

City Health Dept. Win High National Honor, Given Special Citation

By MARIANNE JOHNSON

The Albuquerque City Health Dept. has been judged one of the best in the nation.

The department, headed by Larry J. Gordon, has been awarded a special citation, the first ever to be presented in the national Samuel J. Crumbine Awards contest. The award was announced Thursday in New York City.

Open to about 1200 city health departments, the annual Crumbine Awards are the highest national awards which can be received by a health department

The special citation for the Albuquerque department was based on "outstanding achievement in the development of programs of environmental and food sanitation."

Special Citation

The awards jury voted the award the special citation to the department after it was judged second in the nation in both divisions of the annual contest, the first time a health department has placed in either first or second place in both environmental and food sanitation ratings.

The contest is sponsored by the public health committee of the Paper, Cup and Container Institute, publishers of the Health Officers News Digest which is sent to more than 13,000 public health workers.

Jurors for the awards this year were Ralph T. Fisher, chief, division of health education, New Jersey State Health Dept.; Dr. Ira Hiscock, public health department, Yale University; Miss Martha Allen, national director, Campfire Girls; Karl Mason, director of the Bureau of Environmental Sanitation; Pennsylvania State Health Dept.; Dr. Kenneth J. Weckel, professor, dairy and food industries department, University of Wisconsin, and Dr. John Porterfield, assistant surgeon-general, U. S. Public Health Service.

Entries were received from departments from coast to coast, according to William V. Hickey of the PCCI. Competition was very keen and many entries reflected extremely well planned programs," Hickey said.

"However, it was the unanimous decision of the jury that the Albuquerque Health Dept. is one of the foremost in the nation in its contribution to the health and welfare of the community and second to the award winning departments on the basis of entries submitted.

"The citizens of Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico may well be proud of the Albuquerque Health Dept. and the exceptional manner in which its health officer and other staff members organize and perform their duties," said Hickey.

Gordon will accept the award at the Western Branch meeting of the American Public Health Assn. in San Francisco June 4.

The health department also has received national recognition in the last two years in other fields, being ranked among the top 5 percent in the nation in its food and drink establishment regulations and controls and being listed on the U.S. Public Health Service honor roll in connection with its milk sanitation program.

Gordon was a nominee last year for the coveted Sippy Award, top award to a public health official. In the last two years, numerous new programs have been undertaken by the department, including pure food and drug control, swimming pool inspection and regulation, inspection of food vending machines, organization of a housing division, water sampling and inspection and regulation of all food processing plants. In addition, a start has been made to begin an industrial hygiene program.

City commission Chairman Maurice Sanchez and other city officials had high praise for the department and its achievements.

"Naturally, I am biased," said Sanchez "but I certainly feel the award was very well deserved. The health department personnel should be highly commended. We are very proud of its achievement and feel the city has been singly honored by being selected to receive this special award."