

Nevada Executive Branch Agencies

### **Health Division**

(formerly, Health Department)

## **Records**

### **Introduction**

As Nevada was being established as a territory and then a state in the 1860s, there was growing national

Legislative provision in relation to public health was relatively comprehensive and up-to-date in Nevada

In 1893, the Legislature created a State Board of Health, but this body was so under-funded and unders

Thus, although state involvement with health concerns in Nevada built on precedents established during

The dividing line between state and local responsibility and authority has always been a general issue in

The many areas related to public health in which government became involved in Nevada can be group

Some degree of government responsibility in each of these areas was established in Nevada before the

Similar powers were later given to Boards of County Commissioners in respect of unincorporated towns

## PRE-BOARD OF HEALTH LEGISLATION

In addition to the various public health related provisions which were included in acts for municipal incorp

### (1) Public Spaces

The basic criminal law passed at the first session of the Territorial Legislature in 1861 made it an offense

This general prohibition predated the specific powers related to drains, sewers, and nuisances subsequ

### (2) Contagious Diseases

In 1862, the Territorial Legislature provided that the Governor of the Territory should appoint a graduate

In 1869, the State Legislature prohibited the re-use of clothing and bedding that had been used by "any

In 1879, the Legislature provided that it would be unlawful to carry out interments without a death certifi

Also in the 1879 session, the Legislature passed a separate act prohibiting the disinterment of those wh

### (3) General Public Health

The basic criminal law passed at the first session of the Territorial Legislature in 1861 included a provisio

In the United States, ensuring the wholesomeness of food offered to the public became increasingly see

In 1879, the Legislature prohibited the sale of "impure, adulterated or unwholesome milk" and established

The 1881 session of the Legislature also passed an act "to Punish and Prevent Deception in the Manufa

In 1887, it was made unlawful to knowingly bring into the state any animals with an infectious disease. B

In a separate act of 1887, it was made illegal to "drive any horse infected with glanders, or pink eye; any

In 1891, the Legislature passed an act prohibiting bringing into the state "any sheep, hog, horse, or cattl

#### (4) Amelioration of Individual Health Problems

In 1867, the Legislature provided that any "Hospital, or other charitable asylum within this State, for the c

In 1871, an act to amend the law in respect of Boards of County Commissioners provided the "power" fo

And an act of 1881, which further amended the law creating Boards of County Commissioners and inclu

An act of 1885 prescribed that in all public schools above the grade of primary "shall be taught ... elemen

In sum, these acts demonstrate considerable concern with public health on the part of the Nevada State

As there was no comprehensive state administration of these laws, evidence of their implementation sho

### THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH (1893)

By the early 1890s, there had been numerous statutory provisions enacted with the intent of safeguarding

In 1893, encouraged by concern over an outbreak of Asiatic cholera in the Eastern states, the Legislature

The State Board of Health was to investigate the incidence and means of prevention of contagious disease

Regular meetings of the Board were to be held annually and the Board President could also call meetings

Comprehensive as this charge was, in actuality the Board did not have the resources needed to carry it

In 1895, the act of 1891 regarding diseased animals was amended so that it became unlawful for anyone

In 1897, the Legislature passed an act forbidding the manufacture or sale of "candy adulterated by the a

In 1901, the Legislature established an independent State Board of Pharmacy consisting of five "compet

The pharmacy act also provided that failing "to use due care and reasonable caution" or being "grossly n

Practicing pharmacy without complying with the provisions of the act was to be deemed a misdemeanor

The pharmacy act further provided that to adulterate, deteriorate, or substitute any "drug, chemical or m

Finally, it was made a misdemeanor for any licensed pharmacist to permit anyone not licensed by the Board to practice pharmacy in the state.

This very substantive provision for putting the practice of pharmacy in the state on a sound footing and t

Another act of 1901 made it illegal to sell "the meat of any equine animal, without informing the purchaser

In 1903, an act "for preventing the spread of contagious diseases" provided that when any one or more

Notwithstanding the body of legislation already dealing with the prevention of disease among livestock a

In 1905, the Legislature enacted that each county in the state should establish a County Board of Health

In early 1905, the Sheriff of Esmeralda County and residents of Goldfield had informed the Governor tha

Also in 1905, the Legislature passed an act requiring burning or burial within twenty four hours of the car

In a 1907 act to provide for the reorganization of school supervision and maintenance in Nevada, the Le

The 1909 Legislature passed a number of acts related to public health issues without connecting them to

The comprehensive 1909 act in respect of adulterated, mislabeled or misbranded, or poisonous or delet

An act of 1909 made selling, bartering, or exchanging "opium, morphine, yen shee, cocaine, or any by-p

There was also a 1909 act to authorize unincorporated cities and towns to issue bonds for constructing s

Another 1909 act prohibited the disposal of "any slop, empty bottles, dead animals or other refuse or gar

As well as placing the administration of the Food and Drug Act in hands other than the Board of Health,

By 1910, Nevada had a much under funded State Board of Health which was unable to carry out the tota

### THE REORGANIZED BOARD 1911

In 1911, the Legislature passed an act to create a new State Board of Health which greatly extended the

The President and Secretary of the Board were to be appointed by the Governor for a term of four years

The Secretary was to keep a record of vital statistics, issue semi-annual bulletins and a biennial report o

In 1913, a Poisons Act separate from the Pharmacy Board Act was passed which greatly extended the l

In 1917, the Legislature passed an act requiring that teachers in public schools test and examine every c

As there was "no adequate fund to provide against and care for such an emergency" as an epidemic ou

### ANOTHER REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD (1919)

The 1919 Legislature reconstituted the Board of Health to consist of the Governor, Secretary of State, and

Between 1919 and its next reorganization in 1939, the State Board of Health developed as an increasing

In 1935, the Legislature gave the Board authority to regulate public swimming pools and bathhouses. The

### THE RECONSTITUTED BOARD 1939

In 1939, the Legislature reconstituted the Board of Health once more. The Board was now to consist of the

In 1963, the Department of Health and Welfare was established and the former Health Department became