



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI  
DIRECTOR

Date: August 4, 2010

To: Dr. Susan Smolinske, PharmD, ABAT  
Managing Director, Poison Control Center of Michigan

From: Janet Olszewski  
Director

Subject: Grant of Authority to Conduct Surveillance for Health Effects of the Oil Spill in  
Calhoun County that began July 25, 2010

This letter serves as a verification of a grant of authority from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) for you and your staff to conduct the public health activities described here, acting as a public health authority pursuant to the Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information promulgated under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) [45 CFR Parts 160 and 1641]. Under this rule, covered entities may disclose, without individual authorization, protected health information to public health authorities "... authorized by law to collect or receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease, injury, or disability, including, but not limited to, the reporting of disease, injury, vital events such as birth or death, and the conduct of public health surveillance, public health investigations, and public health interventions . . . ." The definition of public health authority includes "... an individual or entity acting under a **grant of authority** with such public agency . . . ."

Therefore, the Poison Control Center at Children's Hospital of Michigan under the management of Dr. Susan Smolinske, PharmD, ABAT and her staff is given a **grant of authority** to conduct surveillance in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Community Health, the Calhoun County Department of Public Health, and the Kalamazoo Department of Health and Human Services. Surveillance activities include collection, analysis, and reporting of information reported by health care providers and citizens on health effects from contract with oil spilled into the Kalamazoo River in Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties. Reporting of individuals with chemical poisonings, including adverse health effects from exposure to oil, to the Michigan Department of Community Health and local public health is authorized by the Public Health Code (R 325.71-325-75).

For additional information, contact Martha Stanbury, Michigan Department of Community Health, at 517-335-8364 or stanburym@michigan.gov.

For legal questions related to this "grant of authority", contact Matthew Rick, Director of the Office of Legal Affairs, at 517-241-3988 or rickm@michigan.gov.