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**Johnson County Department of Health and Environment
is first in Kansas to receive accreditation**

(Olathe, Kan.) June 23, 2014 – The Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) is the first public health department in the state of Kansas to receive accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), and the second in the four-state region of Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska.

PHAB sets standard goals for the more than 3,000 public health departments in the United States, requiring a strict, multi-faceted peer-reviewed process. JCDHE spent more than two years working on improvements and gathering documentation to earn accreditation status.

"We are pleased and excited to be one of the first 44 health departments in the nation to achieve national standards," said Lougene Marsh, JCDHE director. "The seal of accreditation shows that our department has been rigorously examined and meets or exceeds national standards that promote continuous quality improvement for public health," Marsh said.

County Manager Hannes Zacharias also commented on the news. "It's a tremendous achievement. This designation means residents can feel confident that we are meeting the public health needs of Johnson County as effectively as possible," he said. "Our public health department is a vital resource in the community and I'm delighted that the hard work and dedication of the employees who work there is being recognized in this way."

PHAB is jointly supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. PHAB sets standards against which the nation's governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services.

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About Johnson County, Kansas

Located in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 550,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. For more information visit the county's website at www.jocogov.org.