

Rock County Public Health Department
Annual Report



2018



3328 U.S. Hwy 51 N, Janesville, WI 53545 | 61 Eclipse Center, Beloit, WI 53511

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Rock County Board of Health (from left to right) : Vicki Brown; Craig Gramke; Lou Peer; Eric Gresens, R.PH; Connie Winter, DDS; Judy Wade, WHNP; Danette Rynes; Vijaya Somaraju, MD, MPH, FACP.
Not pictured: Kaitlyn Meyers, DVM, MPH

Values, Vision, and Mission

Values:

- Leadership
- Diversity and health equity
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- A spirit of wellness
- Accountability and fiscal responsibility
- Adaptation and continuous improvement

Vision:

Rock County Wisconsin...a healthy, thriving community.

Mission:

The Rock County Public Health Department is the catalyst that cultivates a spirit of wellness and improves the quality of life by promoting healthier lifestyles and environments through collaborative community partnerships.

Message from the Director



I am pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report of the Rock County Public Health Department. This report is a testament to the commitment of our staff and our community partners who work together to ensure the people of Rock County benefit from comprehensive public health practice, policy, and programs. The Rock County Public Health Department exists to serve the public and improve the health status of everyone who works, plays, and lives here. It is our ultimate goal that everyone in Rock County is better off for our service.

The department's vision for Rock County is to be a healthy, thriving community... This isn't merely idealism, but can be reality in Rock County. This vision has served as a call to action to build essential partnerships, expand community capacity of services to address health inequity, and help impact social factors that influence an individual's health and wellness. This report highlights some examples of how we achieve our goals in service to the community. The department has worked closely with community partners to develop preventive and community focused solutions to problems that affect Rock County. The department experienced a year of challenges and opportunities that have deepened and strengthened our tenacity and efforts to improve the health of Rock County. We will continue to work with our community partners to strengthen our collective ability to both effectively serve the public and measure outcomes to streamline efficiency.

A big THANK YOU to our staff, community partners, and community members who made this year one of our best yet. Our communities came together to take action to create a healthier future for everyone. Keep up the great work! The best is yet to come.

Yours in Health,

Marie-Noel Sandoval, MPH
Health Officer/Director

Public Health At Work For You

Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play. The Rock County Public Health Department (RCPHD), with a staff of 35, focuses on the three main priority areas of Healthy and Safe Behaviors, Healthy and Safe Homes, and Healthy and Safe Communities. Serving over 160,000 people in cities, villages, towns, and unincorporated communities, the RCPHD's role is to protect, promote, and enrich population health and collaborate with community partners to ensure a healthy and thriving Rock County.

For decades, the practice of public health has been organized around a set of core functions and essential services which form the framework of the interdisciplinary practice of public health.

- Assessment of health status and health needs
- Policy development
- Assurance that necessary services are provided

The essential services of public health represent the key activities that public health agencies carry out each day.

- Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
- Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
- Assure a competent public and personal healthcare workforce.
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

The Ten Essential Services of Public Health Wheel illustrates the relationship of the core functions and essential services that guide the interdisciplinary practice of public health.



Why We Do What We Do



Uniform Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

The RCPHD worked with school districts across Rock County to implement a uniform YRBS to help monitor health risk behaviors of youth in Rock County. This was the first year all school districts in Rock County implemented a uniform version of the survey. This work allowed partners to collect information on youth substance use, sexual behavior, and other factors related to adolescent health. Data reports were created for each of the school district partners, and this information was used to inform policy and programming in schools and throughout the community.

Presentations

The RCPHD staff presented work on health equity at the Wisconsin Public Health Association 2018 Annual Public Health Conference and Wisconsin: Healthiest State Summit.

Grants

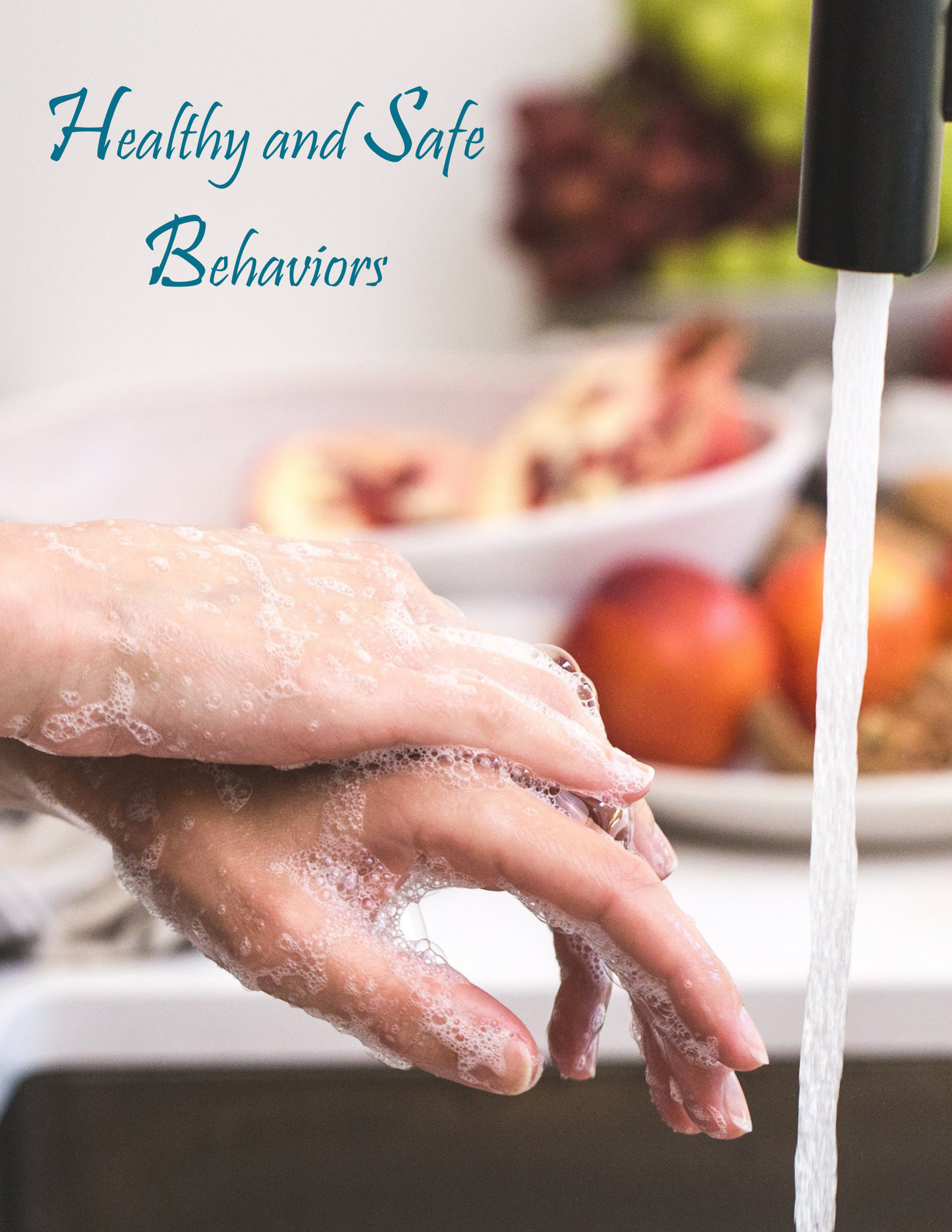
The RCPHD receives annual grant funding from several agencies. In addition to regular grant funding, the RCPHD received the following grants:

- Opioid Tracking
- Population Health Innovation Lab
- Chronic Disease
- Community Conversations
- Wisconsin Oral Health Coalition
- Groundwater Nitrate Risk Tool Mentoring Fellowship

New Epidemiologist Position

Nick Zupan joined the RCPHD team in early 2018 in the role of epidemiologist. Epidemiologists are public health professionals who investigate patterns and causes of disease and injury in humans. They seek to reduce the risk and occurrence of negative health outcomes through research, community education, and health policy. Having an epidemiologist on staff has enabled RCPHD to better identify and examine health disparities such as infant mortality, low birth weight, injury, and chronic disease. The RCPHD utilizes his expertise to retrieve, analyze, and interpret data. These skills are instrumental for planning, policy, and resource allocation purposes. The tools of epidemiology benefit the department and the community by integrating science into public health practices. This capability adds value to the RCPHD initiatives and helps carry the message that real solutions lie in prevention. Additionally, it has elevated the RCPHD image to partners and is enabling the RCPHD to gain proficiency in data analysis and be better posed for data sharing.

*Healthy and Safe
Behaviors*





Obesity

Obesity is a serious problem in Rock County. According to the most recent county health rankings, Rock County is the eighth most obese county in Wisconsin. Obesity is not just an issue of vanity, but has been shown to lead to shorter life spans, lower quality of life, and chronic medical conditions including: diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. In 2018, the RCPHD started initiatives such as Healthy Corners Stores, Worksite Wellness, and use of Health Impact Assessments to inform policies around the physical environment in efforts to address obesity within Rock County.



Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is beneficial for the mother and child because breast milk is the best source of nutrition for most babies. Breastfeeding reduces the risk of some short and long term diseases for the mother and child. The RCPHD continues to pursue breastfeeding efforts by working with child care facilities and businesses to certify them as breastfeeding friendly through the Breastfeeding Friendly Training Process. In 2018, this included significant progress with outreach and engagement of child care facilities and businesses to inform, educate, and promote the benefits of breastfeeding and how it impacts population health within Rock County. The RCPHD is the co-lead on the Rock County Breastfeeding Coalition that strives to encourage, normalize, and increase breastfeeding duration through collaboration with three health systems and relevant community health organizations with a health equity lens.



Safe Sleep

Each year in the United States about 3,500 babies die suddenly and unexpectedly before they reach their first birthday due to sleep related deaths. The RCPHD safe sleep team strives to create a common and uniform message about safe sleep practices within Rock County to reduce unexpected infant death. The RCPHD safe sleep team collaborates with obstetrics, pediatric, and emergency departments to encourage safe sleep practices with families and caregivers. Additionally, the RCPHD delivers safe sleep curriculum training to various community partners, including child care facilities, to increase knowledge of safe sleep information.



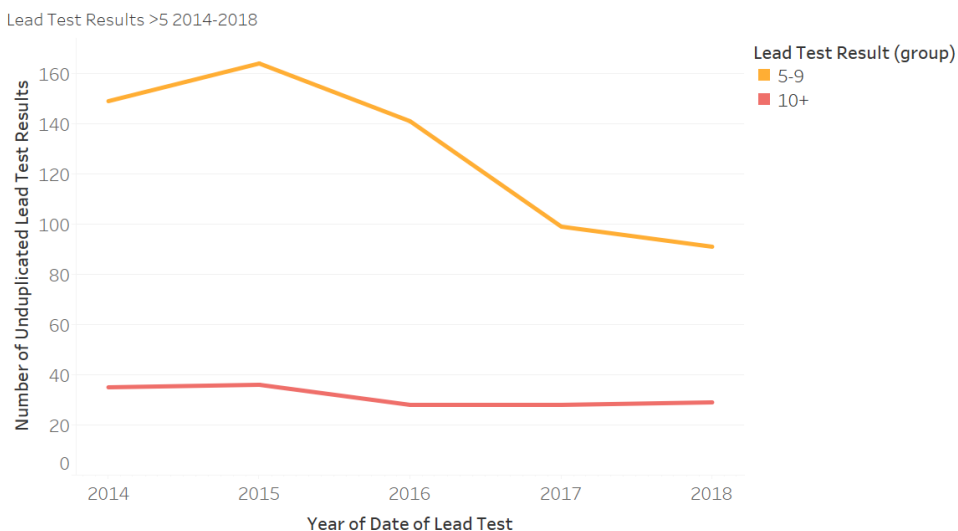
*Healthy and Safe
Homes*



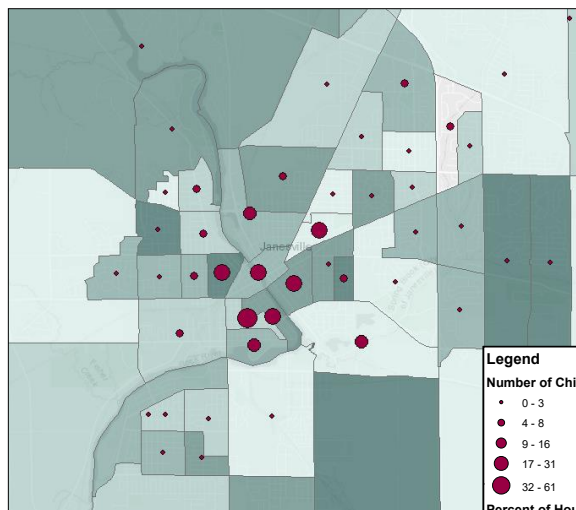
Lead Poisoning Prevention

Lead poisoning is one of the most common childhood problems in the United States. Rock County has the third highest number of lead poisoned children in the state of Wisconsin. Over half of Rock County homes have been constructed before 1960 and could contain lead based paint. Paint can be eaten or inhaled as it peels, cracks, or becomes dust. The RCPHD provides educational and investigative services to families affected by childhood lead poisoning. The RCPHD encourages those who live in homes constructed before 1960 to have their children tested for lead.

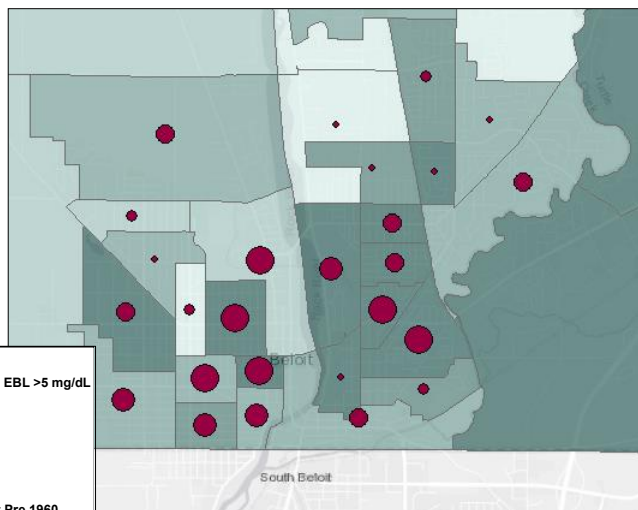
The number of children who are testing above 5 ug/dL blood lead level has decreased since 2015.



Janesville



Beloit



Legend

Number of Children with EBL >5 mg/dL

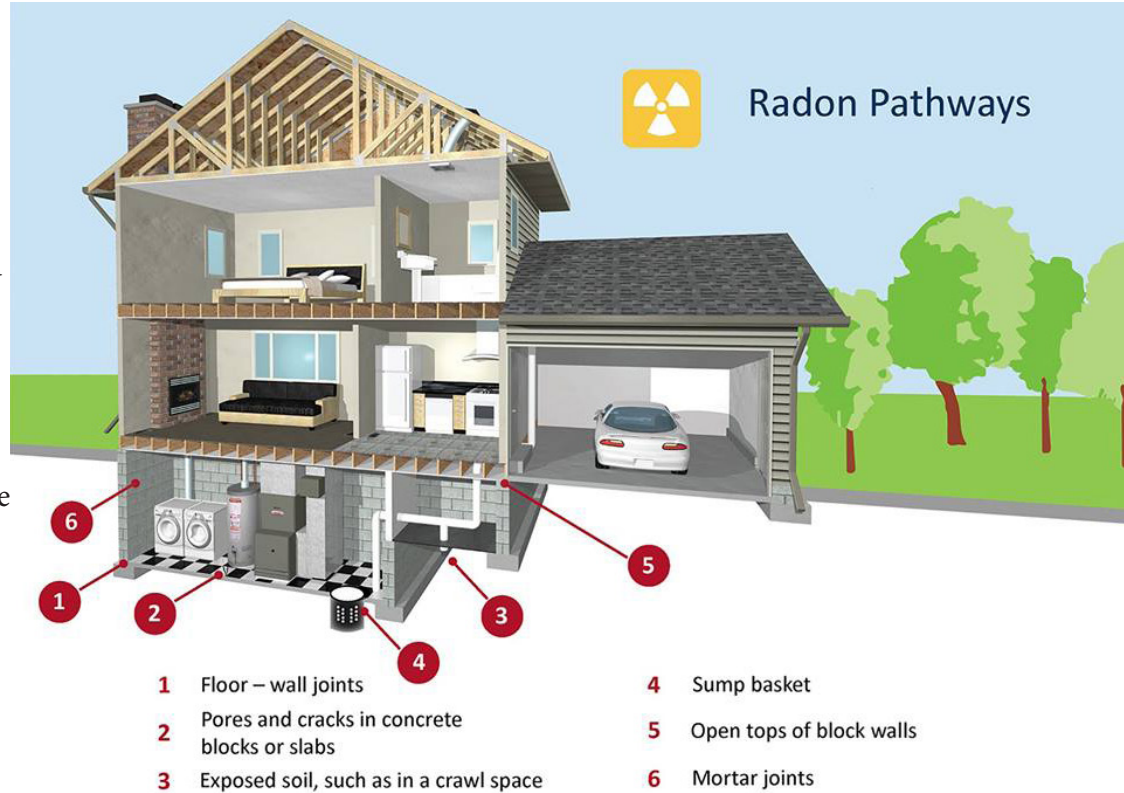
- 0 - 3
- 4 - 8
- 9 - 16
- 17 - 31
- 32 - 61

Percent of Housing Built Pre 1960

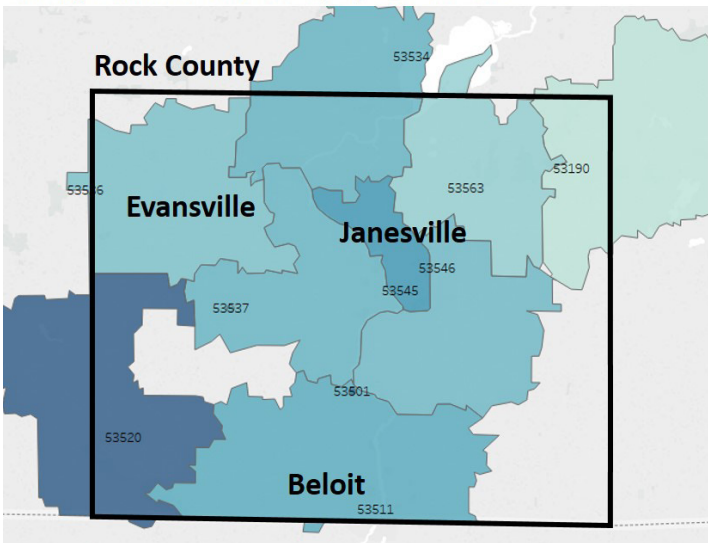
- 1.76% - 14.53%
- 14.54% - 28.29%
- 28.3% - 41.39%
- 41.4% - 60%
- 60.01% - 96.09%

Radon

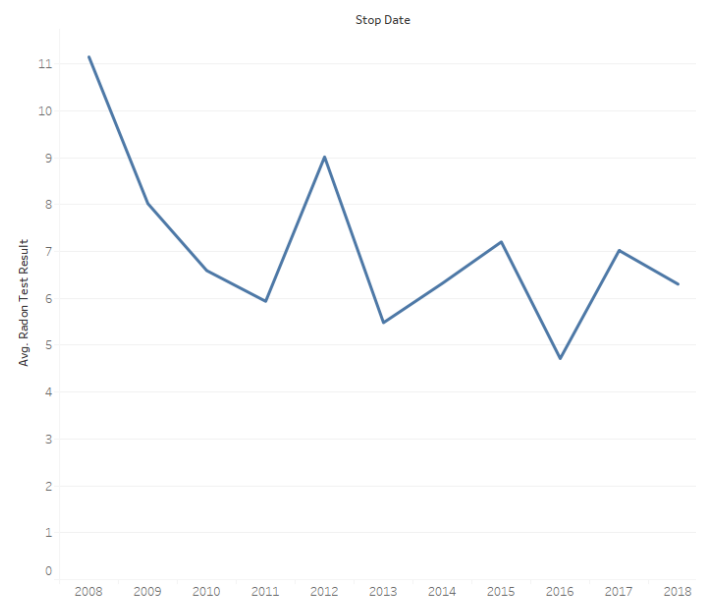
Radon is an odorless, tasteless, naturally-occurring gas that seeps into the house from the soil around and under the home through the cracks in the foundation, floor, or walls, and openings around floor drains, pipes, and sump pumps. Radon has been detected in new and old homes, and in homes with or without basements. Radon causes no immediate health symptoms, but long term exposure may cause lung cancer. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers. The RCPHD data shows that over half of homes tested within Rock County have radon levels above health advisory levels. Radon levels in a home depend on several factors and can vary greatly between neighboring houses. The RCPHD provides low-cost radon detection kits and encourages homeowners to test their homes for radon.



Average Radon Test Result by Zip Code in 2018



Radon Test Kit Results Trend over Time



Drinking Water

The RCPHD has a drinking water laboratory that is certified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture. The RCPHD recommends that well owners test their well water once a year for bacteria and nitrate. In 2018, the RCPHD lab conducted over 1,600 test for nitrates and bacteria for private well owners. The RCPHD found higher positive levels for *E. coli* in the fall of 2018. This was likely caused by the heavier rainfall that occurred around that time.

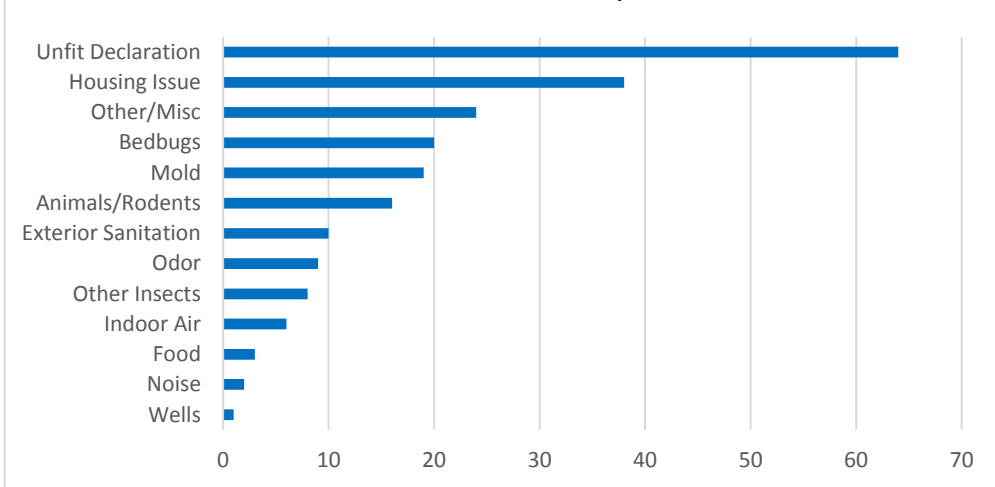
A special 'town-based' well sampling program is conducted each year in different Rock County communities to assist people with conveniently getting their wells tested at a reduced cost. In 2018, almost 20% of wells tested positive for bacteria and about 24% of wells tested above the health advisory level for nitrates.

Other Health Hazards — Public Nuisances

The RCPHD responded to 185 human health hazard complaints in 2018. This number does not reflect complaints associated with established programs, such as licensed facilities or private sewage. Environmental Health staff respond to each complaint by providing information, corrective actions, and/or referrals to other agencies.



Human Health Hazard Complaints 2018

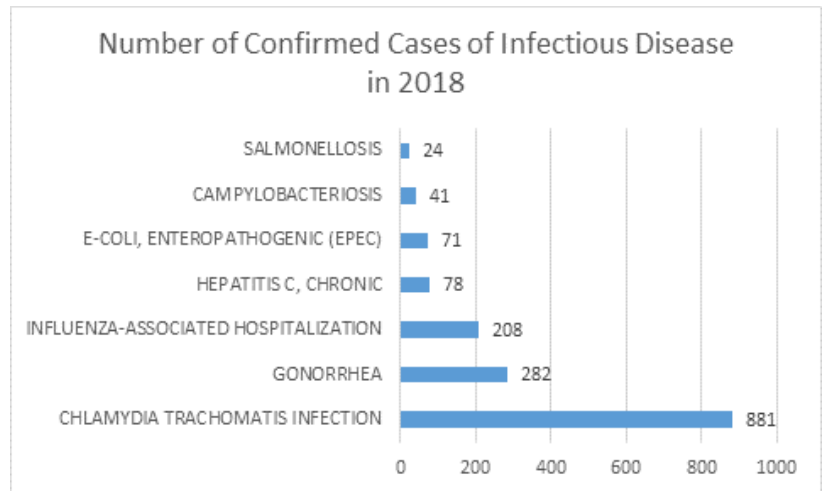


Healthy and Safe Communities



Communicable Disease

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the primary purpose of a local governmental public health agency is to prevent epidemics and spread of disease. Wisconsin State Statute 252 requires that local health officers investigate communicable diseases and take measures to prevent and control those diseases. The number of reportable infections in Wisconsin has increased in the last four years; conditions such as carbon monoxide poisoning and latent tuberculosis infection, among others, are now investigated.



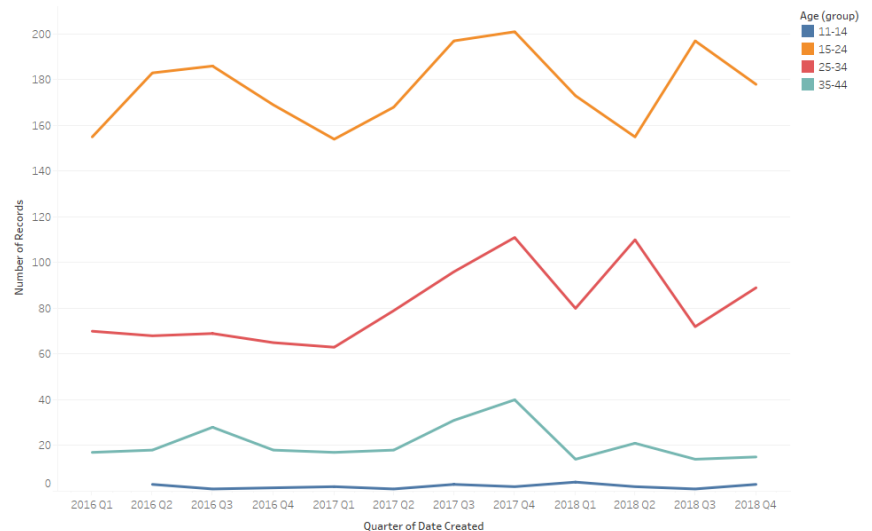
In 2018, the most reported communicable disease cases in Rock County were sexually transmitted infections (STI). The RCPHD STI team began researching evidence-based practices related to the prevention and intervention of STI and outlined a multifaceted approach to address the needs of Rock County.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infection rates are on the rise nationwide and also increasing in Rock County. According to the most recent county health rankings, Rock County has the fifth highest incidence of Chlamydia in Wisconsin. Sexually transmitted infections can lead to infertility, certain cancers, and pregnancy complications. Of the five reportable STI (Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Chancroid, and Pelvic Inflammatory Disease), Chlamydia continues to be the most commonly reported infection, but Gonorrhea has increased in recent years. Rock County Public Health Nurses conduct disease investigations and provide education regarding treatment and prevention.

Data indicates that 15–24 year olds are disproportionately affected by STI. The RCPHD is partnering with schools to encourage reproductive health curriculum which provides education and awareness as a first step in primary prevention.

Number of Cases of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea by Age Group 2016-2018



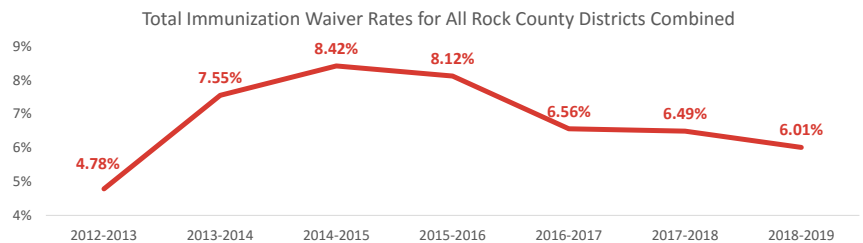


Immunizations

According to the CDC, immunizations are one of the top ten public health achievements in the 20th century. The CDC notes that immunizations have substantially reduced deaths, hospitalizations, and the health care costs due to vaccine-preventable diseases. However, constant vigilance is required to maintain proper levels of disease immunity and to control disease in our community. To maintain the current levels of protection, all people should receive immunizations, including children, adults, and the elderly.

The RCPHD continues to work with school districts and private schools in Rock County to decrease immunization waiver rates. Rock County waiver rates have continued to decline

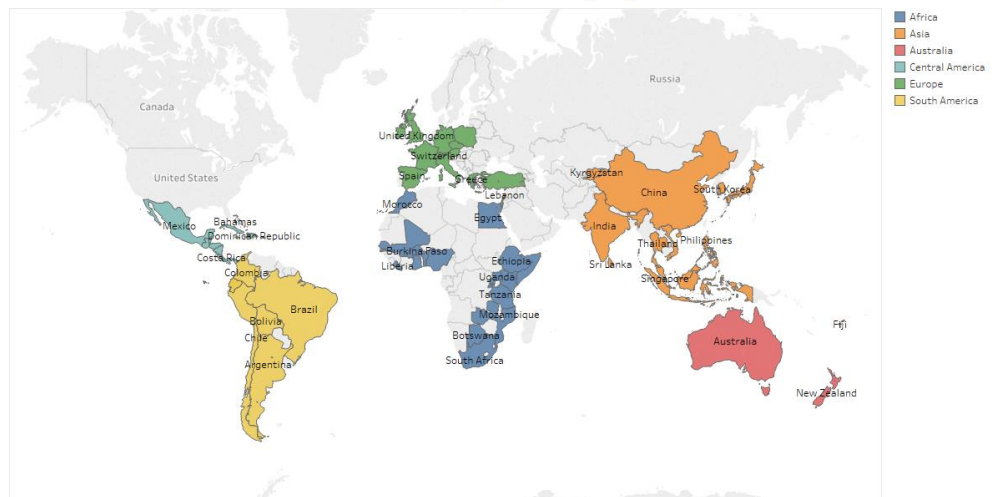
as a result of collaborations which resulted in policy changes in many schools and districts. This decrease in waiver rates is significant, because it means more children are immunized which protects our entire community.



Travel Vaccines

The world is becoming a more connected society. People travel to many different countries and can be exposed to many different diseases. Unvaccinated travelers run the risk of contracting diseases and bringing them back to their communities. The RCPHD provides travel immunizations and health protection education to children and adults traveling abroad at a reasonable cost. In 2018, RCPHD served 235 international travelers. The RCPHD nurses provided 389 vaccines and 72 antimalarial prescriptions. This protects the traveler as well as their community.

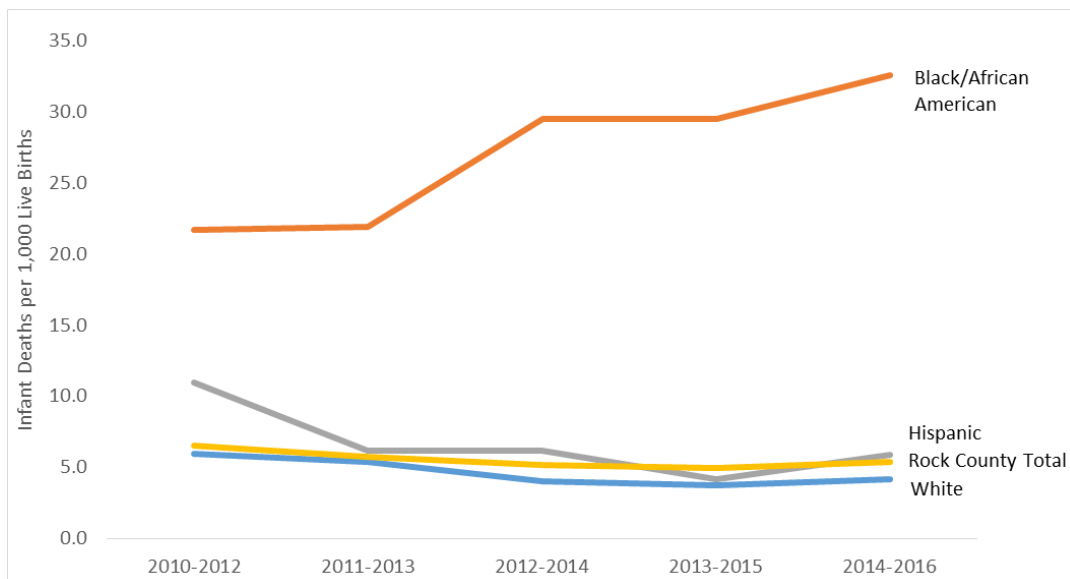
Where are our travel clinic patients going?



Better Birth Outcomes

Data shows poor birth outcomes and disparities are occurring in Rock County, particularly in the African American population. Approximately 150 babies are born each year in Rock County that are low birthweight. These babies die at a rate that is 25 times greater than babies of normal birthweight.

The RCPHD is utilizing tools, resources, and supports from the Population Health Innovation Lab grant to coordinate and leverage population-based community and system level interventions to improve birth outcomes. In coordination with community partners, this work will provide population-based strategies that promote healthy birth outcomes for all, with an emphasis on community and system level strategies that eliminates duplication of services and competition for clients, assures efficient use of resources, and produces measurable results.

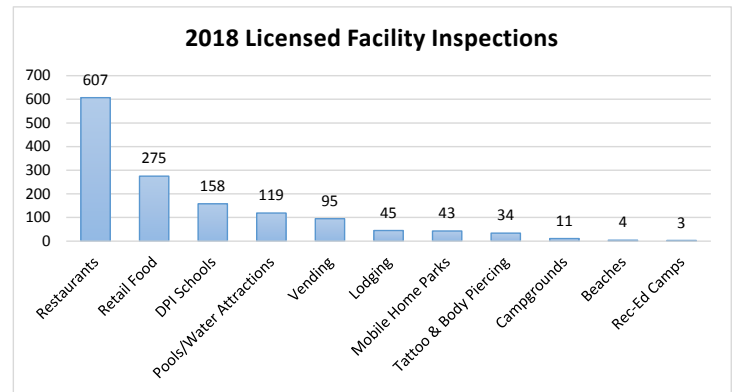


Licensed Facilities

Public food service, lodging, and recreational establishments are an important part of our community, but may create a unique threat of disease and injury for our citizens. Environmental Health Specialists are responsible for ensuring a variety of facilities maintain a safe, healthy environment for the customers and employees. This is accomplished through a combination of conducting inspections and providing education, training, and resources to operators. Corrective actions are ordered and follow-up inspections are conducted to ensure compliance. In 2018, RCPHD environmental staff conducted a total of 1,394 facility inspections. At the end of 2018, the Environmental Health Division received a grant to analyze facility inspection data. This study will be used to create intervention strategies that target the most common violations associated with foodborne illness.

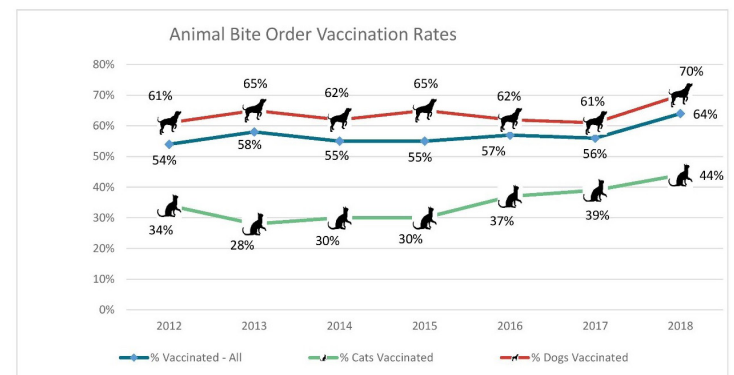
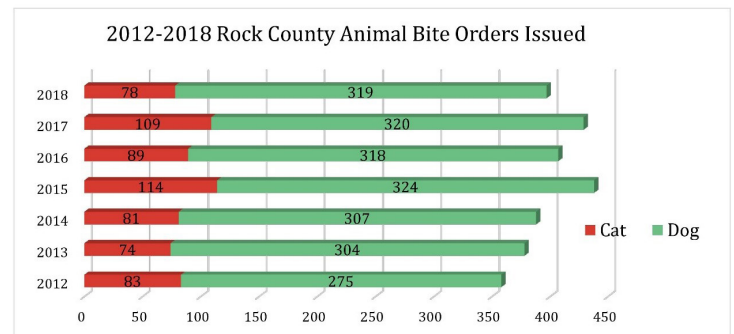


Photo Credit: Janesville Gazette



Vector Control

Rabies is a deadly disease that occurs in our wildlife. Rabies-related human deaths have significantly dropped over the last century due to aggressive rabies control programs and pet vaccinations. The RCPHD collaborates with community partners to monitor rabies exposures and enforce regulations. In 2018, 67 animals were tested for rabies with one bat testing positive. Additionally, there were 397 bite orders issued in Rock County. The RCPHD continues to promote pet vaccinations because they are a key component to protecting the public from the rabies virus. Vaccination rates of animals involved in bite orders saw a significant increase in 2018.

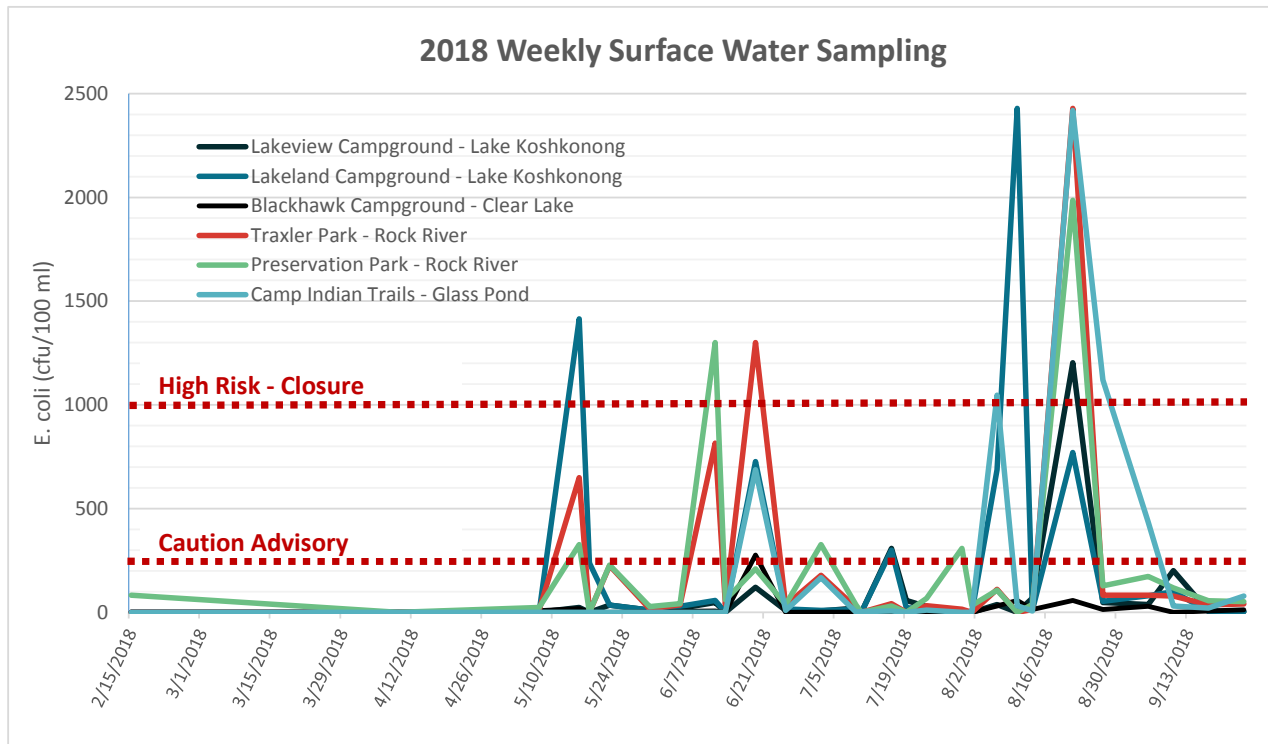


Mosquito Surveillance

The RCPHD continued to work with the University of Wisconsin Entomology Department to grow and sustain a mosquito surveillance program. Rock County is a southern tier county with significant interstate commerce, therefore monitoring for mosquitos which can carry Zika or West Nile Virus is important. The RCPHD, along with 14 other counties in Wisconsin set up mosquito surveillance traps through the guidance of this collaborative partnership. Although the Zika carrying species of mosquito was not identified in Rock County, several other species that have the potential to transmit diseases to humans were identified.

Beach and Surface Water Quality

Recreational water illnesses (RWIs) are caused by germs and chemicals found in the water we play in. They are spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols, or having contact with contaminated water. This can lead to a variety of infections, including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic, and wound infections. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea. Diarrheal illnesses can be caused by germs such as *E. coli*. The RCPHD collects and tests water samples from several recreational waters throughout Rock County, including licensed beaches, lakes, creeks, and the Rock River. This sampling occurs weekly, monthly, or seasonally depending on patron recreational use. The RCPHD staff test for pH, temperature, clarity, conductivity, nitrates, and *E. coli*. Illness risk for humans and pets is determined by *E. coli* levels. High water levels due to rain events can cause *E. coli* levels to rise. Beach signage and closures, along with the distribution of information through various media outlets inform patrons about unsafe recreational water quality, thereby protecting their health.

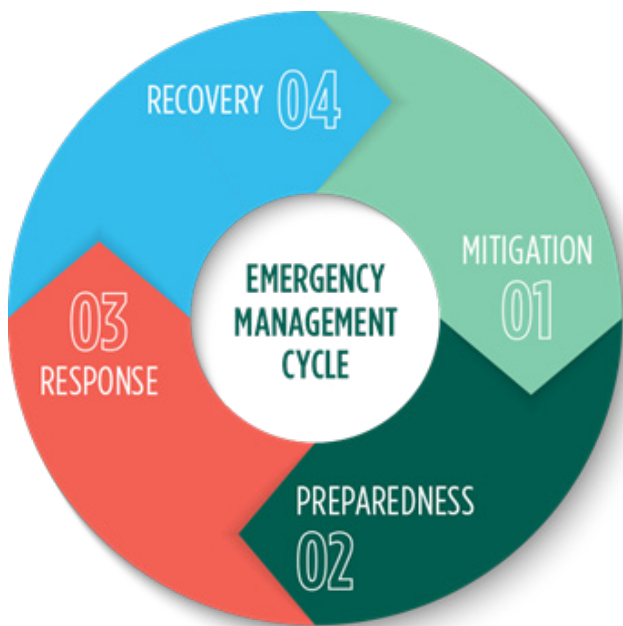


Public Health Emergency Preparedness

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program focuses on preparing for and responding to adverse health events, threats, and disasters that could pose a risk to residents.

The RCPHD receives CDC grant funding to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies. The RCPHD prepares for a massive immunization event by conducting large vaccination events at local schools. Throughout 2018, RCPHD staff participated in various training exercises within the department as well as with community and state partners.

The RCPHD also updated its Public Health Emergency Plan (PHEP). The purpose of a PHEP is to ensure that the department can efficiently and effectively meet the public health needs of the community when impacted by an emergency or disaster. The contents of the PHEP and its supporting documents provide the framework for public health preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for emergencies and disasters. This plan is meant to guide public health on preparedness, response, and recovery activities for local emergencies.



Community Collaborations

Substance Abuse Reduction Coordination

In 2018, the RCPHD partnered with HealthNet of Rock County to host an AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) volunteer to serve as a Substance Abuse Reduction Coordinator in Rock County. The VISTA volunteer served as the coordinator for multi-sectorial collaboration among human services, free and charitable health clinic, law enforcement, and health organizations to inform a baseline assessment of substance use and abuse in Rock County. These partners are using this information to enhance prevention and treatment efforts across the county to address substance use and abuse in Rock County.

Health Equity Alliance of Rock County

The Health Equity Alliance of Rock County (HEAR) coalition consists of action teams that target health equity, behavioral health, healthy weights, and oral health to improve health outcomes throughout Rock County. In 2018, the action teams advanced work outlined in the 2017–2020 Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan. The HEAR group continues to garner support from community groups and members to sustain work and enhance the health of Rock County.

Community Conversations

Community Conversations are a way to engage members of a community to discuss issues that affect all elements of health in the community. The HEAR team received a \$6,000 grant from the Department of Health Services to conduct Community Conversations in Rock County to inform the State Health Assessment about local priorities. The issues identified include: lack of transportation, access to healthcare, and affordable, healthy foods. The HEAR team is working with community members and partners to address these concerns and work toward collective change.

Older Adult Falls Prevention

According to the most current data regarding injury deaths in Wisconsin, falls were the most common underlying cause of injury deaths in Rock County. About 1 in 4 people age 65 and older experience a fall that can lead to serious injury. The RCPHD collaborates with Rock County Council on Aging and SSM Health Saint Mary hospital to co-lead “Stepping On” courses to prevent falls in Rock County. “Stepping On” is an evidenced based intervention aimed to reduce falls in older adults by 31%.

Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup

The Rock County Groundwater Nitrate Workgroup continues to analyze existing groundwater nitrate data, evaluate known best management practices to reduce nitrate leaching, and provide practical recommendations on short- and long-term methods to improve groundwater nitrate quality. The Nitrate Workgroup within Rock County includes representatives from Rock County Public Health, UW–Extension, Land Conservation, Planning Department, County Board of Supervisors, and the agricultural community. In 2018, the workgroup developed Nitrate Best Management Practice demonstration areas and are working on farmland initiatives to improve groundwater nitrate quality.



Community Collaborations

WCLO

The RCPHD partnered with local newspapers and radio stations to inform the public on health issues. Staff appeared monthly on WCLO Afternoon Chat.

Community Events

The RCPHD participates in various community events, including National Night Out, senior fairs, and unwanted prescription take backs. This helps inform the public on a variety of health issues and strengthens community partnerships.

Worksite Wellness Workshop

In 2018, RCPHD worked to expand partnerships with local businesses and organizations through the Rock County Worksite Wellness initiative by working with employers to improve the health and wellness of people living and working in Rock County. The Worksite Wellness Workshop brought new ideas on how to reduce obesity in Rock County and formed partnerships with over 30 new businesses and organizations, including Wellness Council of Wisconsin, Wellness Council of America, and American Heart Association. The RCPHD looks forward to continuing to expand and integrate these activities throughout 2019 and 2020.

Rabies Clinic

The RCPHD partners with Friends of Noah to provide a low-cost vaccination clinic for cats and dogs. A total of 426 animals were vaccinated for rabies, including over 100 cats and over 300 dogs.

Healthy Corner Stores

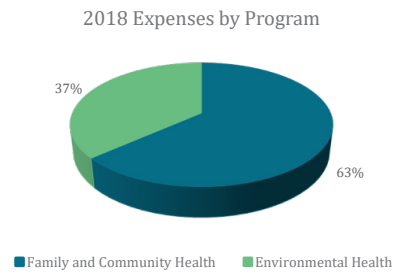
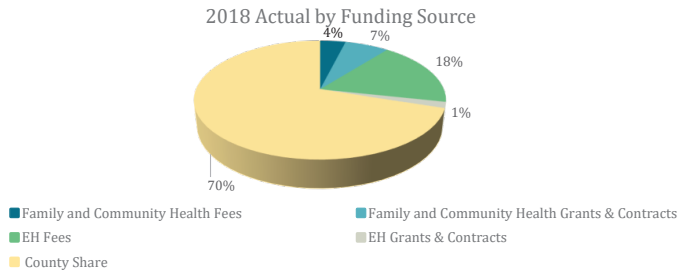
The Healthy Corner Store Initiative focused on corner stores that are within limited access to grocery stores and promoted partnerships between store owners and community to increase the sustainability of a healthy corner store. In 2018, RCPHD implemented a project in partnership with gas stations and convenience stores in Beloit, Janesville, Clinton, Edgerton, Evansville, Footville, and surrounding areas with a goal of promoting healthy food choices. The RCPHD worked with 18 stores. Fifteen of those stores increased availability of fresh fruits.



Financial Report

2018 ACTUAL BY FUNDING SOURCE	\$	%
Family and Community Health Fees	\$ 134,156	4%
Family and Community Health Grants & Contracts	\$ 230,773	7%
EH Fees	\$ 609,400	18%
EH Grants & Contracts	\$ 59,021	2%
County Share	\$ 2,399,894	70%
TOTAL	\$ 3,433,244	

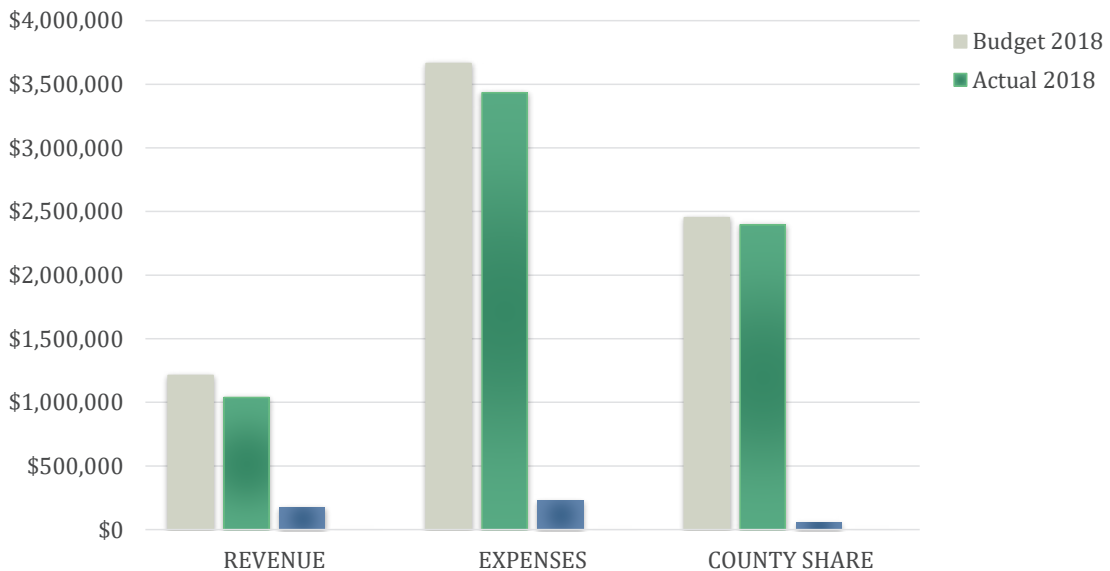
2018 EXPENSES BY PROGRAM	\$	%
Family and Community Health	\$ 2,179,245	63%
Environmental Health	\$ 1,253,999	37%
TOTAL	\$ 3,433,244	



Budget Summary

	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	DIFFERENCE	% DIFFERENCE
REVENUE	\$1,211,256	\$1,038,330	\$172,926	14%
EXPENSES	\$3,662,597	\$3,433,244	\$229,353	6%
COUNTY SHARE	\$2,451,341	\$2,394,914	\$56,427	2%

Budget to Actual 2018



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