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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S NEW TOUGH TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES SERVICES IN THE FIELD**

The Westchester County Health Department is equipping its Environmental Health field workers with rugged portable “toughbook” computers that will automate the inspection process.

The new technology will allow health inspectors to generate typed inspection reports and notices of violation that can be printed out and handed directly to the facility operators at the site and time of inspection. The inspection history of the facility will be available to staff on-site. The computers also give access to email, document exchange, and Internet resources in the field. A unique feature is the software application that contains individual modules tailored to each of the 20 field inspection programs, but connected to a unified database for all.

Several toughbooks were used in a pilot program by Health Department restaurant inspectors this year and the results were so impressive that the Department will be phasing-in a total of 70 portable computers in 2008 for field staff working in all 20 Environmental Health field inspection programs. This will include staff monitoring air and water quality, children’s camps, pools and beaches, petroleum bulk storage, and animal facilities, among others.

“Having computer access out in the field gives a great boost to efficiency and to the quality of services we can provide,” said Westchester County’s Commissioner of Health, Dr. Joshua Lipsman. “Environmental inspectors can save time by entering information instantly, rather than writing information by hand then inputting it later back at the office. This avoids duplication of work and also avoids potential errors or delays caused by hard-to-read handwriting.”

**MORE**

The development of the software and introduction of portable computers is part of an ongoing effort by Westchester County to increase efficiency and reduce costs while making services more accessible and user-friendly through the incorporation of innovative technological solutions.

“We will continue to seek new ways to upgrade our ability to serve the people of Westchester,” said Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano. “Taking advantage of the new technology that is available is one cost-effective way we can do that.”

Offering a wide variety of forms and documents online, sending automated email alerts, and introducing a system for electronic filing of construction plans are just some of the recent steps taken by the County to improve services through technology.

For more information, please call the Westchester County Health Department at (914) 813-5000 or visit the Health Department website at [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health).