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2024 Annual Report Buffalo County Health Department



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Demographics and Dollars



- 2024 Population Estimation: 13,311
- Median Household Income in Buffalo County: \$64,948
- 4.8% of Population without Healthcare Coverage
- Estimated 11% of Children Living in Poverty

Top Ranked Causes of Death in 2024:

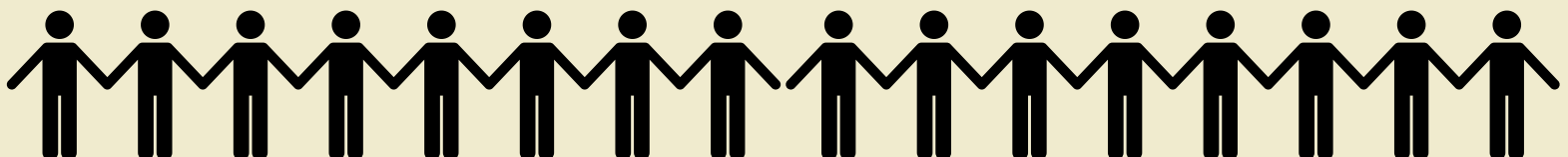


1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Chronic Respiratory Diseases
4. Stroke
5. Accidents (unintentional injuries)

In 2024, the Health Department was funded by:

Local Tax Levy: \$183,681.18
Program Generated Revenue:
\$78,475.79
Grants and State Aids: \$407,580.19
Total: \$669,737.16

Cost per Buffalo County Resident:
Local Taxes: \$13.80



Our Mission

To empower individuals, families and communities to live well by preventing disease, protecting health and assuring safety while encouraging independence. The mission will be achieved using proven scientific evidence and clinical expertise.

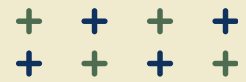


Our Purpose

Health departments provide public health protections in several areas, including preventing the spread of communicable disease, ensuring food, air, and water quality are safe, supporting maternal and child health, improving access to clinical care services, and preventing chronic disease and injury – these are known as the Foundational Areas. The infrastructure needed to provide these protections strives to provide fair opportunities for all to be healthy and includes eight capabilities – known as the Foundational Capabilities.



Foundational Public Health Areas:



Communicable Disease Control



- Surveillance & investigation
- Animal bites
- Immunizations

Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention



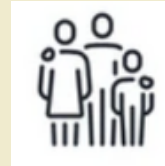
- Well Women Program
- Harm reduction
- Tobacco prevention
- Health promotion
- Rural farm visits

Environmental Health



- Agent of the State
- Water testing
- Radon
- Lead
- Human Health Hazards

Maternal, Child & Family Health



- Botvin Life Skills
- Youth mental health
- WIC
- School health
- Car seat safety

Access & Linkage to Care



- Reproductive health clinic
- Referral to clinical care
- Linkage to insurance
- Healthcare meetings
- Nursing services & consultation

Foundational Public Health Capabilities:

1. Assessment & Surveillance

- Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- Community Health Assessment (CHA)

* Revised Every 5 Years

* Conducted Every 3 years

2. Equity

3. Organizational Competencies

4. Community Partnership Development

5. Emergency Preparedness & Response

6. Accountability & Performance Management

7. Policy Development & Support

8. Communications



2024 Public Health Team



2024 Health and Human Services Committee Members

Elected members:

Mary Anne McMillan Urell - Chair
Dwight Ruff
Carol McDonough
Steven Nelson
John Hadley

Appointed members:

Wendy Kleinschmidt
Steve Schiffli
Kim Beseler
Liz Hoffmaster

- 01. Jamie Weaver, Health Officer
- 02. Sara Thielen, Public Health Nurse
- 03. Jonah Hewitt, Environmental Health Specialist
- 04. Dyllan Smith, Public Health Educator
- 05. Kelsi Black, PH Support Specialist

Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

WI Statute DHS 145 requires all reportable communicable diseases to be directed to the local public health agency for investigation, control and prevention of any spread among the population. The WI Electronic Disease Surveillance System (WEDSS) connects with CDC reporting and we also rely on timely communication from providers.



65% of 2 year-olds up to date on vaccines

15 TB tests administered in 2024

304 Vaccines for Children in 2024

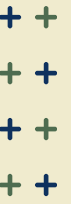
Sara Thielen, Public Health Nurse & Sam Stanslaski, 2024 intern

Communicable Disease Stats

This table showcases some communicable disease data reported to the health department over a three year period. We receive reports from the WI State Lab of Hygiene and surrounding hospitals and clinics for Buffalo County residents.

Infection	2022	2023	2024
Anaplasmosis	6	7	3
CO Poisoning	3	1	0
Babesiosis	0	1	1
Campylobacteriosis	9	7	21
Chlamydia	22	17	11
Cryptosporidium	4	4	3
E. coli (EPEC)	9	8	21
E. coli (STEC)	5	4	3
Gonorrhea	2	4	3
Hepatitis B	2	0	0
Hepatitis C	1	0	2
Influenza—hospital	5	2	6
Lyme Disease	33	46	49
Pertussis	0	0	6
RSV –hospital	0	1	2
Salmonella	4	1	4
Invasive Strep (A)	3	5	2
LTBI	3	2	1
Shigellosis	1	0	0
Tuberculosis	0	0	0
Syphilis	1	2	2
Toxoplasmosis	0	1	2
Vibriosis	1	0	1

Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention



Harm Reduction Efforts

104 Deterra Drug Disposal Bags Distributed

7 Community Education events for Narcan

Sharps Disposal Availability

34 Med Lock Bags Provided

120 6th grade students participated in “Escape the Vape” educational series

Public Health partnered with the ADRC to participate in the Caregiver Resource Fair. We also partnered with Law Enforcement and UW-Extension to attend Drug Take-Back events. Education, Narcan, drug deactivation bags, & med lock bags were provided.



What Good did it Do?

57 Narcan Kits Distributed

30 Gallon Tub of Sharps Collected

87 pounds of unwanted medications collected



Public Health participates in the WI Wins program. WI Wins is a research-based campaign to reduce youth access to tobacco. It uses a positive reinforcement strategy that congratulates stores and clerks for being a positive influence by not selling tobacco to minors. 2 local high school students helped complete 16 tobacco compliance checks for 2024

Environmental Health



Public Health is an Agent for the State of WI DATCP in licensing food and recreational establishments. We also serve as an agent for the WI DNR to ensure safe water for transient non-community wells that serve the public (bars, restaurants, churches, etc.).

Food & Recreational Safety	Drinking Water Safety & Lab Analysis
• Ensure compliance of <u>200</u> licensed facilities • Annual Inspections • Complaint Inspections • Pre-Licensing Inspections • Consultation/technical assistance • Temporary food and campground inspections	• State of WI Certified Water Lab • Drinking water sample analysis for private wells • Ensure compliance of <u>61</u> Transient Non-Community water systems • Follow up on unsafe drinking water results • Technical Assistance

106 licensed
facility
inspections
conducted in
2024

288 Free Radon
Test Kits Provided

18 Animal
Bite Cases



5 Human Health
Hazard Investigations

Foundational Area

Environmental Health



Buffalo County Public Health has a CLIA certified lab that provides in-house bacteria testing and partners with UW-Oshkosh to analyze arsenic and nitrate samples.



239 private wells tested for coliform bacteria

CLIA sets standards for result accuracy, reliability, and timeliness.

85 private wells tested for nitrate

24.6% of private wells were positive for Total Coliforms
n = 59/239

The EPA's maximum contaminate level (MCL) for nitrates is 10 mg/L or 10 ppm.

15% of private wells exceeded the MCL for nitrate contamination
n = 13/85

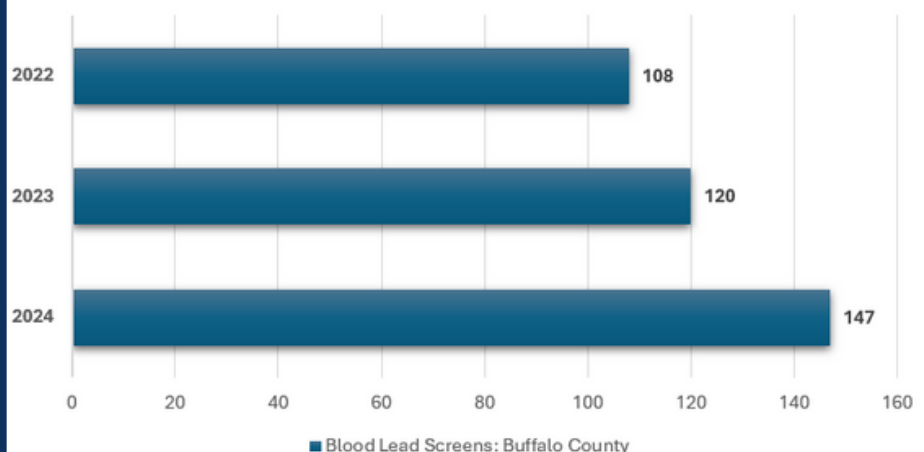
Lead Testing



WI Statute 254.166 provides response requirements for reports of lead poisoning or lead exposure for children under the age of 6. The Public Health department has one certified lead risk assessor for environmental investigations.

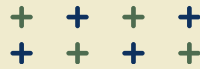
Wisconsin testing recommendations: all children should get two lead tests by age 2. Ages 3 to 5 should get tested if they have no record of a previous test. The Public Health Nurse provides home visits for results at 5 mcg/dL or above.

Blood Lead Screens by Year: Buffalo County



Maternal, Child, and Family Health

Pictured: Mondovi School 4th grade class learning about advertising. This lesson highlights the tricky techniques tobacco companies use to promote smoking.



Public Health promotes adolescent wellbeing by providing Botvin Life Skills curriculum in all four public schools within the County, grades 3rd - 5th. In 2024, 419 students participated. Botvin is a substance abuse and violence prevention program designed for upper elementary school students. This curriculum helps increase self-esteem, develop healthy attitudes, and improve their knowledge of life skills.



WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program

The WIC program is offered to Buffalo County residents in partnership with Trempealeau County. WIC provides nutrition education and breastfeeding support for families, as well as supplemental food, to families at or below the poverty level. For a family of 4, this would be an annual income of less than \$57,720.



WIC connects clients with WI farmers. Clients can get a check to spend at local farmer's markets. In 2024, \$5,872.00 was redeemed by Buffalo – Trempealeau clients.

Foundational Area

Access & Linkage to Care

Public Health operates a reproductive health clinic. The essential services offered at this clinic include:

- STD testing and treatment
- Pregnancy testing
- Contraceptive assessment, education, and initial access
- Health insurance eligibility screening and enrollment aid for FPOS (Family Planning Only Services)
- Menstrual hygiene resources and education
- Referrals to medical providers



In response to a 2022 rise in Toxic Shock Syndrome among WI teen girls, Public Health distributes "period packs" with hygiene supplies and TSS prevention education to local high schools.

Foundational Capability

Community Partnership Development

In 2024, Buffalo County allocated \$245,424.39 in COVID-19 recovery funds to enhance 14 local county parks. Following the pandemic, Buffalo County Public Health received community feedback indicating that improving mental health in our children should be a primary concern. The project focus was to improve park amenities, promote physical activity, and become more inclusive for people who use wheelchairs.



Playground equipment: Harmonia Park (Waumandee)



All-abilities swing: Rieck's Lake Park (Alma)



Wheelchair accessible fishing dock: Rainbow Lake Park (Gilmanton)

Foundational Capability

Emergency Preparedness and Response



As required by WI Administrative Code, DHS 140, local health departments are required to participate in emergency preparedness and response.

We meet this requirement by:

1. Maintaining a Emergency Preparedness Response Plan
2. Participating in preparedness exercises.
3. Communicating and coordinating with health care providers, emergency service providers, and other agencies that respond to disasters, outbreaks or emergencies.
4. Issuing and enforcing emergency health orders, as permitted by law.
5. Implementing strategies intended to protect the health of vulnerable populations during a disaster, outbreak, or emergency.

Foundational Capability

Communications

Public Health strives to keep the local community informed with the latest health information while promoting resources and education on key topics and trends impacting public health and safety. Means of communication can include press releases, social media platforms, published articles, and community presentations.



Health Educator, Dyllan Smith, at a local community planning meeting

In 2024, the Health and Human Services Facebook page received 4,000 site visits, generated 1,500 interactions with posted content, and gained 72 new followers.

Assessment and Surveillance

The Buffalo County Health Department leads efforts to improve population health across the community.

In spring 2024, Public Health hosted Stakeholder Meetings to present the findings from the Community Health Assessment (CHA) conducted in fall 2023. The CHA results were analyzed to identify gaps in health, safety, and wellness. Using both data and community input, priority areas were determined and goals for improvement were developed.

Supporting Data
from the CHA on
Priority Areas:

The identified priority areas for the 2026–2030 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) are:

1. Prevention of sexual and dating violence
2. Education and prevention of Lyme disease

Injury & Violence



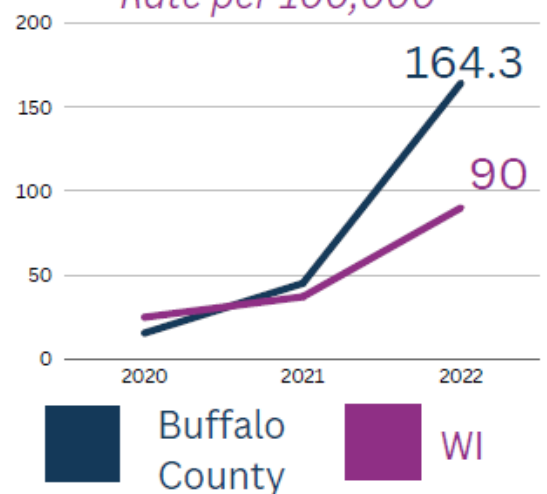
15%

of all students (24% of females and 6% of males)
experienced sexual or dating violence

11%

of all students were forced to do something
sexual (including, but not limited to, sexual
intercourse)

Lyme Disease Incidence Rate per 100,000



The above data is self-reported by local high school students

Thank You for a Successful 2024!



This Annual Report is compiled and will be submitted to the WI Department of Health to satisfy the statutory requirement: DHS 140.06 (2)

- (a) By May 1, a copy of the annual report submitted by the local health officer during the previous year, as required by s. 251.06 (3) (h), Stats.
- (b) Public health data, in a format prescribed by the department.

Respectfully submitted:

Jamie Weaver, REHS, LRA

Buffalo County Health Officer/ Public Health Supervisor

