



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



The Hills are Alive with Walking Vermonters

Sign up for the Get Moving Vermont Spring Challenge
During National Public Health Week April 5-9

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BURLINGTON – Vermont state employees “walked the talk” last year. A total of 339,125,192 million steps to be exact, recorded on pedometers one footstep at a time during the 12-week Get Moving Vermont spring challenge.

Hundreds of state employees are expected to sign up for the Get Moving Vermont challenge during National Public Health Week, April 5-9. The spring challenge officially kicks off April 12 with a walk around the Vermont Statehouse led by Governor Jim Douglas, who wears a pedometer and tracks his activity every day.

“Worksite wellness programs have gained significant momentum in Vermont in the past few years; there were 80 employers in Vermont last year who received awards from the State of Vermont for their wellness initiatives,” said Health Commissioner Wendy Davis, MD. “We knew, as state employees, that if we were going to encourage the rest of the state to move more and eat healthier foods, we could – and should – set an example.”

The Get Moving Vermont program is a collaborative partnership with the Vermont Department of Human Resources, Department of Health and the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness & Sports. The online tool is available to anyone who wants to participate in the 2010 “The Hills Are Alive with Vermonters Walking” spring challenge, not just state employees.

Participants can track their activity, fruit and vegetable consumption, water intake and weight, and follow their progress up through elevated peaks such as Mount Mansfield and Camel’s Hump.

“We encourage state employees to participate with their family and friends and to track activities they do in and out of work,” said Maura O’Brien, program coordinator for the Division of Workforce Development & Wellness in the Department of Human Resources. “If you want to positively impact employee health and wellness, it’s essential to connect their work and home lives; this has been one of the benefits of our collaboration.”

Last year, more than 500 state employees, and friends and family of state employees, logged more than 159,000 miles, including 127 state employees who completed the full challenge and walked the equivalent of the entire length of the nation’s longest footpath, the 2,172 mile Appalachian Trail.

State employees formed 95 teams last year, and although some chose to compete against each other, the intent is to promote physical activity and set milestones in a supportive way. Participants are encouraged to walk at least 10,000 steps a day, and the majority of Vermonters who sign up eclipse their initial goals.

Any Vermonter who wants to sign up for the challenge should visit the Get Moving Vermont website at: www.getmoving.vermont.gov. You can also follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/healthvermont>. For more information on National Public Health Week “A Healthier America, One Community at a Time” visit: www.nphw.org.

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