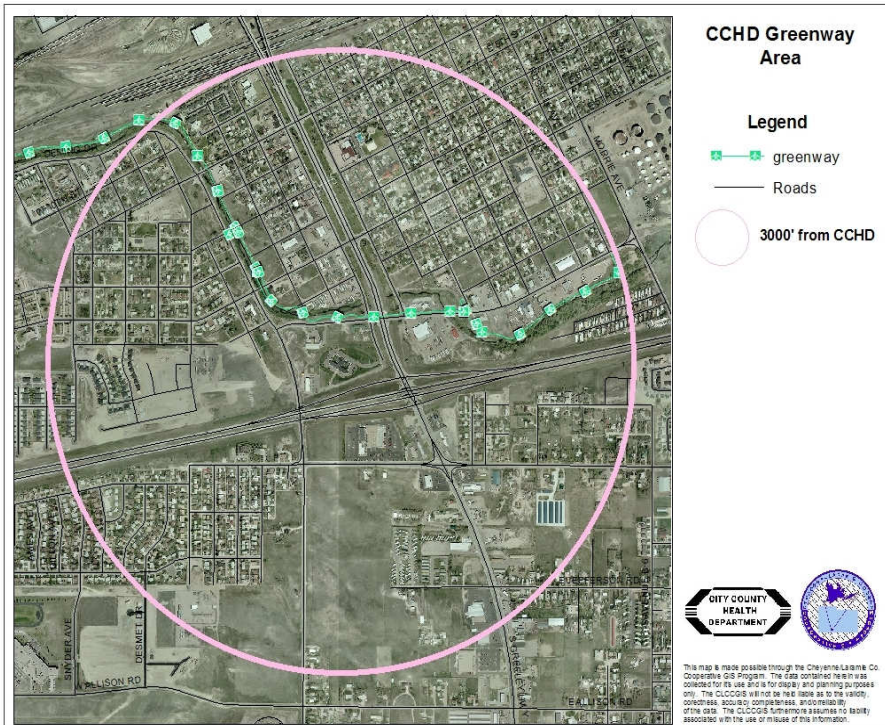
### Smoking

- 58% Never smoked
- 30% Are quitting smoking

### BMI-Body Mass Index

- 31% Desired BMI
- 36% Over recommended BMI
- About 31% - High Risk





Employees of the Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department (CLCHD) have the advantage of working in close proximity to the greenway. CLCHD employees, through their “Worksite Wellness Program”, have the option of combining daily work breaks into one block of time if it is utilized for exercise. Some employees choose to use this time to exercise on the greenway. Employees have also organized Yoga classes in the conference room during lunch as well as using exercise videos as a way to stay fit.

# Ten Steps to Moving at Work

1. **Walk with a colleague, walk with a client**  
Invite a co-worker to join you for a walking break, meeting or appointment. Walking and talking can open up new conversation topics and create strong bonds.
2. **Choose a fitness friend**  
Being accountable to someone else often makes it easier to fit fitness in. Set up specific times to walk together or to try out new activities like a yoga class.
3. **Sit up straight**  
Sound too simple? Actually, sitting up straight and tightening your stomach muscles can make a big difference in your posture (and it helps prevent back pain too!).
4. **Walk while you wait**  
Waiting for the train or the bus? Walk around the station or up around the block. Waiting for an appointment? Stroll down the hall or around your office.
5. **Stretch your body (and your mind)**  
A few good stretches can help relax your body and clear your mind. You can stretch while working at a computer, while talking on the phone or just for the fun of it!
6. **Reward yourself with an activity break**  
Take an activity break whenever you can. After working diligently at your desk, take 5-10 minutes to hand-deliver a file, set up a meeting in person or walk to the copier.
7. **Plan a regular walking route**  
Some people love a routine. Map out a regular route (or routes) inside and/or outside, so you can get up and get moving, without having to think about it at all.
8. **Use your legs for errands**  
Need to go to the bank, the post office, the dentist or the hairdresser? Need to deliver some papers to a colleague? Use your legs to walk (or bike) there and back.
9. **Become a “stair master”**  
Think you need a fancy machine for your backside? Think again! Build beautiful legs and thighs for free. Just take the stairs (up and down) whenever you can.
10. **Explore your workplace options**  
Do you always use the same restroom, the same water fountain and the same route to your office? Enjoy a few extra steps by using facilities that are farther away!

# Stress OUT

Name: Dave Hale

Job Title: Water Plant Operator (BOPU)

Age or Generation: 45

Working Hours: 12 hr shifts

Considers His Job: Moderately stressful

Written By: Victor Spencer



While talking with Dave I asked four basic questions,: What is the biggest stress in your job? In what way do you deal with the stress? How do you feel your stress management helps you at work? And finally why would you recommend your way of dealing with stress to others?

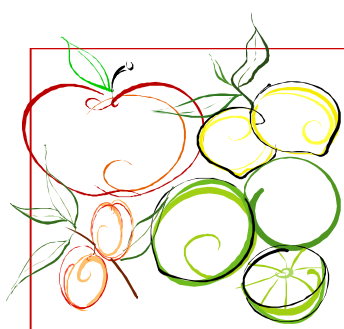
Dave has a rather unique stress reliever in that there just aren't many old buzzards left. Now if you know anything about gold prospecting you know that one of the most famous prospectors of recent times was known as the "Buzzard". Dave has taken his lead from such men as this and takes his stress to the great outdoors.

When I asked Dave how he felt gold prospecting helped him, he had a two part answer, "I come back more *patient* and *pleasant* with co workers." Having worked with Dave for many years, I know whatever he is doing it's working well for him.

While talking with him about the other benefits of gold prospecting and how it helped him with stress he commented, "I get into beautiful areas and get a great workout". Gold prospecting has many physical aspects. You hike, dig, and in some cases, take a good swim. When you are using a dredge to try and get your gold, you can spend all day in the water "vacuuming" out rocks and sand from the water; after which you must fill in the hole that you have made. You get some more lifting and shoveling in at the end.

The best part for Dave is "you might get rich!" Gold and fame aside you get a great work out in beautiful country scenery and hopefully come home a little richer and a little less stressed out.

For more information on gold Prospecting you can go to [www.goldprospectors.org](http://www.goldprospectors.org)



## Trying to find the motivation to get healthy?

Captain Rich Hillegas from the Laramie County Sheriff's Department discusses how he and his wife Lorie started their journey to getting healthier over 20 years ago.

### ***What inspired you and your wife to start your wellness program?***

In the early 80's I was overweight, about 185 lbs, which is heavy for me. I started dieting and lost about 30 pounds over the course of a year. That was okay for a few years, but I was still not feeling right, and I was obviously out of shape. I started into Tae Kwon Do about 1987 and lost another 5 pounds or so but I wanted to increase my stamina so a year later I started running and added some light weight training to my exercise regime. I also did some heavy bag workouts to practice my martial arts techniques and to help with the stamina. Although I dropped the Tae Kwon Do after about 10 years, I really began to pick up on the running so that I could participate in 5K and 10K runs such as the Bolder Boulder.

My wife Lorie, had begun walking in the late 80's or early 90's and actually built up her walking to the point where she participated in the Bolder Boulder as a walker along with me. I believe she just wanted to improve her general fitness at first, but she also was experiencing some of the changes that women go through. I know that bone density has been a concern for her. Doctors have told her that weight-bearing exercises would be good for her to improve that situation and it appears to be working. She has also begun to run, which I know has made her feel a lot better and she sleeps better.

### ***How long ago did you begin the program?***

I started dieting about 1983 and exercising about 1987 and have kept it up in one form or another ever since. My wife started exercising in the late 80's – early 90's and also did a lot of reading about nutrition because she wasn't satisfied that doctors always knew a lot about that topic. She too has kept up with the exercise since that time.

### ***Describe what your program consists of in detail - i.e. diet, exercise, healthclub(s), home equipment (how many days a week and for how long per session using each specific piece of equipment).***

Lorie belonged to a health club for awhile and I belonged to the YMCA for awhile, but we didn't seem to use them much, so it was wasted money in our case. Over the years we began accumulating exercise equipment. I have gone through several weight machines like a SoloFlex, and others, but for ten years Lorie and I have been using a Total Gym (the one advertised by Chuck Norris). It is well made and uses your own body weight for weight resistance. We have a high end home treadmill, an elliptical trainer, an exercise tower for abdominal exercises and pull-ups, a recumbent bicycle and various other free weights. Most important, buy the proper shoes for the exercises you are doing and buy good shoes, this will save your feet, knees, hips and back. One other suggestion, if you are serious about improving your fitness, get a weight/body composition scale. Tanita makes several models. When my wife first started to exercise she gained a little weight, this was due to losing fat and adding muscle. The body composition measurement/weight scale will provide feedback on this information as well as bone density and other information, depending on which model you get. This can be a great tool and motivator providing feedback on your progress.

Lorie and I each exercise 5 days per week. I run 35 to 40 minutes (5 miles) five times a week and add the Total Gym routine (20 minutes) twice a week. I do substitute a mile or two on the elliptical machine for running anywhere from 1 to 3 times a week. I do pushups, pull-ups and specific abdominal exercises (synergism) almost every day. Each session begins and ends with 10 minutes of stretching. Running is my main focus.

Lorie's routine is more varied, but usually last about an hour each session. She mixes in the use of all of our machines and adds weight-bearing exercise through the use of a weight vest and more recently a kettlebell. There are some very good kettlebell routines available on the internet.

Diet is for us fairly simple. We eat anything we want, but most things are in moderation. We make a lot of our own meals, fast foods you could say, at home and in advance so we can just pull them out of the freezer and reheat them. We eat a lot of homemade soups and stews that are very healthy. We eat what might be considered fast foods by some, but when you make them at home with your own ingredients they are a lot healthier. We eat steaks, hamburgers and we like ice cream, just in small proportions.



Captain Rich Hillegas and Lorie Hillegas

***Has it been a successful choice for both of you?***

Once you start on an exercise program it becomes hard to live without it. It helps us sleep, we feel better and have more energy. The point is to do something for yourself, make time for yourself. Don't make excuses not to exercise, do it even when you don't feel like it, you always feel better afterwards. Follow a routine and set a time to workout and stick to it, but do change exercise routines occasionally. It helps you cope with stress. I'm 53 and my blood pressure is 110/70 and my resting heart rate is as low as 36 bpm; they weren't anywhere near that low when I started. I'm in better shape than I was in my 20's. Set realistic goals for yourself so you keep improving.

***Describe the difference in how much better the two of you feel since you've chosen to maintain a healthy lifestyle.***

(Probably answered some of this one above.) This has been very beneficial for both of us. I now weigh about 140 lbs. and have maintained my weight and fitness for 20+ years. My wife has done similarly, her general health has improved.

Interviewed By Marianne Phetteplace

