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NEWS RELEASE

Charlotte County Health Department Receives Bicycle Friendly Business Award

Port Charlotte (FL) - The Florida Department of Health, Charlotte County Health Department is proud to announce the receipt of a Bronze award by The League of American Bicyclists for being a Bicycle Friendly Business. Charlotte County is the first health department in the country to receive this recognition. Bicycling provides undisputed health benefits, an alternative mode of transportation, and cost savings by reducing trips to the gas pump.

"We at the Department of Health strive to lead by example when it comes to healthy lifestyle choices that incorporate a balanced diet and exercise," said Ana Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H., Florida State Surgeon General. "We are pleased for the Charlotte County Health Department and know that they will continue to embody the behaviors that led them to this recognition."

"We are truly honored to be recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as the first health department in the country to be recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Business, said Charlotte County Health Department Administrator, Steven Mitnick. "With this award, we challenge other businesses in Charlotte County to make their businesses more bicycle friendly for their employees and customers."

The Port Charlotte facility has installed secure bike lockers and showers for commuting staff. There are decorative yet functional conveniently located bike racks available for the public to use. Newly hired staff are encouraged to ride to work and are provided with an information packet that includes a guide developed by staff for staff called *CCHD Tips for Successful Bicycle Commuting*, the Florida Bicycling Association (FBA) guidelines to laws that apply to cyclists, FBA's guidelines for safe cycling practices, and a map of Charlotte County bike paths.

"This Bicycle Friendly Business is making a difference for employees, customers, and communities," said Bill Nesper, Director of the Bicycle Friendly America Program. "Charlotte County Health Department promotes bicycling as a viable form of transportation and gives their employees choices and options that make biking to work easy, fun and healthy."

For bicycling resources and information on health department programs you can visit www.CharlotteCHD.com.

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