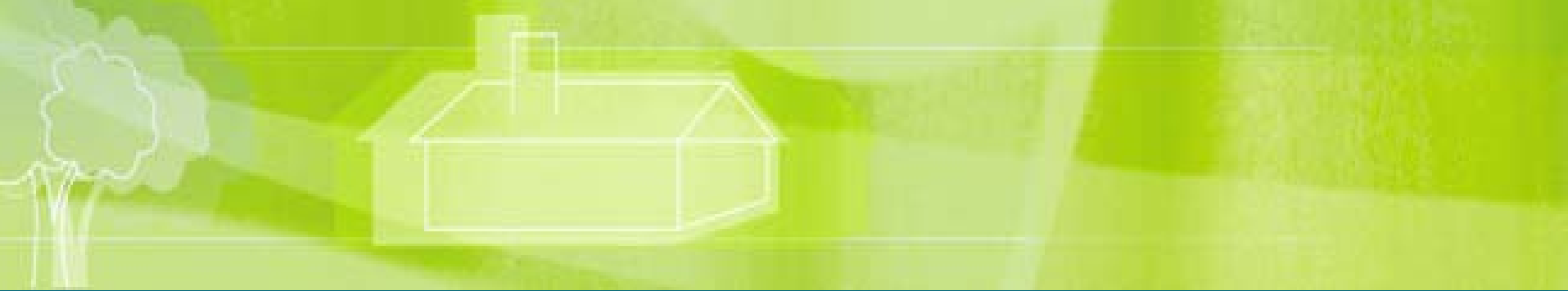


A Legislative Approach to Healthy Public Policy in Local Government



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Public Health Group

Why local government

- Level of government closest to community
- Impacts on:
 - safe and healthy places to live
 - social networks and support services
 - opportunities to participate in decisions affecting the community
 - good infrastructure such as land use schemes



Image from the video "Leading the Way", VicHealth and Mudpuppy Productions, 2003

The Health Act: Section 29B

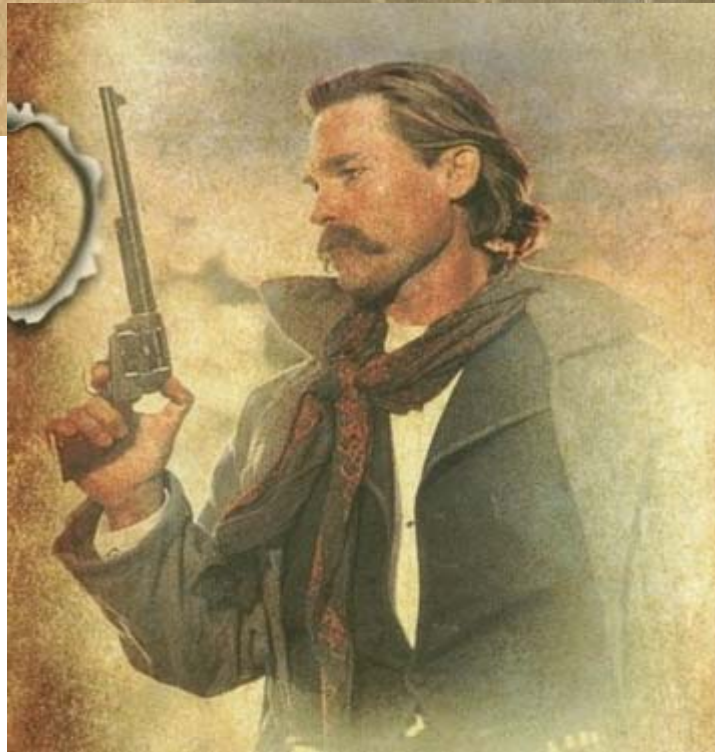
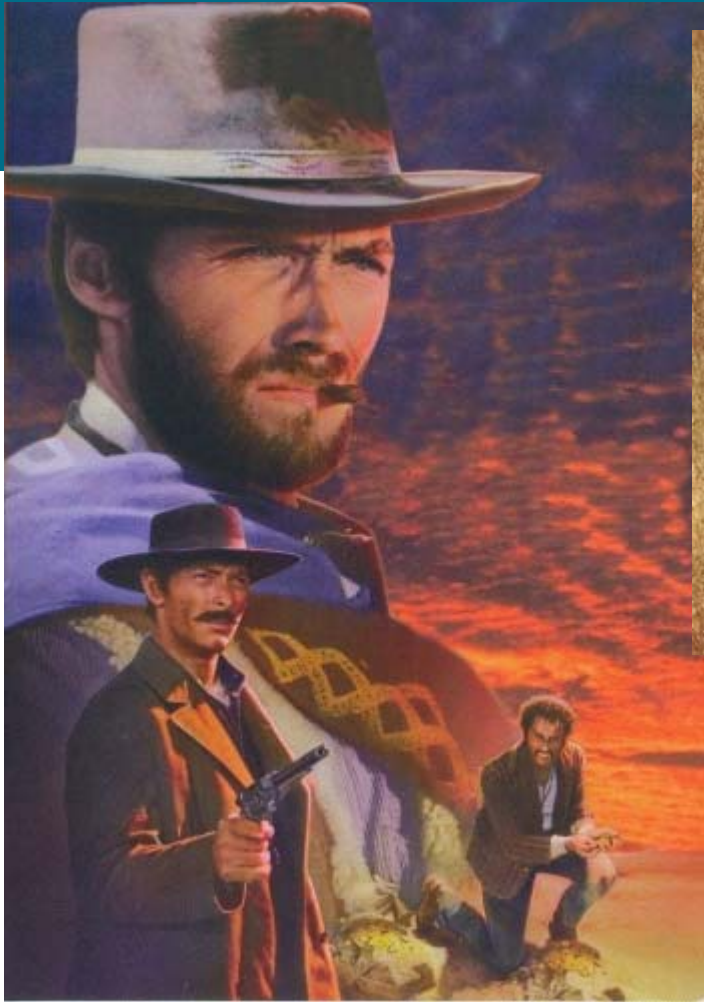
1. Every council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare at 3 year intervals a municipal public health plan.
2. A municipal public health plan must -
 - (a) identify and assess actual and potential public health dangers affecting the municipal district; and
 - (b) outline programs and strategies which the council intends to pursue to –
 - (i) prevent or minimise those dangers; and
 - (ii) enable people living in the municipal district to achieve maximum well-being; and
 - (c) provide for periodic evaluation of programs and strategies.
3. Every council must review its municipal public health plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan.

The early history of municipal public health planning

Pre-1988	Local Government health functions focus on environmental health and human services
1988	Health (General Amendment) Act – functions for local government and new provision for municipal public health plans – to take legal effect in 1993
1989 - 1993	MPHP Pilot Program – Four stages
Other: 1990, 1992	VicHealth Healthy Localities Project and ALGA Integrated Local Area Planning

The early years

- Strong take-up rate: 76% of councils had plan
- Focus on developing the plan, rather than implementation
- General lack of council ownership of MPHPs



Towards the new century

- 1999: recommendation for framework to achieve greater consistency and quality across the state
- Partnership with Municipal Association of Victoria and other stakeholders

Environments for Health

Promoting Health and Wellbeing through
Built, Social, Economic and Natural Environments

Municipal Public Health Planning Framework

Snapshot of current environment: 2005

- Over 80% of councils with current plans
- More emphasis on practical strategies
- Many councils integrating health into other strategic planning: corporate plan, land use plan
- Councils working in partnership
- Ongoing issues: staffing/resources, working across council

Case study

One council in
rural
Victoria....



Review of the Health Act: 2004-05

Issues for discussion:

- Recognise council role to protect, improve and promote health
- Continue requirement for MPHPs?
- How do we achieve:
 - greater focus on implementing and evaluating MPHPs
 - Closer links to other council planning, processes and timelines

Lessons learned

- Legislation as enabler
- Not just compliance, but quality
- Political/internal advocacy
- Partnership with MAV, VicHealth and other stakeholders

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Local Government Planning for Health & Wellbeing

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