

# Health department plans addition

Services will be expanded

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The Oldham County Health Department is planning a \$1million addition to its building in La Grange that will include space for community education and exercise classes.

Director Teresa Gamsky said the addition will be built next year and will add 5,000 square feet to the 11,000-square-foot facility on Commerce Parkway. That building — which is the health department's only space — was built in 2004 and designed to be expanded, Gamsky said.

The department has 28 employees, and the space will allow it to add more. It also will enable the department to have education, exercise and cooking classes and an emergency shelter for people with special medical needs.

The department will be able to offer more programs that focus on local issues such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity.

The department is accepting bids on the project and plans to select an architect early next year, Gamsky said. Construction would start by spring and take eight to nine months.

The space will be a mix of community and office space and also will have a biohazard storage area.

Gamsky said most health departments have large community rooms, but Oldham's is limited in space and is difficult to fit all the staff members in for a meeting.

When the H1N1 vaccines were distributed last year, the building was barely able to handle the additional supplies and staff.

She said the department has saved up enough to pay for the addition over the past four to five years.

The department collects 2 cents from every \$100 of real property value. The revenue has been growing with the population, but has recently slowed with the economy, she said.

The health department serves all Oldham residents and has employees that oversee restaurant and septic system inspections, financials, a clinic that has family planning

and vaccinations, and a HANDS program that supports first-time parents. The department also has a community emergency preparedness coordinator.

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