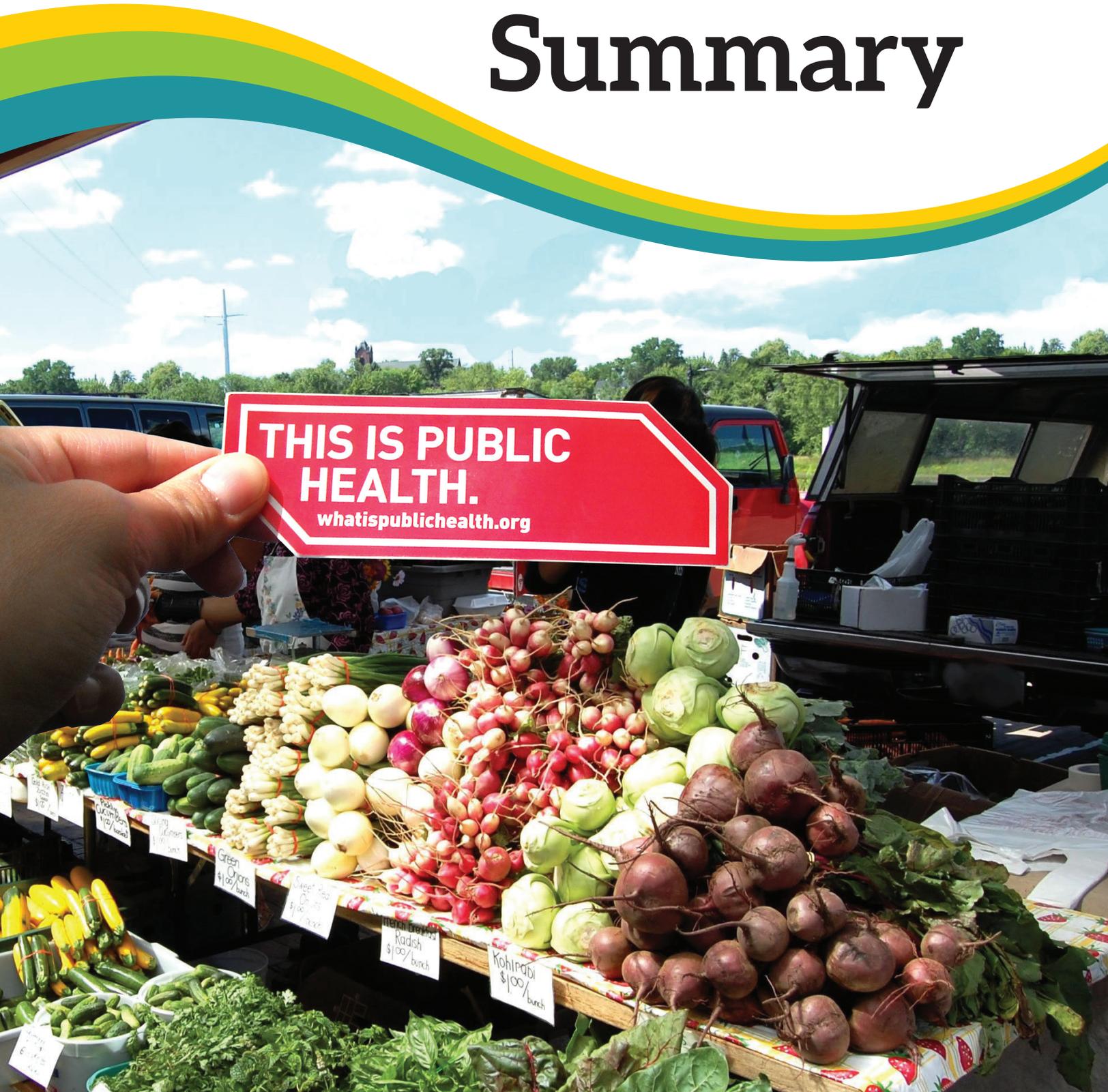




Eau Claire City-County  
**Health Department**

# 2014 Annual Report Summary



**THIS IS PUBLIC  
HEALTH.**

[whatispublichealth.org](http://whatispublichealth.org)

Green Onions  
\$1.00/bunch

Radish  
\$1.00/bunch

Kohlrabi  
\$1.00/bunch

# Message from the Health Officer

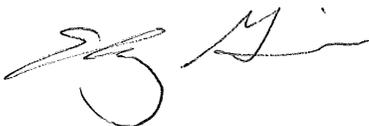
It is my pleasure to share with you the Eau Claire City-County Health Department's 2014 Annual Report. It has been an exciting and rewarding year focusing on prevention. Prevention makes a difference to Eau Claire. A healthy community and healthy people support the success of business, tourism, and schools, and reduces crime, lost work-days and school failure. Whether you realize it or not, you benefit from the public health prevention work that happens here every single day.

This report provides you with some highlights of how we to promote a healthy community and protect people from injury and illness. Every day, staff at the health department meet state laws to protect and promote health including inspecting environmental hazards and investigating communicable diseases. Staff also work to understand the health of people in our county and develop innovative programs/services to support changing needs. For example, did you know that Eau Claire has high rates of binge drinking and pregnant women smoking during pregnancy, and that Lyme disease and Chlamydia are two of our most prevalent communicable diseases? We pay attention to the data and work with partners to improve health.

Improving issues like chronic disease, alcohol misuse, mental health, communicable disease and environmental hazards is complicated work. While it would be wonderful to have a "magic wand," we know that it will take time and partnerships to improve health. The health department is working with partners across the county and state to do this tough work. In any given day staff may interact with restaurant operators, physicians, tattoo artists, city planners, teachers, neighborhood association members, elected officials, students and many others.

Thank you to the staff, the community and to Eau Claire leaders who work every day to keep all Eau Claire communities safe and healthy. I encourage you to let me know how we can continue to improve the work we do at the health department. Please contact me at 715-839-4718 or at [Elizabeth.giese@co.eau-claire.wi.us](mailto:Elizabeth.giese@co.eau-claire.wi.us).

Respectfully,



Elizabeth Giese, RN, MSPH  
Director/Health Officer ECCCHD



Eau Claire City-County  
**Health Department**

# Eau Claire City-County Health Department Mission

Keeping people in all Eau Claire City/County communities safe and healthy.

## Guiding Principles

The Health Department's work is guided by these four overarching principles:

- Prevention-** Promotion of health and prevention of disease, injury and disability is critical in saving lives and money
- Health Equity-** Everyone should have equal opportunity to be healthy
- Collaboration-** People working together provide the best solutions
- Quality-** Efficiency and effectiveness is critical in programs and services

## Eau Claire City-County Board of Health

The Eau Claire City-County Board of Health (BOH) is an eight member board, appointed by the County Board and City Council. The BOH has representation from: a City Council member, a County Board member, 2 practicing physicians, 1 practicing dentist, 1 registered nurse and 2 community representatives. The Board advises and advocates for the provision of reasonable and necessary public health services and provides leadership that fosters local involvement and commitment.

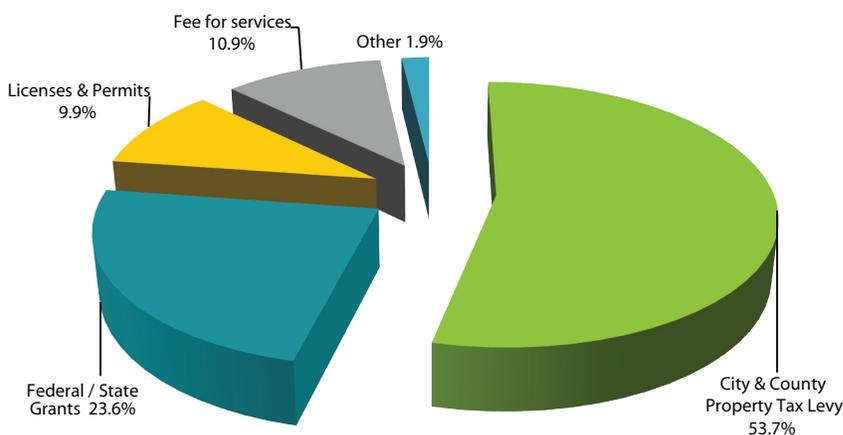
Donald Bodeau, MD  
Jennifer Eddy, MD  
Blair Johnson, DDS  
Kathy Mitchell, PhD  
John Paddock  
Meroy Price, RN  
Elizabeth Spencer, RD  
Gerald Wilkie



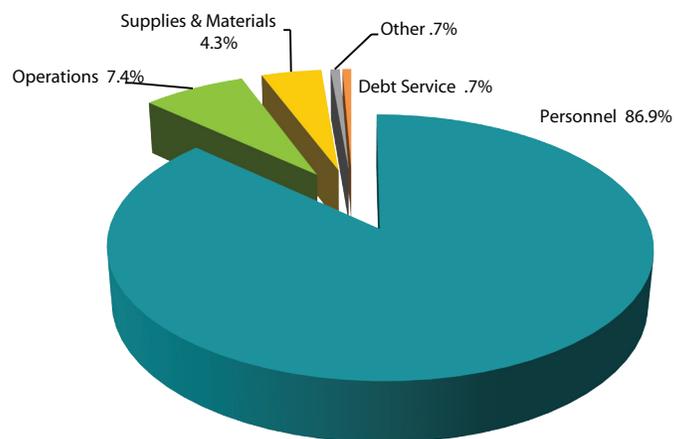
Wilkie, Spencer, Eddy, Johnson, Mitchell, Bodeau and Price

## Budget (Preliminary)

### 2014 Revenues



### 2014 Expenses



Health data provides a snapshot of the health of our community and shows how health is influenced by many things, including our everyday surroundings - where we live, learn, work and play. Data leads the work that we do and help us to:

- Identify and understand current/potential health problems or environmental public health hazards
- Provide health information to community partners
- Evaluate if the programs, policy and environmental changes are making a difference

### Eau Claire by the Numbers

**100,677**

Eau Claire County population<sup>1</sup>

**1 in 3**

children enrolled in public schools are eligible for free school lunch<sup>1</sup>

**1 in 4**

Residents live in a rural area<sup>1</sup>



**\$49,069**

Median household income<sup>3</sup>

**7%**

population that is African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, or Hispanic<sup>1</sup>

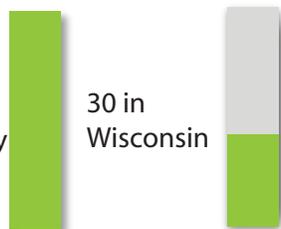
**1 in 7**

Residents live below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL)<sup>1</sup>

Residents that contracted Lyme disease out of 100,000 people<sup>2</sup>

72 in Eau Claire County

30 in Wisconsin



Learn how Environmental Health is researching Lyme disease on **page 10**.

Positive Chlamydia test per 100,000 people<sup>2</sup>

353 in Eau Claire County

417 in Wisconsin



Learn how our Nurses are working to increase awareness on **page 7**.

27% of Eau Claire County high school students report drinking 5+ glasses of alcohol in a few hours<sup>4</sup>



Learn how Health Educators are working to reduce underage drinking on **page 5**.

1 County Health Rankings  
 2 Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System 2013  
 3 American Community Survey 2001-2013  
 4 Eau Claire County 2001-2011 PRIDE Survey

## Community Health

The places where we live, work and play can greatly influence our health. Health Educators work closely with community partners to collectively identify and address those things that can improve our health in these places. This includes working with individuals, but also includes making changes to systems and policies.

## Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention

The Alliance, formed in 2002, is a county-wide coalition of people from all walks of life who want to see more kids drug free. Youth, parents and other community partners are engaged in changing two root causes of youth substance use – acceptance and availability. The coalition's focus is on reducing underage alcohol use, prescription drug misuse and tobacco and other nicotine use because Eau Claire County kids tell us these drugs are easy to get.



Everyone has a role in the solutions:

- Make sure parties are supervised by an adult
- Properly dispose of unused/expired prescription drugs
- Lock up alcohol
- Parents, talk with kids – the sooner the better

The More Kids Drug Free campaign was launched in 2014 to convey the impact of drugs on our youth and the importance of sustaining prevention efforts. The campaign centered on community

members sharing why it's important to see more kids drug free through personal story signs. Sign photos were seen over 75,000 times through social media. Governor Walker endorsed the More Kids Drug Free campaign stating, "Working to prevent drug abuse is a lifesaving cause; increasing awareness is a critical step in helping people live happy, healthy, prosperous lives." Thank you to everyone one that participated in the campaign!

In 2014, the Alliance received a Drug Free Communities grant to effectively reduce youth substance use by bringing people together countywide to take action toward: connecting parents, supporting youth, creating safer social environments, and improving health. Over 100 adults and 156 youth volunteered this past year to see more kids drug free.

To learn how you can see More Kids Drug Free in Eau Claire County, go to [www.getinvolvedasap.org](http://www.getinvolvedasap.org).

### Community Health by the Numbers

**2689**

hours invested by community partners

**24%**

fewer youth say alcohol is easy to get than 12 years ago

**1356**

more youth say their friends feel it's wrong for them to drink than in 2004

### Eau Claire Healthy Communities Celebration and Legislative Event

Healthy Communities continues to be a strong partnership with 50 community partners and 200 members working on clear action around community health priorities. In 2014, the 1st Annual Legislative Event and Healthy Communities Celebration were held. Learn more about Eau Claire Healthy Communities at [www.echealthycommunities.org](http://www.echealthycommunities.org)!

## Healthy Communities: Community Health Assessment

Eau Claire Healthy Communities is a local coalition made up of community partners, including the Health Department, working together to promote the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities in Eau Claire County through collaborative and focused action.

In the summer of 2014, Eau Claire Healthy Communities started a unique partnership with Chippewa County Department of Public Health, Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), Eau Claire City-County Health Department, Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Marshfield Clinic, Mayo Clinic Health System, Sacred Heart Hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital and United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley to create a shared Community Health Assessment. This collaborative effort allows us to combine resources and conduct one assessment, instead of several separate assessments. It also sets the stage for further collaborative work on the top health issues for our community.

The first part of the assessment was the launch of a community health survey which garnered over 2000 responses from Chippewa and Eau Claire counties in the fall of 2014. Further assessment activities are planned to gain more input from the community in the upcoming months. By working together, we can better build a shared sense of health issues in our community and increase the impact on health outcomes in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties.



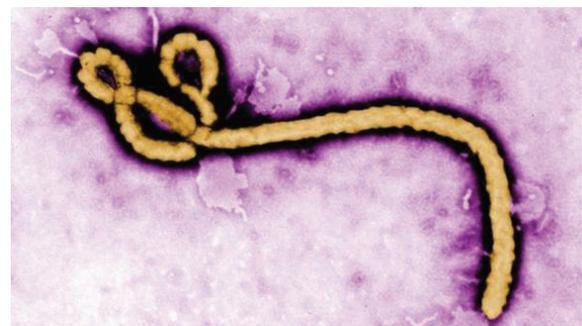
## Emergency Preparedness

*Public Health Emergency Preparedness efforts ensure the Health Department and the broader community are ready to respond to a variety of environmental hazards and communicable diseases.*

### Ready to Respond

Being prepared for an emergency is critical. Pandemic flu, natural disasters, and many other emergencies can have a significant impact on health. In 2014 Ebola was impacting people across the world. In Eau Claire, partners focused on proactive Ebola preparedness. The health department collaborated with organizations such as Hospitals, EMS, Schools, Law Enforcement, Government and many others. In Eau Claire County we had individuals that traveled to West African countries affected by Ebola and the health department was responsible for active monitoring. If someone became ill, we could rapidly isolate and treat the patient, avoiding spread to others in Eau Claire.

In addition, the health department planned an Ebola exercise to test our community respond to an individual suspected of having Ebola. The exercise



enabled partners to see where gaps exist in communication and their internal plans and where improvements can be made – something that would help in an unlikely Ebola case, but also help with response to other novel communicable disease. We don't expect that Ebola in Eau Claire but it is possible. We need to be prepared to protect everyone in our community – whether it is Ebola, Influenza, Pertussis, or a Flood.

## Public Health Nursing

Public Health Nurses provide a wide variety of individual, family and group services that positively impact health in our community. From prenatal education to communicable disease prevention, public health nurses encourage and support community members to make healthy choices and prevent disease.

### The Year in Numbers

# 2033

vaccinations given to infants, children and adults

# 945

children in need received decay-preventive fluoride mouth rinses

# 562

people received tuberculosis skin tests

# 156

women received prenatal care coordination services

# 18

nursing students completed clinical practice experiences with public health nurses

# 891

women and men received contraceptive services

## Nursing

**Adolescent Health Clinics** - Many middle school children may not be vaccinated as recommended because children have fewer doctor visits as they get older. This can have an effect on an entire community because infections pass easily between students and the students bring the illnesses home to families. To keep both adolescents and the community healthy public health nurses held Adolescent Health Clinics at seven middle schools in Eau Claire County. Nurses gave nearly 700 vaccinations. Parents and schools voiced their appreciation of the convenience these clinics provided.

**Mental Wellness Days for Hmong Elders** - Mental Wellness Days for Hmong Elders was a project that Eau Claire Healthy Communities Mental Health Action Team, Hmong Mutual Assistance Association of Eau Claire and public health nurses implemented. This focus was a result of an Eau Claire County mental health needs assessment, conversations with health and social service providers who work with the Hmong community and focus groups of Hmong residents. The goal of Mental Wellness Days for Hmong Elders was to work with elders in the Hmong community to increase their overall knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellness. For example, elders learned relaxation techniques to deal with stress and they made stress-relief balls by filling uninflated balloons with flour. A mental health dictionary for healthcare providers was also developed to use when working with Hmong patients. In the Hmong language, mental health terms do not translate easily into English. The dictionary begins to create a more common language around mental health.



75% of the elders felt they knew more about mental health and wellness after the sessions

**Chlamydia Project** - Chlamydia is one of the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI) with 383 cases in Eau Claire County for 2014, and the highest rate of infection in 15-24 year old females. To increase the awareness of chlamydia, public health nurses procured grant funding to increase chlamydia testing for females, ages 15-24. This project also enabled nurses to increase outreach to specifically target this age group. Outreach included education of risks related to STIs, methods of preventing STIs and places to go for STI testing. Public health nurses provided educational workshops at the Juvenile Detention Center. They also partnered with local bar owners throughout the county to distribute educational handouts and condoms.

Public Health Nutritionists focus on developing and encouraging healthy eating across the life span of our population. Good nutrition is important for health and disease prevention. Our nutrition programs advocate for healthy behavior changes and access to healthy food choices in the community.

## WIC – Eat Well and Feel Great

Proper nutrition is crucial for good health and sets a lifelong example for children, but it can be difficult on a low income. It is estimated that about 50% of all infants and 35% of all U.S. children under age five are enrolled in WIC (The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children). The Eau Claire City-County Health Department WIC Program served 3,271 clients through 6,749 client contacts in 2014. WIC provided \$1,351,559 in direct assistance to local Eau Claire County families, a monthly average of \$34.43 worth of nutritious groceries per person.



WIC contributes to healthier pregnancies and healthier children, resulting in better health and dramatic savings in long term medical care costs. Through WIC clinics, children are screened for anemia, body mass index is determined and parents are counseled on the benefits of breastfeeding. WIC dietitians also provide education to prevent obesity and chronic diseases by addressing two closely related factors—poor nutrition and inadequate physical activity. The program promotes many other health department community services to our WIC population including tobacco cessation, children’s immunizations and the Prenatal Care Coordination program. In 2014, 2,338 infants and children were screened in WIC for their immunization status.

The WIC program partnered with UW-Stout field experience students in the dietetics program and the UW-Extension Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program to continue the “Veggin’ Out at the Farmers’ Market” fruit and vegetable cooking demonstrations. The demos contained education targeted at the WIC population but was open to all visitors of the farmers’ markets located at Phoenix Park and Festival Foods. The Veggin’ Out team had over 2,200 contacts with community members, including 60 WIC families.

### Public Health Nutrition and WIC by the Numbers

**222** women received contact with a breastfeeding peer counselor

women participating in WIC started breastfeeding their babies **78%**

**1193** families received WIC vouchers to use in area farmers’ markets



families who spent all or some of their farmers market vouchers **86%**

**64** carseats were given to families in need through the Kids Ride Safe Project



grocery store and farmers’ market tours were given to WIC families **15**



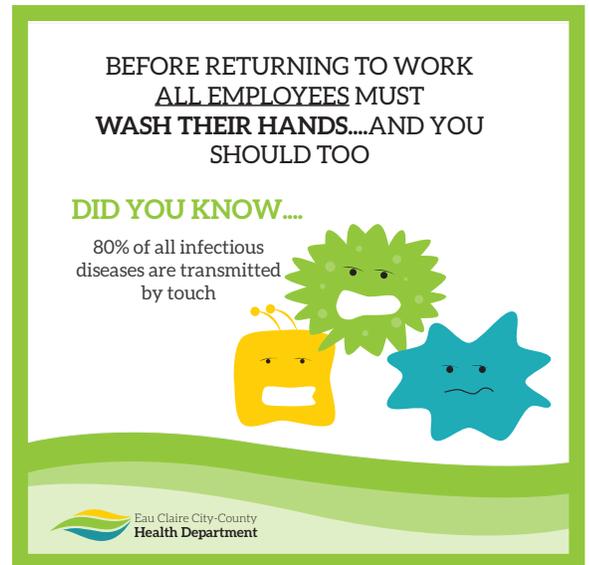
## Environmental Health

*The physical environment in which people live is an important determinant of health. Environmental health protects the health of the public by assessing, correcting, controlling and preventing those factors in our environment that can negatively affect health, including foodborne and waterborne outbreaks.*

## Safe Food Handling

In the United States, about 48 million people (1 in 6 Americans) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die each year from foodborne diseases, according to recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is a significant public health problem that is largely preventable, potentially impacting 17,300 people in Eau Claire County. The health department works to prevent **your** risk of foodborne illness by inspecting restaurants and events with food as well as providing follow-up of those with foodborne illness to find the cause.

In 2014, we began an initiative to inspect all moderate and high risk facilities at least twice each year. The increased presence throughout the county helps the health department influence both the compliance and the overall culture of the establishment - and creates a safe establishment for you to eat at! The laboratory testing programs were expanded to now include re-inspections of establishments with chronic poor results from ice cream dispensers, ice machines and raw meat products. The efforts of the public health laboratory promotes consistency in food safety throughout the county.

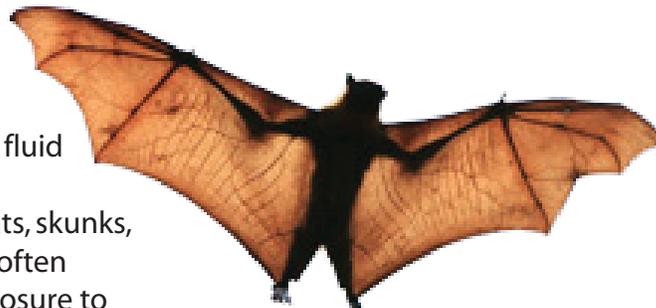


Check out the new handwashing signs that will be displayed throughout Eau Claire County.

## Rabies

Rabies is an infectious disease caused by a virus found in saliva, brain tissue, and spinal fluid of infected mammals. The rabies virus is commonly found in wild animals such as bats, skunks, raccoons, foxes and coyotes. Rabies is most often transmitted to humans or pets through exposure to an infected animal. Prevention and immediate treatment is critical for people or pets who have been exposed to rabies because there is no cure!

From 2010 to 2014, there were 947 animal bites or exposures reported in Eau Claire County. 100% were followed up on by the health department to ensure preventative measures were taken. Four out of the last five years the health department has had a reported animal test positive for rabies.



If there has been exposure or questionable exposure:

- Wash the wound immediately with soap and running water.
- Consult a physician immediately, even for minor wounds.
- Contact the health department to report the exposure
- If the bite is from a wild or stray animal DO NOT try to capture the animal. Do not harm any animal that has bitten a human or your pet.

## Environmental Health by the Numbers

**47%** of tested homes had high radon levels 

unsafe private drinking water bacteria tests **16.3%**

**883** restaurant inspections completed 

trucks of usable donations collected during "Don't Dump-It Donate-it" **5** 

**1902** housing consults were completed, providing education and expertise on housing topics to the community

spore tests came back safe **99%**

## Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) and is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks, also known as deer ticks. It has historically been the second most prevalent reportable communicable disease in Eau Claire County. The health department began a three year project to determine what percentage of ticks are infected. This past summer the health department did tick collections at Lowes Creek and Big Falls County Parks to gather ticks for testing. After the first summer of collections, preliminary results show an infection rate among collected ticks of almost 40%!



With infection rates this high, the health department urges you to:

- Avoid wooded and bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Repel Ticks with DEET or Permethrin.
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that are crawling on you.
- Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body after being outdoors in a wooded area or area with high grass. Areas to check for ticks include under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist and especially in hair.

## Health Department Staff

*Thank you for taking the time to read about some of the important and fulfilling work our staff accomplished in 2014. We are striving to create a healthy and safe community for the citizens of Eau Claire City and County, and are proud to share this summary with you.*



# Eau Claire City-County Health Department

Office: 720 Second Ave  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Website: [www.ehealthdepartment.org](http://www.ehealthdepartment.org)

Phone: 715-839-4718

Fax: 715-839-1674

The full 2014 Annual Report and this Summary Report can be found at [www.ehealthdepartment.org](http://www.ehealthdepartment.org)