



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

## MANITOWOC COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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# 2020 OVERVIEW

## Objective

The Manitowoc County Health Department Annual Report provides a snapshot of the health status of our community and the work we do to improve the overall health of Manitowoc County. Our work is done in partnership with individuals, families, organizations, and the public. We focus on all factors that affect health: health behaviors, social and economic factors, clinical care, and the physical environment. The core functions of public health and the 10 essential public health services provide structure to our mission.

## Year in Review

Manitowoc County is well served by the Health Department employees who work every day to protect and promote the health of our residents. The year 2020 was a particularly challenging year for staff and community members alike, as the world faced the COVID-19 pandemic. Responding to this pandemic became the primary objective of the Health Department, as staff assisted with mass testing sites, guided businesses, schools, and community members through ever-evolving protocols, followed up on positive cases and their contacts, and prepared for mass vaccination clinics.

While our team of Public Health Nurses and Health Educators focused on COVID-19, our environmental staff continued to protect public health and safety through inspection and licensing of retail food establishments, campgrounds, swimming pools, motels, and more. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) staff continued to serve those most at need in the community, evolving to meet needs safely during the pandemic.

Healthiest Manitowoc County 2020 was put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the many difficulties of this past year, the Manitowoc Public Health Department rose to the challenge. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for both the Department and the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Lambert, MPH

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County Executive

Jim Brey  
Chairperson of the County Board

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Shaunda Stuart, WIC Administrative Assistant

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

Sue Boeckman, Administrative Assistant

Yer Kue, Bi-lingual Health Aide

Norma Medrano, Bi-lingual Health Aide

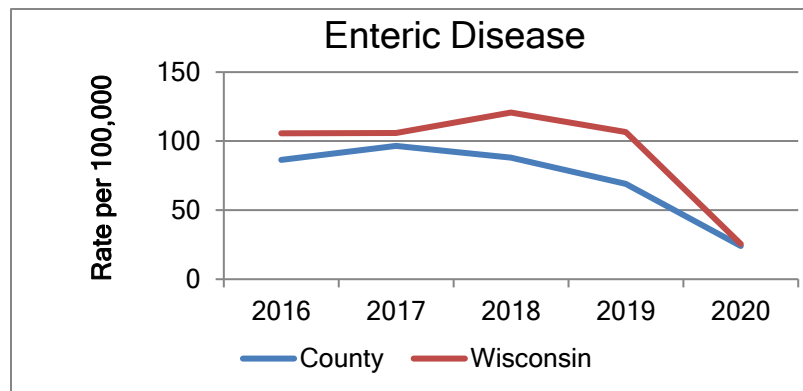
Luarmarie Rosado Rivera, Bi-lingual Health Aide

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Statutorily required program to prevent, suppress and control the spread of communicable disease through immunizations, reporting, contact follow up, and assurance of appropriate treatment and community interventions through department surveillance.

## Enteric Disease

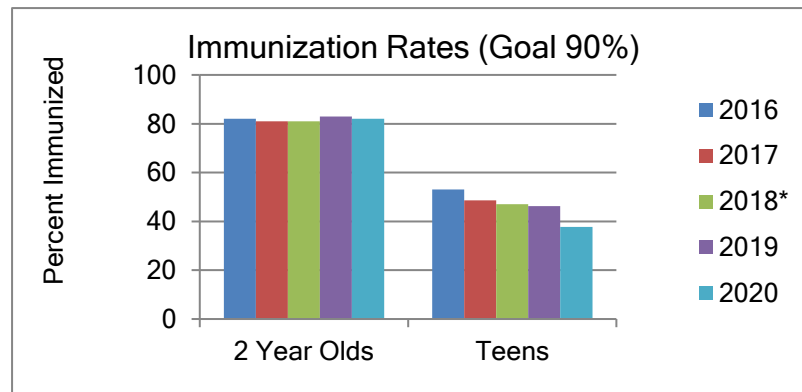
Both Manitowoc County and the State saw a steep drop in enteric infections in 2020, likely due to the reduction in social gatherings and emphasis on handwashing borne by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also possible that fewer people sought treatment, thus reducing the number of reported cases.



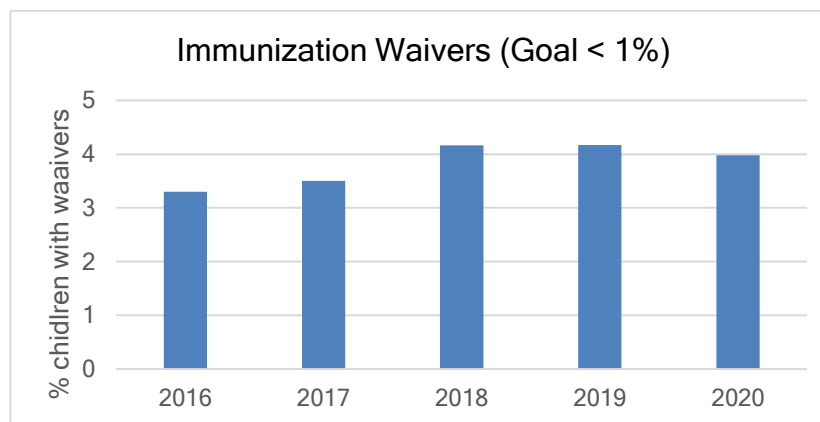
Very few enteric diseases were reported in 2020, including 6 cases of cryptosporidiosis, 6 cases of giardiasis, 6 cases of salmonellosis, and less than 5 cases of campylobacteriosis.

## Immunizations

Approximately 90% of children should be immunized to prevent outbreaks of contagious, vaccine-preventable disease and protect those most vulnerable. The Health Department sends reminder notices to the parents of children under the age of 3 who may be in need of vaccination, a proven method for increasing the scheduling and attendance of vaccine appointments. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented the Health Department, as well as many local providers, from offering on-site vaccination and thus reduced the opportunities for children to receive their vaccines.

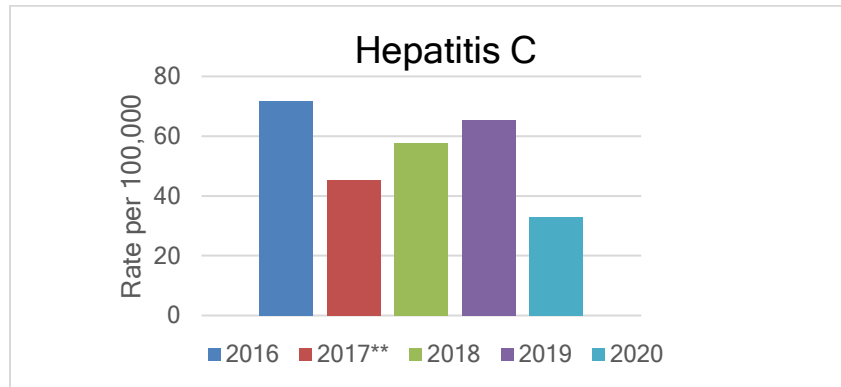


All states allow for medical exemptions to immunization requirements. The State of Wisconsin also allows exemption based on religion or personal convictions. Families who claim exemptions from vaccine for any reason are at increased risk of developing a vaccine preventable disease, and can also increase the risk of outbreaks in the community.



## Hepatitis C

The rate of Hepatitis C diagnosed in Manitowoc County dropped sharply in 2020. It is unclear as to whether this is a true decrease in incidence or the result of delayed or deferred access to health services due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



\*\*In 2017, the Hepatitis C case definition changed and therefore, fewer cases met the case criteria and definition.

## Non-COVID-19 Respiratory Diseases

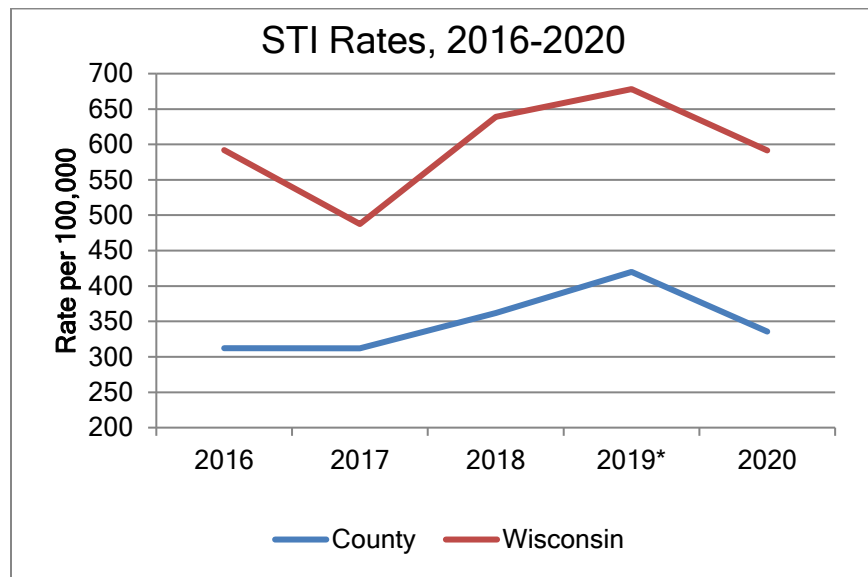
Respiratory Diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and blastomycosis are required to be reported to the Health Department, where the cases are investigated and followed up as necessary. The majority of the reported contagious bacterial respiratory diseases are suspect TB. There were no cases of active TB reported in 2020 and 10 cases of latent TB. One individual completed treatment with medication to prevent active TB.

Influenza is only reportable when there is an outbreak, pediatric death or hospitalization identified. There were <5 respiratory disease outbreaks and 36 influenza-associated hospitalizations reported in 2020.

## Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remain an area of concern for Manitowoc County, although rates of infection remain far below the Wisconsin state average. The number of reported infections declined sharply in 2020, likely reflecting the behavioral and health-treatment seeking changes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Health Department follows up on STIs by contacting high risk individuals to educate them about the disease, facilitate treatment, and trace partners to prevent continued spread of the disease.



Chlamydia is the second most frequently reported communicable disease in Manitowoc County, following only COVID-19, with 227 cases reported in 2020. This reflects a sharp decline from past years, likely reflecting the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gonorrhea is also circulating in the community, with 37 cases reported. Less than 5 cases of syphilis were reported in 2020.



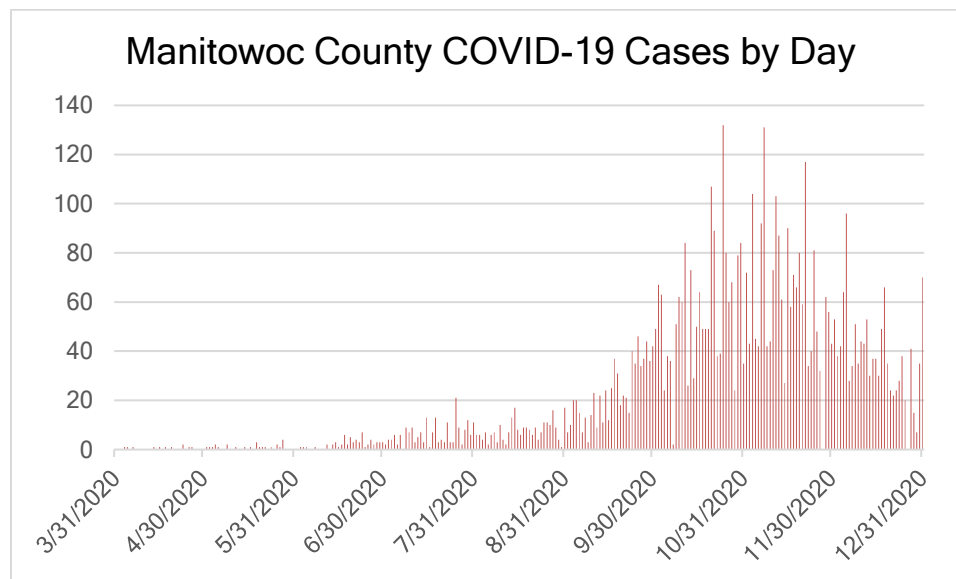
## COVID-19 Disease

On January 9, the World Health Organization announced a mysterious coronavirus-related pneumonia in Wuhan, China. Less than two weeks later, the US confirmed its first case of the yet unnamed “novel coronavirus.”

On April 3, 2020, Manitowoc County confirmed its first case of COVID-19. By that point the State EOC was activated and operating at Level 1, and limited PPE was being distributed to healthcare agencies throughout Wisconsin. The MCHD closed to the public in early April.

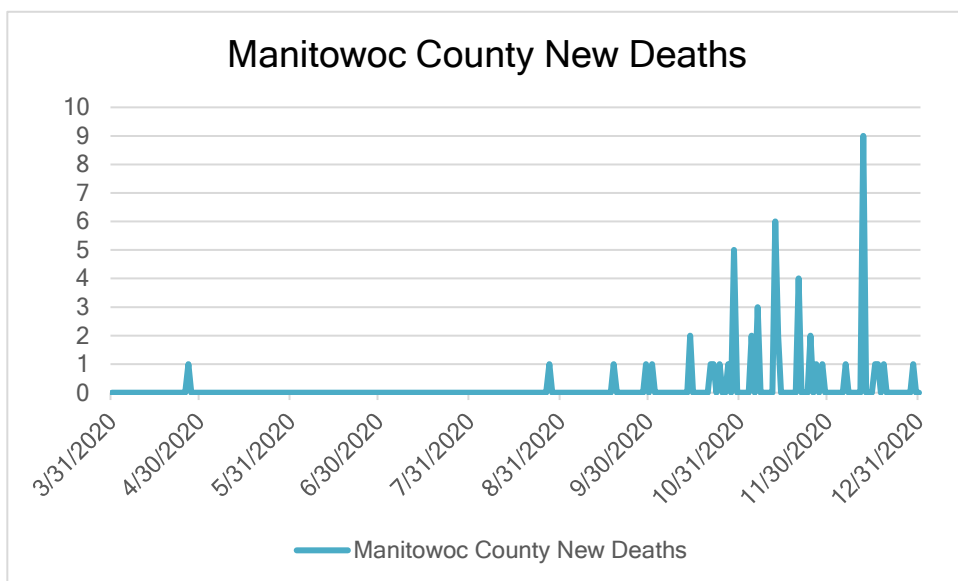
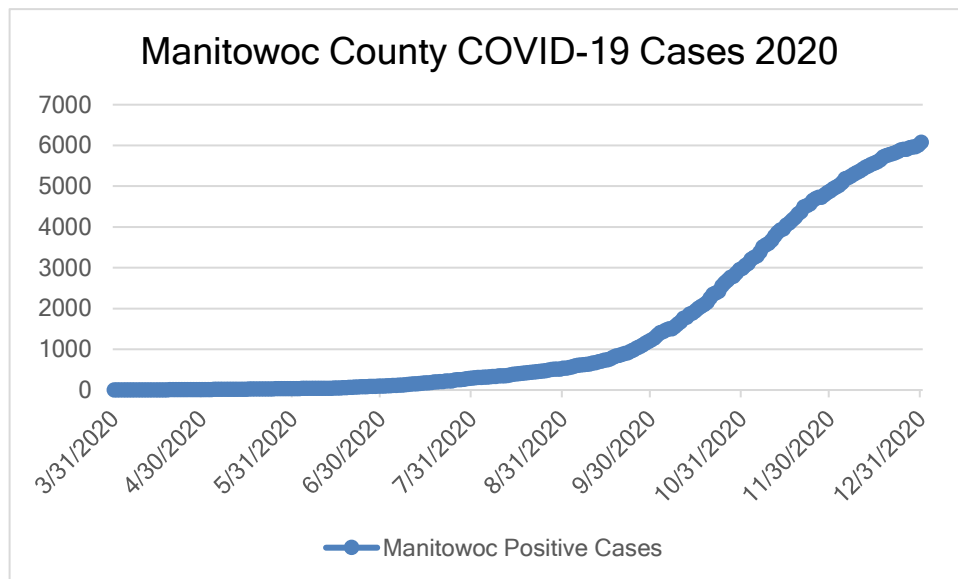
From the onset of the pandemic, Manitowoc County Emergency Services and the Public Health Department forged a close partnership. These two departments worked together to coordinate communication strategy, plan and operate community testing sites, and prepared to operate mass vaccination clinics. The Health Department also served as an information resource for the community, working with businesses, schools, and other community sites to help reduce transmission and protect the public’s health.

In early fall, cases began to rise dramatically. The County responded by quickly onboarding new staff and training them in disease investigations and contact tracing.



By the end of 2020, 6076 people in Manitowoc County had been diagnosed with COVID-19. Fifty-one of those people had passed away, and untold others now face chronic illness and disability because of the virus.

Two vaccines were authorized in the last weeks of December 2020 for emergency use by the FDA. Manitowoc County Health Department and Emergency Services had been preparing for mass vaccination clinics for months and were ready to receive the vaccine. The first vaccines did not arrive to the Health Department until early 2021.



# PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

Public health nurses use their extensive knowledge of the community to organize community resources to collaboratively meet the health needs of families and individuals.

Interventions are the core of public health nurse activities which nurses carry out on behalf of individuals, families, systems, and communities to improve or protect health status.

Public health nurses are strong advocates for individuals and families and provide health education, disease prevention and health promotion to improve outcomes.

## Health Education

Pregnancy education was the most common health teaching topics. In typical years, home visits are offered based on referrals received from doctors, hospitals, birth certificate reviews, social workers and other agencies. Home visits were stopped in April due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health Teaching Topic	No. of Clients	No. of Activities
Pregnancy Education	12	12
Access to Care	1	1
Breastfeeding Promotion	1	1
Community Resources	1	1
Contraception - Condoms	1	1
Health Benefits	1	1
Life Course Framework	1	1
Reproductive Life Plan	1	1
Tobacco Primary Prevention	1	1

## Referral and Follow Ups

Public Health Nurses determine the most appropriate referral based on the need and availability of effective strategies and resources in the community. Most of the referrals were made to Badger Care, Medical Providers, and WIC.

Referral Type	No. of Clients	No. of Activities
Badger Care+	14	14
Medical Care - prenatal	11	11
WIC	11	11
Prenatal Education Services	2	2
Child Protective Services	1	2
Food Resources - Food Share	1	1
Health Benefits Counseling	1	1
Housing Assistance - Resources	1	1
Medical Care - Primary Care	1	1
Tobacco Addition - First Breath	1	1
Other	3	3

Note: Some records of Public Health Nursing Interventions were unable to be accessed due to an error in SPHERE information systems technology. Case Management, Outreach, and other PHN initiatives may not be fully captured in this report.

Public Health Nurses completed 1386 case investigations for COVID-19, tuberculosis, and chlamydia in 2020.

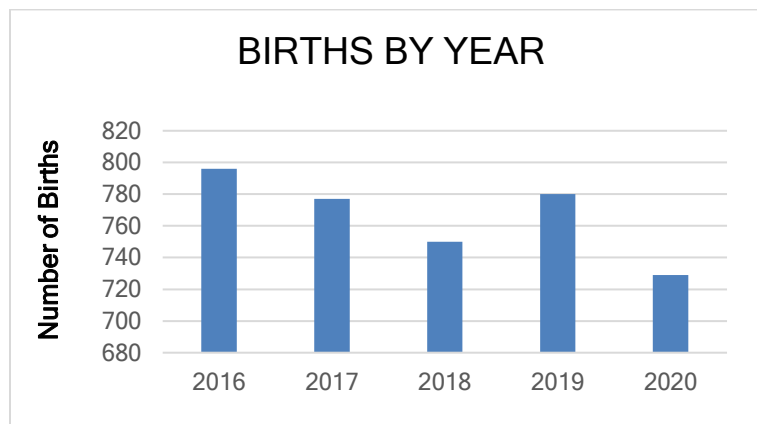
# MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Healthy birth outcomes and early identification and treatment of health conditions among infants can prevent death or disability and enable children to reach their full potential.

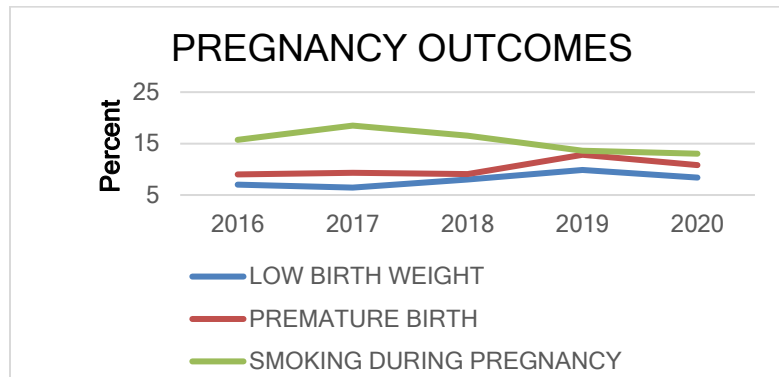
The Health Department typically offers pregnancy testing and child blood lead testing. These screenings contribute to healthy birth and early childhood development outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a temporarily halt to these in-person screenings from April through the end of the year.

## Pregnancy and Birth Outcomes

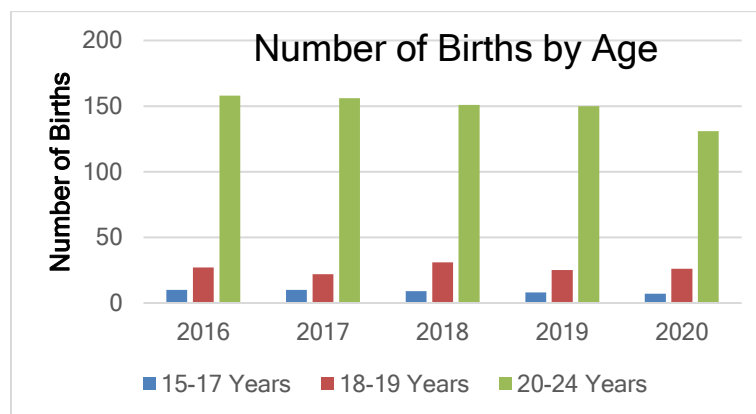
Healthy outcomes are increased by providing parents of all children born in Manitowoc County with age-appropriate information. Public Health Nurses provide home visits based on referrals from outside agencies as well as providers. Home visits were not conducted while the Health Department was closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Smoking rates negatively impact premature birth and low birth weight. The number of women who smoked during pregnancy plateaued in 2020 after several years of slow decline. Nurses offer referral to tobacco cessation resources as well as to the WIC programs.



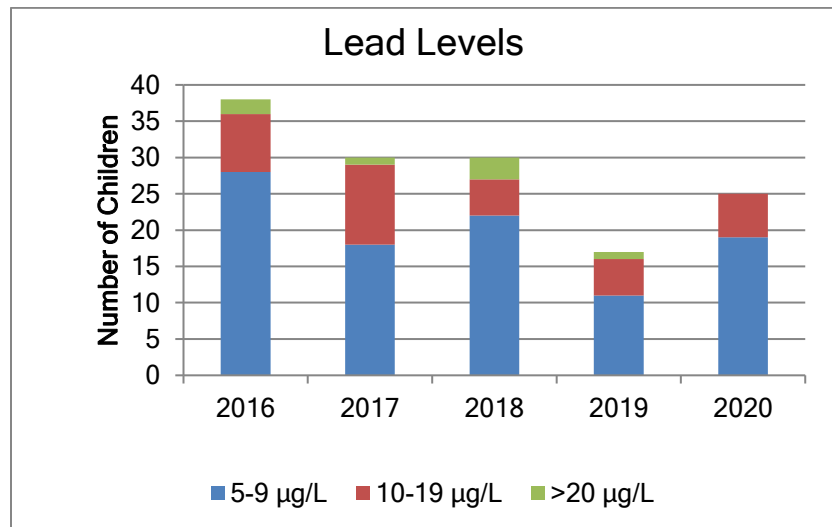
Young pregnant women are at a much higher risk of having serious medical complications. Nurses refer sexually active women to providers to prevent unplanned pregnancies and refer high risk pregnant individuals for appropriate case management to resources such as WIC. The number of young women delivering babies continues to decline.



## Childhood Lead Exposure

No safe blood lead level in children has been identified. Because lead exposure often occurs with no obvious symptoms, it frequently goes unrecognized and can effect neurological development of the child. Lead screening is provided along with follow up and case management in children with blood lead levels  $\geq 5$   $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  with intensive services in children that have levels  $\geq 20$   $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

The Health Department paused in person screening in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Local providers were still able to assess children at healthcare visits.



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental Health focuses on the protection and promotion of a healthy environment by preventing, assessing, correcting and controlling agents in the environment which could have adverse effects on the health and well-being of individuals and communities of Manitowoc County.

## Inspections and Licensing

The Environmental Health Section of the Manitowoc County Health Department licenses and inspects the following facilities within Manitowoc County through contracts with the following Wisconsin agencies: DATCP and DSPS:

Manitowoc County Licensed Establishments	License Year 2017-2018	License Year 2018-2019	License Year 2019-2020
Restaurant and Retail Food Facilities	418	419	445
School Food Service (non-licensed)	19	19	18
Lodging	64	61	88
Campgrounds	11	11	11
Recreation and Educational Camps	7	6	6
Body Art	8	8	9
Swimming Pools, Whirlpools and Therapy Pools	35	33	37
Mobile Home Parks	13	13	11
Temporary Restaurants	52	47	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>671</b>

## Safe Housing, Indoor Air, and Human Health Hazard

The Environmental Health Section receives complaints regarding poor plumbing, insects, indoor air, toxic chemicals, garbage and refuse, mold, health hazards, lack of heat, and generally unfit dwellings. State Statute requires that the local health officer orders the abatement or removal of human health hazards and if the order is not complied with, arranges for the hazard to be abated. The Department also works with local building inspectors, police, Planning and Zoning, Aging and Disability Resource Center, and Human Services Departments to identify and correct poor living conditions.



## Radon Information Center

Environmental Health staff provides radon information and outreach for Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Calumet Counties in Northeastern Wisconsin through a grant from the State of Wisconsin and EPA. Radon is a naturally occurring radiological gas that has been linked to lung cancer. We provide information and test kits to citizens. Short term and long term test kits were offered for sale at cost from the Manitowoc County Health Department.

Test Kits Distributed	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Short Term Kits	144	170	161	175	160	189	187	281	158
Long Term Kits	4	13	19	22	14	28	52	44	40

## Radiation Protection

Through a contract with the State of Wisconsin, environmental health staff collects environmental samples, such as air, milk, and water, around the area of the nuclear plants. Three staff members serve on the State Emergency Response Team which train yearly. The staff participate in the nuclear exercises with a field team, in the EOC and nurses staffing the congregate care facilities.

## Safe Drinking Water

The Manitowoc County Health Department is involved in 2 aspects of monitoring and testing drinking water in Manitowoc County.

**Transient Non-Community Well Program:** The Environmental Health Section has a contract with the Wisconsin DNR for the purpose of assuring compliance with the Safe Drinking Water code as it applies to public transient non-community water systems. TNC water systems include rural churches, restaurants, parks and taverns and other businesses that serve over 25 different people 60 days or more per year. Work includes collecting drinking water samples, issuing all required enforcement letters and inspecting each well system every 5 years.

Number of TNC Systems tested for bacteria and nitrates and inspected annually	100
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### Free Well Water Testing for Houses with Pregnant Women and Infants

Manitowoc County Health Department provides free well water testing for coliform bacteria, nitrates, fluoride and metals for households with pregnant women and infants (up to 12 months old). The results provide information on the general drinking water quality from a metals perspective. Wells with abnormal results were retested after discussing possible parameters that may have contributed to the unsafe reading.

<b>Wells tested</b>	<b>10</b>
Unsafe coliform test	2
Elevated nitrate test	0

## Beach Water Monitoring Program

During 2020, a total of 10 Manitowoc County beaches on Lake Michigan were monitored according to EPA standards for water quality and safety. Beach water samples are routinely collected and analyzed total and fecal coliform bacteria. The beach monitoring program was performed through a cooperative effort between UW-Oshkosh, the Manitowoc County Health Department, the City of Manitowoc, the City of Two Rivers and the Wisconsin DNR. This program was funded through an EPA grant administered by the DNR. Results were posted to the Wisconsin Beach Health website and signage was provided at the beaches indicating to the public the most current available water conditions and any risks associated with swimming in contaminated surface water. Any level over 235 MPN is an advisory, over 1000 MPN is a beach closure.

Beach Name	# of Samples	# of Advisories	# of Closures
Hika	15	1	1
Red Arrow	53	0	0
Blue Rail	53	6	0
Memorial Waldo	27	3	1
Memorial Thiede	27	0	0
Memorial Parkway	27	0	0
Neshotah	27	0	0
Point Beach Lighthouse	26	2	0
Point Beach Lakeshore	26	1	0
Point Beach Concessions	26	1	0

## Rabies Control

Wisconsin law requires that all dogs and cats without current rabies vaccine that bite or scratch a human must be impounded for 10 days under surveillance of a veterinarian. Domestic animals with current rabies vaccinations are required to be home quarantined for 10 days and observed by a veterinarian 3 times throughout the quarantine. Quarantine orders are issued by local law enforcement officials and the Manitowoc County Health Department. The Manitowoc County Health Department also serves as the primary source of rabies information for local physicians, law enforcement officials and veterinarians. Domestic animals that have been exposed to wild animals that have tested positive for rabies, or that are not available for testing, require a special quarantine. These quarantine orders are issued by the Manitowoc County Health Department.

<b>Animal Bites Reported</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Dog	170	136	150	140	137	144	131	145	158	153	151
Cat	70	44	43	57	57	52	47	49	61	61	38
Wild Animal (always tested for rabies)	12	12	10	18	11	9	15	7	10	6	3
Other Domestic Animal	2	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	0
<b>Animal Bites (total)</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>WSLH Rabies Tests</b>											
Dogs	12	11	7	10	5	9	6	10	7	3	4
Cats	14	13	10	8	10	10	6	5	11	12	4
Wild Animals and Other Domestic Animals	12	12	10	18	14	11	16	9	11	7	6
<b>Total Animals Tested</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Quarantine Order for Domestic Animals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

# PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Manitowoc County is prepared to respond to all emergencies with a detailed plan of action and a system of communication with community responders. The second year grant cycle was from July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 and it focused on the Countermeasures and Mitigation domain including Medical countermeasure dispensing, medical material management and distribution, non-pharmaceutical interventions and responder safety and health. We accomplished this mostly through real world events due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## Grant Cycle Objectives

	2017-2018 Year 1	2018-2019 Year 2	2019-2020 Year 3	2020-2021 Year 4	2021-2022 Year 5
DOMAIN	Community Resilience	Information Management	<b>Countermeasures and Mitigation</b>	Biosurveillance	Surge Management
Capabilities	Community Preparedness & Community Recovery	Emergency Public Information and Warning & Information Sharing	<b>Medical Countermeasure Dispensing, Medical Materiel Management and Distribution, Non-pharmaceutical Interventions &amp; Responder Safety and Health</b>	Public Health Laboratory Testing & Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation	Medical Surge, Mass Care, Volunteer Management & Fatality Management

## 2020 Accomplishments

Supported the COVID-19 Response via:

- Contact tracing
- Providing guidance and support to nursing homes, schools, and businesses
- Preparing for COVID-19 vaccine clinics, including running a mass clinic dry run
- Obtaining certification in Fit Testing so as to be ready to outfit clinical teams for vaccine clinics
- Partnering with The Chamber of Manitowoc County to aid area businesses in understanding and creating COVID-19 policies and procedures in the workplace using best practices, and helped manage outbreaks

Administered mass influenza vaccinations to children under 19 years of age



Public Health Nurses at the Flu Clinic

## Preparedness and Training Exercises

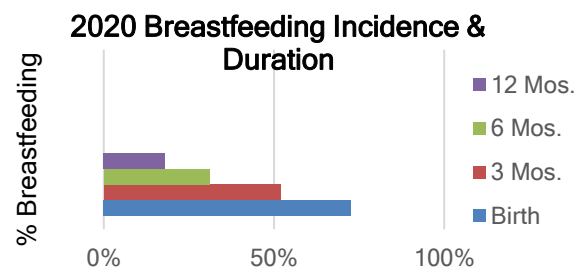
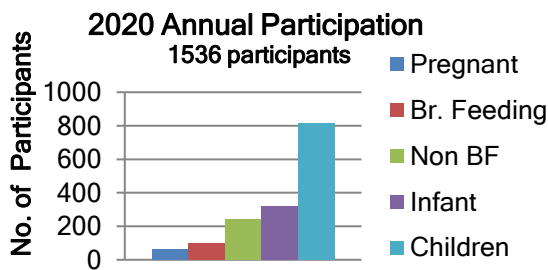
- Partnered with key community leaders to complete a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment
- Trained preparedness staff and at a minimum, ensured staff completed the ICS 100, ICS 200 and NIMS 700 classes
- Maintained profiles in the public health emergency alerting system
- Maintained communication with the Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition.
- Attended the Health Emergency Preparedness conference
- Trained staff in sheltering set up, logistics, maintenance, and take down
- Worked with community partners to make plans for assisting vulnerable populations during disasters and emergencies
- Participated in a tabletop exercise assisting Certified Healthcare Facilities in evacuation plans due to natural disasters
- Sat on the Regional Advisor Committee to help provide input on an intensive training for new public health employees specific to rural public health and preparedness initiatives

# WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is the public health cornerstone for building healthier women, infants, children, families and communities. WIC's goal is to improve the health of pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to age 5.

## WIC Overview

The WIC Program provides supplemental nutritious foods, nutrition education and breastfeeding information/education for pregnant & postpartum women, infants, and children under the age of 5. WIC staff make referrals to other service providers including health & other government programs. Breastfeeding education includes how to breastfeed, tools to help return to work/school and continue breastfeeding, and how to obtain and use a breast pump.



The year 2020 saw the change in how WIC serve our participants due to the COVID 19 pandemic. WIC appointments went from face to face appointments to phone and text appointments. On March 31, 2020, the ROSIE computer system, modified by the state office, allowed for telephone appointments. WIC staff were able to bypass the required anthropometric and bloodwork data in the computer system to complete certifications without physical presence.

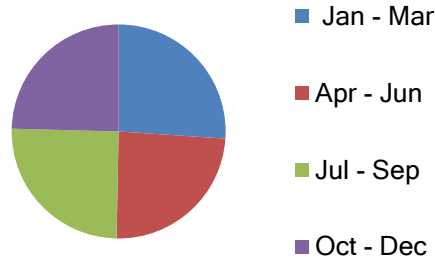


## WIC Venders

WIC approved vendors are located throughout Manitowoc County. There are eleven locations of grocery stores and pharmacies available to our participants to purchase WIC approved foods.

### 2020 Vendor Revenue

**\$597,948.10**

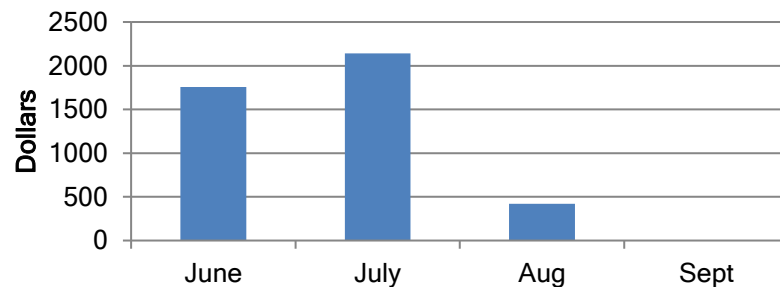


The WIC Farmers Market Program offers eligible WIC families checks to buy fresh produce from June through October at approved locations.

### 2020 Farmers Market Amount

**Redeemed**

**\$5,562.00**



WIC saw a decrease in vendor revenue due to the increase of online shopping and pick-up options offered by grocery stores as the result of the pandemic. The state WIC office is working on utilizing WIC benefit cards for online shopping. WIC also saw a decrease in the farmer's market check redemption, due to the limitations put on the farmer's markets themselves and families not able to attend the local markets.