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Eau Claire, WI - Please see attached press release from the Institute for Wisconsin's Health Inc. (IWHI) related to a multi-county project funded by PEW to look at the public health impacts, risks, and benefits of industrial sand mining. Eau Claire City-County Health Department is one of the participating agencies. For more information, please contact IWHI directly at 608.467.9612.



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## **Institute for Wisconsin's Health to Lead Health Impact Assessment of Industrial Sand Mining in Western Wisconsin**

Madison, WI – As industrial sand mining continues its rapid growth in western Wisconsin, communities face many questions about the potential health risks and benefits of mining operations. Over the next 18 months, the Institute for Wisconsin's Health will work with 14 health departments, the Ho-Chunk Nation, and the University of Iowa's Environmental Health Research Center, to gather and analyze information on the potential public health impacts of industrial sand mining in the region.

A health impact assessment (HIA) is unbiased, and factors in health data and the perspectives of people and organizations that may have very different opinions. This assessment will take into account a wide range of potential risks *and* benefits to the health of communities in western Wisconsin. It will combine health expertise, scientific data, and input from businesses, community members and other organizations in order to examine issues, which may include air and water quality, jobs, transportation, and other factors prioritized by community stakeholders. The assessment process will culminate in a final report, which will provide practical recommendations communities can use to maximize potential health benefits and minimize potential health risks.

"Industrial sand mining is an issue that is important to leaders and community members in Western Wisconsin. This health impact assessment will allow us to examine the potential health impacts of industrial sand mining and help inform future decisions about this complex issue."

said Nancy Young, Executive Director of the Institute for Wisconsin's Health. "Health impact assessments examine social, economic and environmental factors, because all of these factors impact the health of populations. We are honored to have an opportunity to work together with these communities to learn more."

Participating health departments include Barron, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Ho-Chunk Nation, Jackson, LaCrosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, St. Croix, Rusk, and Trempealeau Counties.

This assessment is made possible by a grant from the Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts - dedicated to promoting the use of health impact assessments in the United States. More information and a searchable map of HIA activity in the United States are available at [www.healthimpactproject.org](http://www.healthimpactproject.org).

The Institute for Wisconsin's Health, Inc. is an independent, non-partisan public health institute whose mission is to strengthen Wisconsin's public health system through capacity building and innovation. More information on the Institute can be found at [www.instituteforwihealth.org](http://www.instituteforwihealth.org). As the project proceeds, updates will be available on the Institute website.

The opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Health Impact Project, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation or The Pew Charitable Trusts.