

EHEC Surveillance

Study: Update

by Paul D. Fey, Ph.D.

The NPHL has been conducting an enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* (EHEC) surveillance study this past summer. The study has been accomplished by collecting diarrheal stools from 10 participating microbiology laboratories throughout the state. Following are some preliminary results of the study: to date, we have received 320 diarrheal samples and *E. coli* O157:H7 was isolated from nine (2.8%) of these samples. Interestingly, 7 additional samples (2.2%) were shiga-toxin positive using an ELISA test. However, we have been unable to isolate *E. coli* O157:H7 from these 7 samples. It is a distinct possibility that these samples contain non-O157:H7 EHCH, and this possibility will be investigated this fall and winter. The NPHL is willing to provide screening for *E. coli* O157:H7, and for other serotypes of EHCH, if screening is not already being performed. For more information, please call Dr. Paul D. Fey at (402)559-8104 or read the Spring 1998 edition of the NPHL Newsletter.