



2021 Annual Report

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Promoting Health, Preventing Disease, Protecting the Environment.

A Letter to the Community

To the Marathon County leaders and community:

Our world has been irrevocably transformed by the COVID-19 pandemic. From the beginning, its impact on public health has been one of continual change and challenge for us all, and 2021 was no exception. This year required us to develop a sustained pandemic response as we entered an unprecedented second year of battling COVID-19. Marathon County was forever changed. As new variants of COVID emerged, we worked to decrease the number of hospitalizations and severe disease, while also trying to slowly incorporate our previous work back into our practice. Vital public health work including, but not limited to, restaurant and pool inspections, human health hazard prevention, tobacco prevention, work to reduce substance abuse and misuse, and prenatal care was happily resumed.

Additionally, we faced a change in leadership as both Joan Theurer, Marathon County's Health Officer since 2009, and Judy Burrows, the department's longstanding Community Health Improvement Director, left their roles for new opportunities. Joan and Judy have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of citizens in our county, and we all owe them a debt of gratitude. Fortunately, they continue to be statewide leaders of public health and staunch advocates for data-based decision making. At the Health Department, we are grateful for their service to our community and their devotion to successful public health practice.

Marathon County Health Department remains committed to advancing a healthy community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards. We continue to devote our lives and our careers to heal, rebuild and make Marathon County the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play.

Wishing you good health,

Laura Scudiere, Marathon County Health Officer



Essential Services of Public Health

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.
2. Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.
3. Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.
4. Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.
5. Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.
8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement.
10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.



Our Mission

To be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play.

Our Vision

To advance a healthy Marathon County community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards.

Our Core Values



Service: responsibly delivering on our commitments to all of our internal and external customers.



Integrity: honesty, openness, and demonstrating mutual respect and trust in others.



Quality: providing public services that are reflective of "best practices" in the field.



Diversity: actively welcoming and valuing people with different perspectives and experiences.



Shared Purpose: functioning as a team to attain our organizational goals and working collaboratively with our policy makers, department, and employees.



Stewardship of Resources: conserving the human, natural, cultural, and financial resources for current and future generations.

Health Department Leadership

Joan Theurer, RN, MSN- Health Officer
(Jan-Sept)

Laura Scudiere, MPH, CHES- Health Officer
(Sept-Current)

Judy Burrows, RD, BS - Program Director,
Community Health Improvement (Jan-Nov)

Amanda Ostrowski-Program Director,
Community Health Improvement (Nov- Current)

Eileen Eckardt, RN, BSN - Program Director,
Family Health and Communicable Disease Control

Dale Grosskurth, RS, MPA - Program Director,
Environmental Health and Safety & Water Testing

Kim Wieloch - Director of Operations,
Administrative and Fiscal Support

Board of Health

Sandi Cihlar

Dean Danner

Kue Her

Tiffany Lee

Corrie Norrbom, MD

Craig McEwen

John Robinson

Lori Shepherd, MD (Jan- June)

Tara Draeger

Helen Luce, MD

Ex-Officio Members:

Dr. Kevin O'Connell, MD - Medical Advisor



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

COVID-19

- COVID-19 Disease Investigation and Contact Tracing
- Isolation letters with educational information

Community Health Improvement

- Community Health Assessment (CHA)
- Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP)
- Mental Health - Changemakers for Behavioral Health
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Tobacco Prevention and Control

Environmental Health

- Licensing – restaurants, stores, hotels, campgrounds, tattoo shops, pools, and mobile homes for safety
- Water Testing – public swimming pools, municipal water supplies, and private wells
- Investigation of animal bites and prevent rabies
- Human Health Hazards – mold, pests, housing issues, and radon
- Mercury Reduction program
- Northcentral Radon Information Center – provides testing and information

Fiscal and Administrative Support

- Backbone functions of all internal operations
- Fiscal management of grants, fees, and contracts
- Customer service

Family Health / Communicable Disease

- Communicable Disease Surveillance, Investigation, and Control
- Immunization Surveillance and Clinics
- Tuberculosis Case Management and Therapy
- Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic
- Public Health Preparedness
- Start Right
- Child Health
- Northern Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs
- Childhood Lead Poisoning
- Injury Prevention

MCHD STAFF *by the numbers*

 Directors


 Managers

 Public Health Nurses

 Sanitarians

 Health Educators

 Administrative Support Staff

 Professionals/Paraprofessionals

+ contract staff for COVID-19 response



COVID-19

Contact Tracing & Support

Case investigators contact people who have tested positive for COVID-19 to assess symptoms, support needs, review isolation procedures, and solicit names of their contacts. Contact tracers then follow-up with contacts to review isolation and quarantine procedures.

Staffing needed to be rapidly redirected and trained to make calls and provide support. Several adaptations were made and systems developed quickly to meet the needs of the ever changing guidance from federal and state authorities. Crisis Standards of Care were used due to the high number of cases, exceeding the health department's resources. Contact tracing notification of close contacts was carried out by schools, businesses, and other entities. At times, Wisconsin Department of Health Services Contact Tracing Team assisted with disease investigations.

Communications

The communications team was tasked with creating materials, writing Facebook posts and news releases, managing web content, answering media questions and arranging interviews, managing our social media presence, coordinating the translation of materials, and responding directly to phone calls and emails from the public. The breadth and rapidly changing nature of the pandemic were key communication challenges to overcome.

Data

COVID-19 data was collected, analyzed, and utilized to make decisions and answer questions about cases, trends, and other points of interest. Metrics were established for reopening, data dashboards were developed and maintained, and communication products such as printed fact sheets were created and shared.

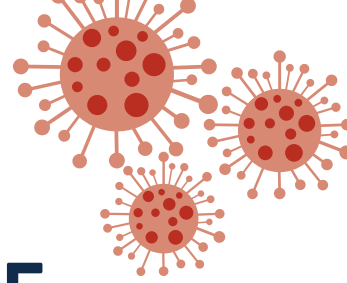
Partnerships

Staff engaged with people from many different sectors, including businesses, childcare, education, health systems, faith organizations, emergency management, and community non-profit organizations. Staff roles included listening and responding to concerns from the partners they work with, as well as communicating their needs back to other teams within the Department's response teams. Examples include:

- Provided a weekly report to area schools on recommendations for mitigation/control.
- Fielded over 270 calls from businesses or business related questions.
- Collaborated with Aspirus and Emergency Management to provide a site for testing.
- Provided consultation with long-term care facilities on outbreak containment.
- Coordinated with UW-Stevens Point at Wausau to promote their testing clinic.



BY THE NUMBERS



61

contracted employees assisted with contact tracing, disease investigation and support activities.



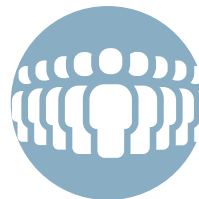
15,845

positive COVID-19 cases reported.



227

COVID-19 outbreaks in facilities.



648

individuals served through mass testing clinics coordinated by MCHD. (November-December)



270+

calls from businesses or business-related questions regarding COVID-19.



1,436

calls from community members with questions about COVID-19.



216

COVID-19 related deaths.



833

people ever hospitalized for COVID-19.



30

press releases.



320+

COVID-19 related social media posts.



250

COVID-19 related media interviews.



COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

COVID-19 required aligning staff responsibilities with new activities and subsequently some services were stopped or interrupted for varied lengths of time.

WHAT WE *Continued*

- Fielded questions from the public, community partners, and business sector on recommended COVID-19 mitigation strategies, as well as quarantine and isolation guidance.
- Reviewed new orders or guidelines issued by State and Federal agencies.
- Communicated COVID-19 mitigation strategies and response measures through the media.
- Developed content, responded to comments, and updated website and Facebook, including culturally appropriate and culturally specific messaging.
- Developed and evaluated COVID-19 mitigation strategies and response plans with schools, healthcare systems, the Hmong and Hispanic Network (H2N), and other community organizations.
- Coordinated local COVID-19 testing with University of WI – Stevens Point at Wausau, WI National Guard, and schools.
- Monitored community risk and status of COVID-19 at the community-level through data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

WHAT WE *Resumed*

- Updates of [MarathonCountyPulse.com](https://www.marathoncountypulse.com) website.
- Creation of the 2021-2021 Community Health Improvement Plan, with identified priorities of substance misuse, mental health and health equity.
- Support of collaborative community efforts i.e. AOD Partnership Council, Healthy Marathon County Alliance, Marathon County School-Based Counseling Consortium, and Nicotine Prevention Alliance.





ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LABORATORY

COVID-19 required aligning staff responsibilities with new activities and subsequently some services were stopped or interrupted for varied lengths of time.

WHAT WE *Started*

- Shifted team members to support COVID-19 response and environmental health and safety programs.
- Collaboration with Marathon County Sheriff's Department to develop an electronic animal bite quarantine order that would be available on deputies' laptops.

WHAT WE *Continued*

- Provided Environmental Health Triage person to respond to residents' concerns.
- Provided Human Health Hazards consultations.
- Continued water laboratory testing and analysis.
- Provided animal bite investigation and rabies prevention follow up.
- Completed a lab audit without any recommendations for correction.
- Licensing and inspections.
- Ensuring quarantine or isolation housing sites for those unable to isolate in their home.
- Reviewed organization's COVID-19 response plan for community and sporting events (runs, soccer and hockey practices, games, and more).
- Consulted with establishments and businesses to answer questions about COVID-19 precautions.



BY THE NUMBERS

NON-COVID-19
SERVICES

LICENSING



1,045

licensing inspections conducted with restaurants, stores, lodging, pools, mobile home parks, campgrounds, and tattoo shops.



820

licenses issued for restaurants, food stands, lodging, campgrounds, pools, retail food stores, mobile home parks, and tattoo facilities.

WATER TESTING



3,151

drinking water samples tested.



14

lead property inspections.

RABIES



346

animal bites reported.



20

persons were recommended to receive shots to prevent the development of rabies from their animal bite exposure.

NORTHCENTRAL RADON INFORMATION CENTER



292

radon kits provided to homeowners.



Audit performed with exceptional results

An audit was performed by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protections for bacterial tests. This audit evaluated bacteriological testing of drinking and pool water. The auditor reviewed our Lab bacterial Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the steps accurately describe the particular bacterial method used for drinking water or pools. In 2021, the Lab had an exceptional audit. No recommendations received.



FAMILY HEALTH & COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

COVID-19 required aligning staff responsibilities with new activities and subsequently some services were stopped or interrupted for varied lengths of time.

WHAT WE *Started*

- Created a dedicated resource line for community members to call in with COVID-19 related questions.
- Provided COVID-19 testing for people with cultural, physical, or language barriers.
- Developed data collection and reporting tools to manage the large amount of COVID-19 tracking and operations data.
- Collaborated with schools in providing information to help them determine their response.
- Consulted with community agency partners such as homeless facilities, jails, medical clinics, workplaces, long term care, etc. regarding their response.
- Provided shelter for people who were homeless and positive for COVID-19 and needed to isolate to protect others.
- Provided COVID-19 vaccination to those with barriers.

WHAT WE *Stopped*

- Testing and vaccination at the Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic.
- Providing in-person Start Right visits.
- Participating in community level groups such as Homeless Coalition, Child Death Review, Citizens Review Panel, Early Years Coalition, etc.

WHAT WE *Continued*

- TB investigations, treatment, and contact tracing.
- Childhood Lead interventions.
- Perinatal Hepatitis B services.
- Consulted with community agency partners such as homeless facilities, jails, medical clinics, workplaces, long term care, etc. regarding reducing COVID-19 spread.
- Collaborated with schools in providing information to help determine their response.
- Hired, trained, scheduled and supervised more than 40 COVID-19 Response team members.
- Provided Covid-19 testing for people with cultural, physical, or language barriers.
- Covid-19 Disease Investigation and Contact Tracing.

Intermittent SERVICES

- Start Right home visits were offered virtually.
- Start Right families were referred to Children's Hospital of Wisconsin for services.
- Provided Start Right families with a Family Resource Center Warm Line and the Start Right Health Department phonenumber, for parenting questions or support.
- Public Health Preparedness efforts for non-COVID-19 initiatives.
- Provided general Immunization Clinics at Marathon County Health Department.

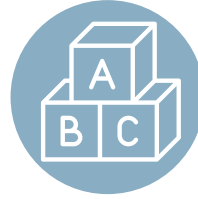
BY THE NUMBERS NON-COVID-19 SERVICES

NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS



138

consultations with professionals.



71

people participated in a training.

START RIGHT



21

pregnant women enrolled in WIC.



18

families received education on safe sleep practices for their newborn.



119

pregnant women referred to MCHD for services.



24

women received three or more visits by a public health nurse.



6

new families accepted Start Right Step by Step services



9

children served by the child health program.



1

pregnant woman reported experiencing homelessness.



FISCAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

COVID-19 required aligning staff responsibilities with new activities and subsequently some services were stopped or interrupted for varied lengths of time.

WHAT WE *Started*

- Created an electronic information resource for use at the Front Desk, including formalizing processes for periodic review and updates.
- Relocated all administrative staff to first floor to operate more cohesively as a team.
- Realignment of roles to be based on skills and interests.
- Operationalized and supported Covid-19 vaccination clinics at multiple locations.

WHAT WE *Continued*

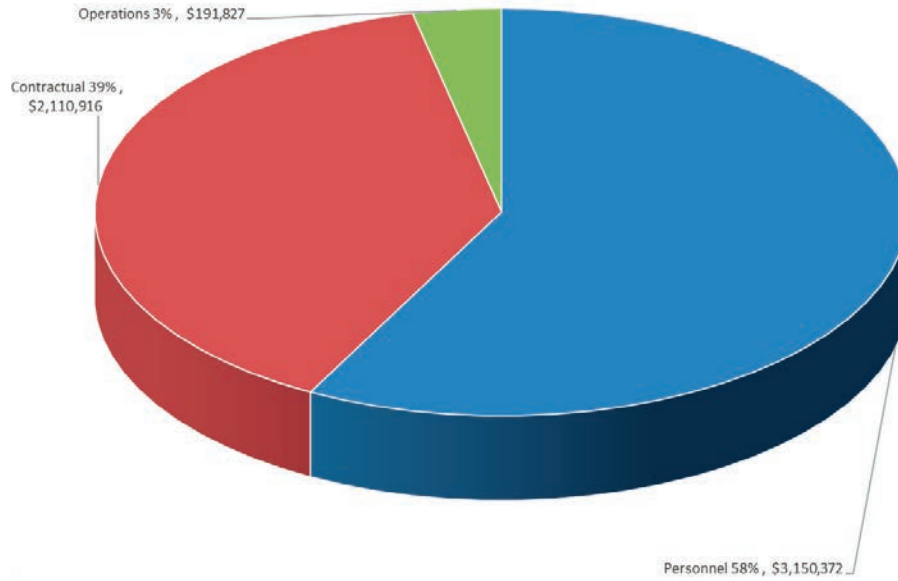
- Continued administrative policy and procedure development and process improvements.
- Submitting birth reports.
- State and local grant billing and administration.
- Fiscal processing - payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payment processing.
- Management of licensing and lab fees.
- Answered and routed incoming phone calls to the department.
- Management of multiple databases.
- Continued gathering, analyzing, and disseminating COVID-19 data.

Intermittent SERVICES

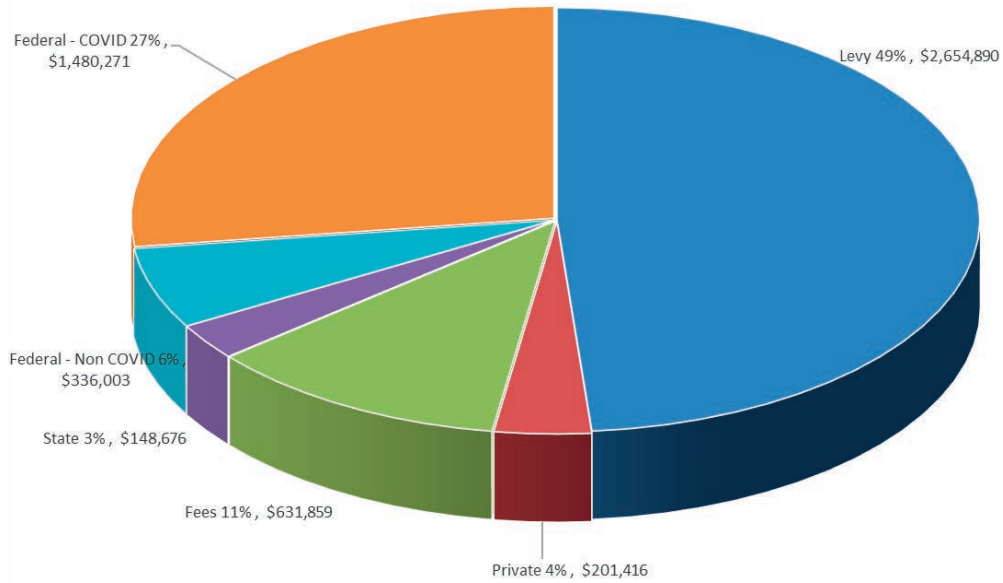
- Outsourcing COVID letters.
- Broadened scope of how, and where we work both individually and as a team, to incorporate remote work flexibility.
- Continued decreased volume of in-person customers and COVID-19 protocols.



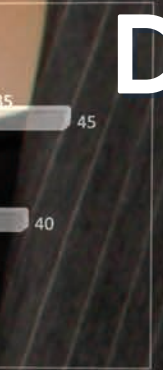
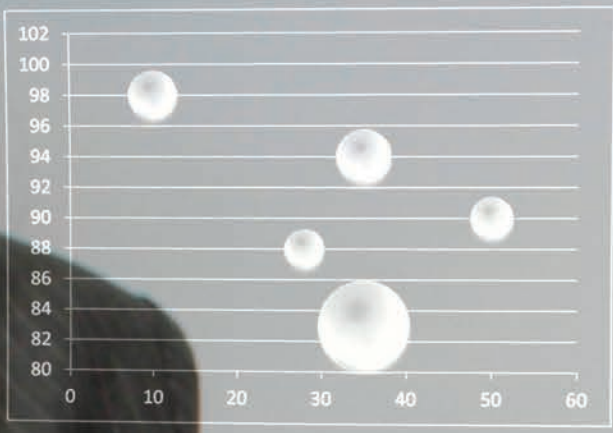
2021 Health Department Expenses



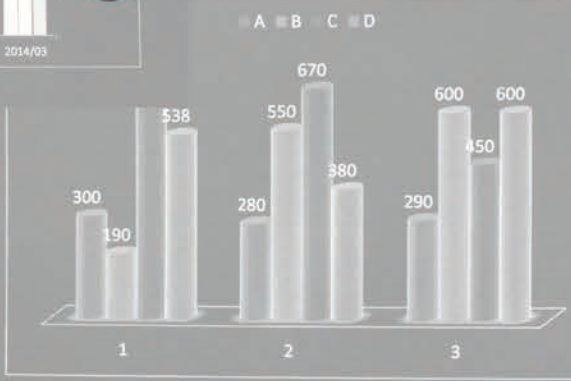
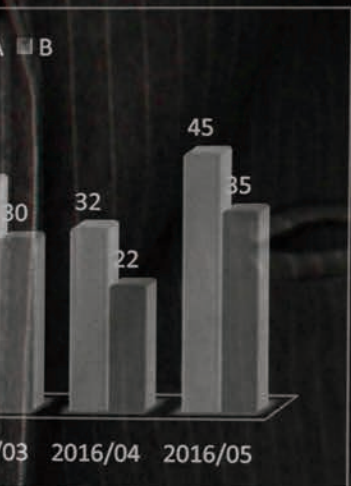
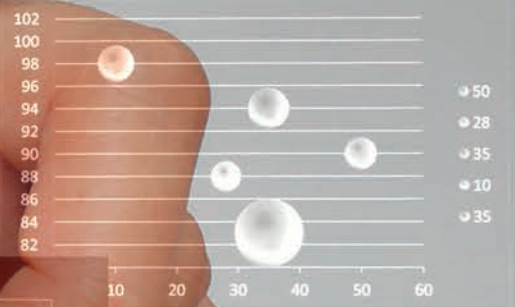
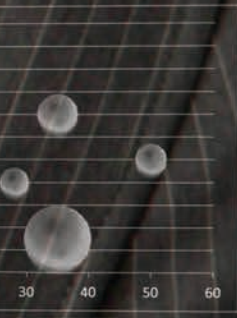
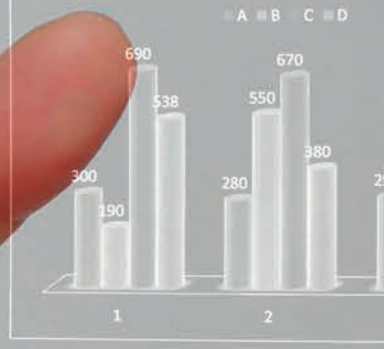
2021 Health Department Revenues



DEPARTMENT INDICATORS



- 1
- 2
- 3





COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

Substance Abuse	<i>* Data collection delayed by organizations due to COVID-19 pandemic.</i>	2019	2020	2021
Percent of teens who reported drinking in the past 30 days		28%	*	*
Percent of high school teens who have ever drank alcohol		56.0%	*	*
Percent of high school teens who used marijuana in the past 30 days		10%	*	*
Percent of high school teens who have ever used marijuana		19%	*	*
Percent of teens who reported ever using prescription drugs without a prescription		9.0%	*	*
Number of fatal drug overdoses in Marathon County		16	14	20
Tobacco Control.	<i>* Data collected in odd numbered years only</i>			
Percent of teens who smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days		7.0%	*	*
Percent of high school students who reported vaping in the past 30 days		16%	*	*
Retail compliance rate for licensed tobacco sellers		88.0%	*	*
Mental Health.	<i>* Data collected every other year</i>			
<i>Figures are associated with the school year that ended that year.</i>				
Percent of high school teens who reported feeling depressed		26.0%	*	*
Number of students reported seeing a therapist at school during the school year		420	452	344
Childhood Hearing and Vision Screening	<i>Figures are associated with the school year that ended that year.</i>			
<i>**No longer a MCHD program</i>				
Number referred to providers for hearing concerns		67	93	**
Percent of referrals receiving follow up for hearing		85%	*	**
Number referred to providers for vision concerns		677	576	**
Percent of referrals receiving follow up for vision		77%	*	**



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LABORATORY

Rabies	2019	2020	2021
Animal bites reported	349	345	364
Prophylaxis recommended, in the event of a stray or wild animal exposure	21	25	20
Number of bites NOT needing prophylaxis	328	320	344
Human Health Hazards			
Nuisance consultations/technical assistance contacts	319	231	186
Human health hazard investigations	6	6	3
Radon test kits provided in Marathon County	118	207	292
Radon mitigation systems installed per report for 11 county area	388	279	342
Requests for radon information (calls, emails, website)	764	2,229	2,622
Transient drinking water systems inspected	37	33	45
Pounds of mercury collected and properly disposed (excluding amalgam)	1	1	4.5
Dental offices contacted regarding proper disposal of amalgam	35	31	32
Pounds of amalgam collected by dental offices and recycled	192	138	186
Environmental screens	6	15	2
Radon			
Tests in RIC	493	469	509
Tests in Marathon County	118	207	292
Percent elevated in Marathon County	53%	47%	34%
Mitigations Reported (Voluntary)	388	279	342
Water Testing <i>*Safer at Home shut down pools for a time</i>			
Total number of drinking water samples	3,513	3,013	3,151
Bacteriologically safe drinking water samples	3,174	2,783	2,914
Bacteriologically unsafe drinking water samples	339	230	237
Nitrate>10.0mg/l (drinking water unsafe for pregnant women & infants)	93	47	55
Total number of recreational water samples	1,745	983*	1,303
Bacteriologically satisfactory recreational water samples	1,665	940*	1,263
Bacteriologically unsatisfactory recreational water samples	80	43*	10

Lead	2019	2020	2021
Total Number of Childhood Lead Tests	1,261	1,155	1,324
Tests <10 ug/dl	1,253	1,147	1,319
Tests 5 to <10 ug/dl (# of children)	37(25)	22(16)	30(21)
Tests 10 to 19 ug/dl (# of children)	6(4)	7(4)	4(3)
Tests ≥20 ug/dl (# of children)	2(1)	1(1)	1(1)
Housing Units – Lead Hazard Reduction	1	1	2
Lead Property Inspections	14	5	14
Licensing * Impacted by COVID-19; pools and tourist rooming houses did not renew; no temporary events .			
Number of licensing inspections conducted with restaurants, stores, lodging, campgrounds, pools, mobile home parks, and tattoo facilities.	1,135	1,050	1,045
Number of licenses issued for restaurants, food stands, lodging, campgrounds, pools, retail food stores, mobile home parks, and tattoo facilities.	967	955	855*
Restaurants located in Marathon County will have fewer than five (5) critical violations associated with disease transmission.	99%	100%	99%
Retail food establishments in Marathon County will have fewer than five (5) critical violations associated with disease transmission.	100%	100%	100%
Pools and whirlpools located in Marathon County will be bacteriologically safe.	95%	97%	97%
Tattoo businesses in Marathon County will not expose their clientele to infectious diseases.	100%	100%	100%
Mobile home parks in Marathon County will provide a safe and healthy environment for residents.	100%	96%	96%





FAMILY HEALTH & COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Start Right Prenatal Services *Data not available	2019	2020	2021
Number of women who had 3 or more visits with a public health nurse	90	43	24
Percent of women who reported smoking during their pregnancy	35%	26%	26%
Percent of women who reported smoking who stopped or decreased smoking	93%	90%	100%
Percent of homes that are smoke-free	92%	*	57%
Percent of women who reported drinking at all during their pregnancy	32%	28%	30%
Percent of women who reported drinking at all during their pregnancy who stopped drinking completely	88%	100%	100%
Percent of women who screened positive for domestic violence	14%	8%	8%
Percent of women who were homeless at any time during services	5%	8%	4%
Was involved with Social Services at any time during services	10%	10%	9%
Resided in jail at any time during services	2%	3%	0%
Percent of women who initiated breastfeeding	69%	69%	52%
Women who have a reproductive life plan	93%	85%	78%
Stepping Stones Home Visiting			
Percent of infants who sleep in a safe sleep environment	83%	69%	70%
Percent of children on schedule for their well child exams	94%	97%	89%
Percent of children who are up-to-date on immunizations at 24 months of age	90%	90%	95%
Percent of parents identified with AODA, domestic violence or mental health concerns who received supportive services	48%	57%	69%
Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs *Data not available			
Number of families served	48	47	68
Number of consultations with professionals	54	88	138
Number of trainings offered	13	9	10
Number of attendees at trainings	74	45	71

Reportable Diseases and Conditions	2019	2020	2021
Babesiosis	1	3	9
Blastomycosis	10	9	5
Campylobacteriosis	30	23	32
Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacterales (CP-CRE)	0	0	1
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	12	11	9
Chlamydia	365	387	345
Coccidioidomycosis	0	0	1
Coronavirus Sars Cor-2 (COVID-19)	0	13,281	15,845
Cryptosporidiosis	30	24	16
Cyclosporiasis	0	2	0
Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis	19	25	56
Environmental and Occupational Lung Diseases	1	0	0
Giardiasis	38	26	26
Gonorrhea	124	140	91
Haemophilus Influenzae/Invasive	4	1	5
Hepatitis B	8	6	7
Hepatitis C	26	25	29
Histoplasmosis	1	0	3
HIV	0	2	2
Influenza Associated Hospitalizations	67	85	6
Jamestown Canyon Virus	2	0	1
Legionellosis	0	1	1
Listeriosis	0	0	2
Lyme Disease	40	27	45
Meningitis, Bacterial	0	0	2
Meningococcal Disease	0	1	1
Mumps	2	1	0
Mycobacterial Disease (non-tuberculous)	13	7	12
Others (Measles, Rubella, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio)	0	0	0
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	25	11	5
Q Fever	0	0	1







FAMILY HEALTH & COMMUNICABLE DISEASE Continued

Reportable Diseases and Conditions Continued	2019	2020	2021
Salmonellosis	33	22	29
Shiga Toxin Producing E Coli (STEC)	11	20	15
Shigellosis	0	2	0
Streptococcal Disease/Invasive/Groups A & B	18	18	21
Streptococcus Pneumoniae/Invasive	17	10	9
Syphilis	6	2	5
Toxoplasmosis	0	0	2
Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE)	0	1	0
Tuberculosis, Active Disease	1	1	3
Tuberculosis, Latent Infection	12	11	20
Varicella (Chickenpox)	7	1	3
Vibriosis, Non Cholera	1	0	0
Yersiniosis	1	0	0
<i>Case counts are from state records and can vary from year to year based on review of records and additional case information. Case count numbers are for all reports that are determined to be confirmed or probable.</i>			
Immunization Clinic Services			
Number of Children & Adults who recieved a vaccine	608	196	802
Number of Childhood & Adult Vaccines given	1,158	356	1,264
STD Clinic Services *Did not operate STD clinics in 2021			
Number screened for STD's	234	54	*
Number screened for HIV	218	49	*
Number of vaccines given at STD clinics (part of vaccine total above)	234	31	*
Total Client visits	655	55	*



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