

2018

Annual Report

Vilas County Public Health



Message from the Health Officer

The 2018 Annual Report of Vilas County Public Health Department provides a snapshot of the many ways in which our department touches the lives of Vilas County residents each and every day and provides an answer to many who ask us, “What does Public Health do?”

Although public health programs and activities may not often be visible, public health staff can frequently be found working behind the scenes on our mission to protect, promote, and maintain the health of our entire population. The 10 Essential Services of Public Health can provide a basic description to others as to what Public Health does, and the services provided by our department.

What will help us to further describe public health in the future is the national movement of Public Health Accreditation. Through the accreditation process we will continue to formally sharpen and develop the tools and methods we need to ensure the safety and health of the population that we serve. Our health department is embarking on the accreditation process.

In summary, we cannot do it alone. Providing Essential Services of Public Health requires community partnerships. While strengthening our services to provide essential public health services, we continue to develop and engage community partners to provide a healthy and safe place to live for all residents of Vilas County.

Respectfully yours,

Gina Egan, RN, BSN
Health Officer
Vilas County Public Health Department

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Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Our Mission

In partnership with our community, Vilas County Public Health Department creates individual and family resilience by promoting health, creating safe environments, and improving quality of life across the lifespan.

Our Vision

Vilas County Public Health Department builds strong families and communities by promoting healthy lifestyles and safe environments.

Our Core Values

- *Honesty/Integrity:* Our staff treat all those who walk through our doors fairly regardless of sex, class, race, religion, etc. We focus on building trust with our clients and our community.
- *Accountability:* Our programs are best practice and evidence based. We rely on data to drive decisions and continue to improve within our agency.
- *Transparency:* We assure that our program and organization operations and decisions are open to the public. We provide program and service information and outcomes to the community and stakeholders.
- *Respect:* We respect and advocate for vulnerable populations and work to empower families to assure optimal quality of life.
- *Empowerment:* Our staff work to create a “judgement-free zone” and strive for health equity in our community. Being sensitive to both community and personal readiness is a priority for the agency

Vilas County Public Health Department Staff

Gina Egan, RN, BSN

Director/Health Officer

Laurel Dreger, RN, BSN, RS, CLS

Asst. Director/Deputy Health Officer

Lori Bergum, RN, CLS

Registered Nurse

Tammi Boers, RS, BS

Community Health Coordinator

Amy Springer, RS, BS

Registered Sanitarian

Taylor Smith, RS, BS

Registered Sanitarian

Theresa Lewis

Administrative Assistant

Andrea Martin RDH

Registered Dental Hygienist

Barb Garrett

Dental Program Assistant

Mary Sikora Petersen, RD, CD, CDE,

Registered Dietician

Essential Service 1:

Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.

Vilas County Demographics

	Vilas County	Wisconsin
Population Estimate	21,435	5,778,708
Percent White Alone	86.4%	87.5%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	11.3%	1.1%
Black or African American	0.3%	6.6%
Asian	0.5%	2.8%
Hispanic	2.3%	6.7%
Percent Female	49.3%	50.3%
Percent Age 18 or Younger	16.7%	22.3%
Percent Age 65 or Over	29.9%	16.1%
High School Graduation Rates	92.5%	91.4%
Person without Health Insurance	10.4%	6.2%
With a Disability and Under 65	11.2%	8.3%
Median Household Income	\$41,632	\$54,610
Percent in Poverty	12.6%	11.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, July 2017

Top Causes of Death

1. Heart Related (91)
2. Cancer (42)
3. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease (16)
4. Falls (14)
5. Motor Vehicle Accidents (12)

2018 County Health Rankings

Vilas County ranked 66 out of 72 counties for Health Outcomes and 44 for Health Factors, according to the 2018 County Health Rankings (by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute). The Rankings provide a snapshot that shows the health of our county residents compared to other counties.

Key Findings:

- 33% Smoking during Pregnancy (vs. WI at 13%)
- 21% Children in Poverty (vs WI at 16%)
- 95% High School Graduation (vs WI at 88%)

Community Health Improvement Process and Plan

Vilas County Public Health Department continued to work with Forest and Oneida Health Departments and Ascension Health Care on implementing the 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan. The five-year plan consists of goals and objectives that were chosen based on the Community Needs Assessment, community forums, small focus groups and interviews. The plan's focus areas include:

- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA),
- Chronic Disease, and
- Mental Health.

For more information, visit: <http://www.vilaspublichealth.com/index.php?page=Reports>

Essential Service 2:

Diagnose and investigate health hazards in the community.

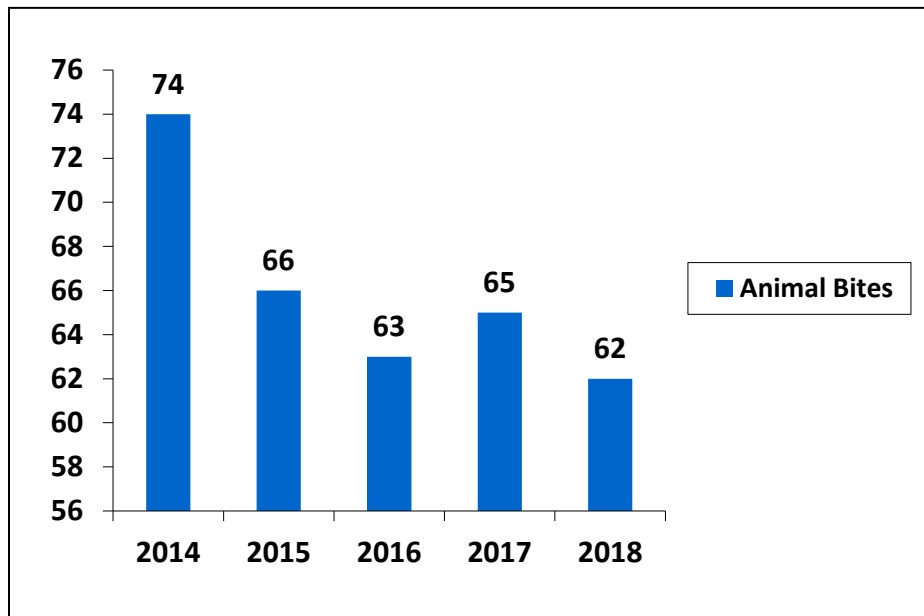
Communicable Disease and Prevention

Confirmed/Probable/Suspect Reportable Diseases	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Lyme Disease	30	17	31	46	75
Blastomycosis	3	3	1	2	4
Hepatitis C	7	20	37	24	41
Chlamydia	28	41	29	52	37
Giardiasis	7	9	34	12	15
Pertussis	36	45	104	39	5
Erlichiosis/Anaplasmosis (Tick-borne)	6	6	16	13	11

In 2018, VCPHD received 413 reports of communicable diseases, Chlamydia, Lyme Disease and Pertussis were the top three reported diseases.

Animal Bites

VCPHD investigates all animal bites to people. We work closely with law enforcement, the local humane officer, area emergency rooms and veterinarians to prevent rabies.



Immunizations for Children and Adults

Through the state of Wisconsin Vaccine for Children's program, VCPHD provides vaccines at no cost to resident's age birth to 19 who qualify. Adult vaccines are also offered, such as Tetanus, flu, and Pneumonia. In 2018, VCPHD gave a total of 1058 immunizations, with 60 of these given to children and 998 given to adults.

Vaccinations					
Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Influenza (flu)	1146	1070	966	885	924
Tetanus/Pertussis	302	223	177	156	107
Pneumonia	20	34	31	13	24
Hepatitis B	16	34	4	3	0



Immunization Coalition

Vilas County Public Health Department is part of the Northwood’s Immunization Coalition which is made up of Florence, Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties. Members, which include local healthcare providers, school nurses, tribes, pharmacies and infection control providers, met 6 times in 2018. The focus of the meetings is:

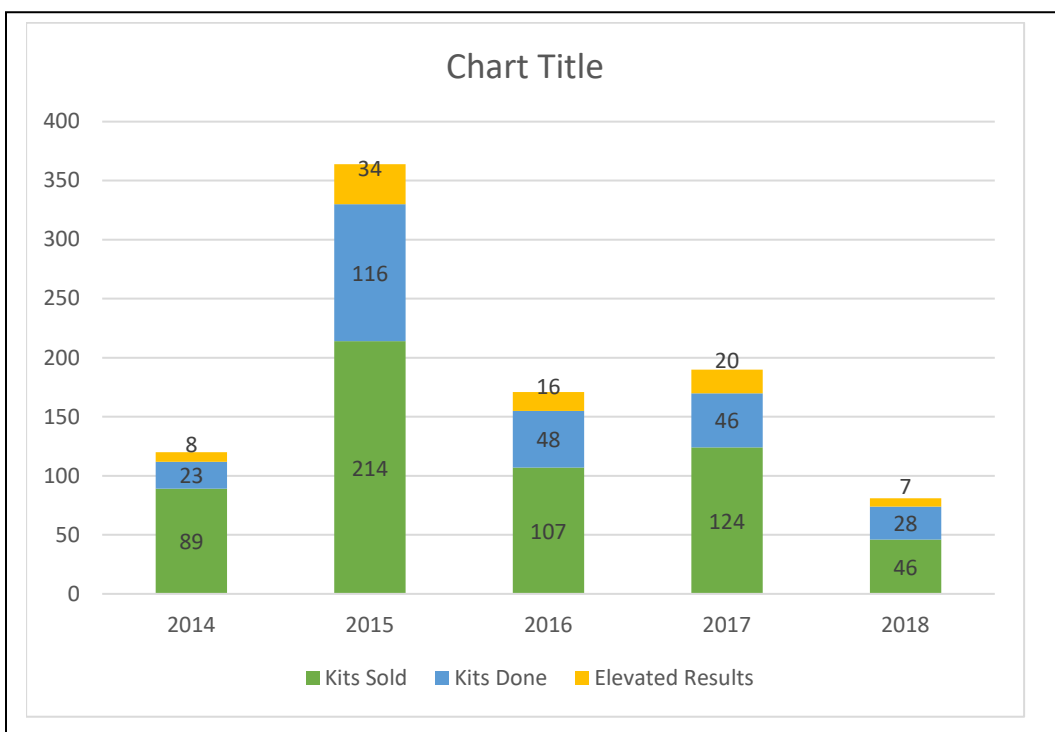
- Promoting Strategies to Improve Access to Care
- Promoting Strategies to Improve County Immunization Rates, and
- Receiving updates from the State and coalition members.

2018 Outcomes:

- Vilas County’s goals for immunizations being up-to-date by age 2 was 65% in 2018. We exceeded that goal and reached 67% being up-to-date by age 2 and 77% late up-to-date.
- We saw improvement in adolescent immunization rates. HPV increased from 42% (2017) to 46% (2018). Meningococcal increased from 75% (2017) to 76% (2018) and Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) increased form 84% (2017) to 85% (2018).
- Adult immunization rates were also increased. In 2018, Tdap at 66% (62% in 2017), shingles at 39% (37% in 2017), and Pneumonia complete (series of 2) at 51% (48% in 2017).

Radon

In 2018, the health department promoted radon testing in January through a press release and postings on the Health Department’s Facebook and VCPHD website pages.



Lead

A VCPHD nurse follows up with children who have a lead level of 5 or greater. This may include phone calls, home visits, consultation with the primary healthcare provider and a home lead risk assessment by our Environmental Health Specialist. The goal is to lower environmental lead exposure and lead poisoning. In 2018, 213 children age 0 through 5 years of age, were tested for blood lead; 46 children were tested through the VCPHD. No child had an elevated blood lead level in 2018.

Community Human Health Hazards

Vilas County Public Health Department (VCPHD) investigates situations with the potential of a human health hazard, as defined by Chapter 14 Vilas County Human Health Hazards Ordinance. Enforcement of the Human Health ordinance is the role of the Vilas County Board of Health and Health Officer.

In 2018, 18 Human Health Hazard cases were managed by the VCPHD for such issues as air quality, mold, garbage and hoarding.

Health Hazards			
Type	2016	2017	2018
Garbage	7	19	9
Mold	3	1	2
Water Issues	1	2	0
Air Quality	2	0	2
Other	4	1	4



Essential Service 3:

Inform, Educate and Empower People about Health Issues.

Presentations and Health Fairs

- Easy Eagles – Presented to 25 members on e-cigarettes and JUUL along with youth tobacco usage rates.
- Community Health Expo – Provided information on sugar content of favorite snacks and Mental Health information and resource to hundreds of people.
- Eagle River Rotary Presentation – Presented on the change of food code to members.
- Opioid Epidemic – sponsored Community Town Hall on opioids, Opioid Use Disorder, and treatment with Keynote Speaker, Dr. Michael E M Larson, Clinical Psychologist, Marshfield Clinic – Minocqua Center. 20 residents attended.



Media

Vilas County Public Health promotes health, informs public on health concerns, provides resources and tips, as well as promotes events using different forms of media. Public health topics are shared using an all media approach, which includes press releases, interviews (when applicable), website posts and Facebook. 2018 public health outreach included:

- Radon
- Temporary Food Stands
- Strong Women/Strong Bones
- WI Wins Results
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning
- West Nile Virus
- Tickborne diseases
- Tobacco
- Immunizations
- Mental Health Month
- Back to School Safety
- Suicide Prevention
- Food Safety

Visit our website at <https://www.vilaspublichealth.com> and friend us on Facebook.



Essential Service 4:

Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.

Vilas County Youth Coalition

The Vilas County Youth Coalition, spearheaded by UW-Extension Vilas County, is a partnership with law enforcement, Lac du Flambeau Tribe, Ministry Health Care, VCPHD and other local agencies. The coalition's mission is to strengthen and support youth by providing intergenerational partnerships, positive opportunities, various community activities, and by encouraging respect, individuality, and active healthy citizenship. In 2018, the following was accomplished:

- **Sixth Grade Summit** – The Summit is held every September in St. Germain and all sixth-grade classes in Vilas County participate. The summit provides education to students on safety and ways to have fun without using alcohol or drugs. In 2018, 314 students participated as well as many agencies and businesses. VCPHD talked to students on the dangers of e-cigarettes and JUULs as well as the amount of sugar in beverages (9/20/18).



- **Dose of Reality Campaign (education campaign):** theater public service announcement (PSA) in Vilas Cinema (Eagle River) and Lakeland Cinema (Minocqua), billboard placed on Highway 70, pamphlets distributed to local pharmacies and healthcare providers throughout Vilas County.
- **Written off Campaign:** The documentary about an individual's struggle with drugs, was viewed at Northland Pines High School on September 26, Lakeland Union High School on September 27. A Teen Bedroom (a mock bedroom on ways teens can hide drugs & drug paraphernalia) was provided in conjunction with the viewing of the documentary at Northland Pines High School along with distribution of medication lock boxes.

Recovery Coach through Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps

The Health Department and Eagle River Police Department are jointly hosting a Recovery Coach through Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps to help people who are interested in staying sober after AODA treatment. She will also provide resources and educational outreach to the community on AODA issues. The Lac du Flambeau (LDF) Tribe will also be hosting a Coach to work in their community.

Northwood's Tobacco-Free Coalition

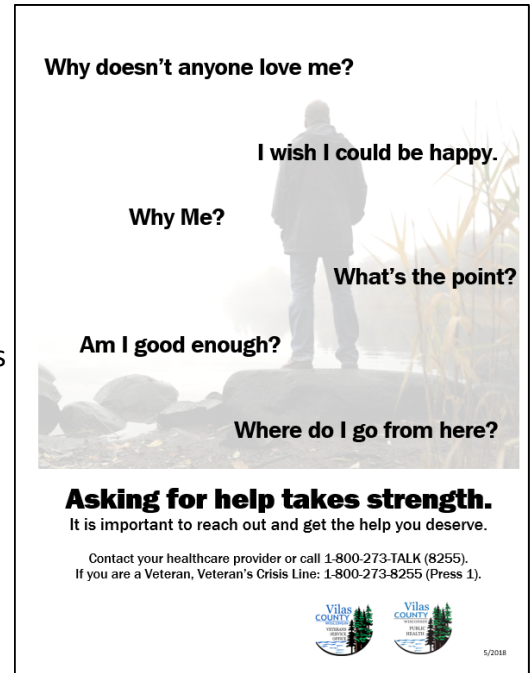
Vilas County Public Health Department (VCPHD) is part of the six county (Florence, Forest, Lincoln, Price, Oneida and Vilas) Northwood's Tobacco-Free Coalition. Participation includes educating legislators, partners, and the public on other tobacco products including electronic cigarettes (e-cigarette), health effects of tobacco use, and resources to help people quit tobacco.

Additional coalition activities include participating in the Wisconsin Wins (WI Wins) campaign. The campaign is a State-level initiative designed to decrease youth access to tobacco products. In 2018, 37 random checks were completed for retailers holding a tobacco license; 3 of these retailers sold tobacco to a minor. The current illegal sale rate is 13%. This has gone up a little since 2017 which was 10.5%.

Community Outreach Prevention Education (COPE) Coalition

In 2018, the Northwoods COPE (Community, Outreach, Prevention, Education) Coalition (Forest, Oneida and Vilas) continued to work on alcohol and other drug coalition (AODA) and mental health strategies. Strategies included strengthening data, access to care, lowering use of AODA, lowering mental health stigma, and suicide prevention. The following was completed:

- Poster Campaign – focusing on middle-aged males for suicide prevention was implemented by Vilas County Veterans Services and the Health Department. The campaign was presented to members of the Tavern League in August. This included data on suicide rates in Vilas County, including males are more likely to complete suicide. Posters, with the national crisis numbers, were distributed to every member of the Tavern League (60+) in the county to be posted in men’s bathroom.
- Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training for 88 participants that included healthcare providers, medical students, school districts, volunteer emergency responders, churches, and community members.



Child Death Review Team

Child Death Review is made up of a variety of partners whose purpose is to investigate why children in our community die. The goal of the review is to determine possible prevention strategies. Our team meets four times a year to review deaths of children under nineteen years of age as well as suicides.

Vilas County Coalition on Activity and Nutrition (CAN)

CAN was formed in June 2018. Members include Northland Pines School District, Ascension – Eagle River, Peter Christiansen Community Health, Master Gardener, Community Health, Northwoods Children’s Museum, Trees for Tomorrow, Vilas County Public Health Department, and community members. Goals of the coalition are the following:

- Select evidenced based programs to promote chronic disease prevention and management (Tobacco, Nutrition, Physical Activity)
- Establish Built Environments that support chronic disease prevention and management.
- Improve policy related to chronic disease.

Breastfeeding Coalition

As breastfeeding advocates, the coalition represents childbearing women and their families. We believe that breastfeeding is natural and provides the optimal nourishment for infants, benefiting both mother and child. We come together in this coalition to provide a strong unified voice in the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding in Vilas, Forest, Oneida, and Price Counties.

Essential Service 5:

Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Community Health Efforts.

Performance Management Plan

Vilas County Public Health Department continues to implement their 2015-2018 Performance Management Plan. The plan includes how VCPHD's performance standards, measures, reporting of progress, and quality improvement are selected and carried out. Performance measures were tracked in an Excel based dashboard and reviewed. Measures are also monitored for potential quality improvement initiatives.

Strategic Plan

Vilas County Health Department finished the process of creating a new Strategic Plan in 2018. The five-year plan began implementation in August and ends in 2022. Implementation of the 5-year plan began in August.

The Health Department has a leadership team that is responsible for monitoring the plan. Goals include:

- Strengthen communication.
- Increase engagement.
- Improve agency infrastructure.
- Formalize a workforce development system.

The Health Department Leadership Team monitors the progress of goals quarterly. For a copy of the VCPHD's Strategic Plan, visit: <http://www.vilaspublichealth.com/index.php?page=Reports>

Quality Improvement Plan

A quality improvement team was created and represents different program areas within the department. The purpose of this team is to develop and implement the Vilas County Public Health Department Quality Improvement Plan as well as oversee performance management and the strategic plan for the health department. The Quality Improvement Plan was created in 2016 and is compliant with the Public Health Accreditation Board Version 1.5 Standards and Measures document. This plan is effective through 2019. The purpose of the QI Plan is to maximize our work efforts, staff efficiency and effectiveness, as well as to build a culture of quality improvement within the organization.

Public Health Preparedness

Vilas County Public Health Department receives funding from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to support public health emergency planning, training, and exercising. In 2018, the VCPHD's Public Health Emergency Response Plan (PHERP) was reviewed and updated, exercised, and used in a real event. VCPHD also concentrated a large amount of time on staff training. Outcomes:

- All Staff: Incident Command System (ICS) 300 Training (February 5 – 6)
- Command Staff: ICS 400 Training (March 5 – 6)
- Exercise: Unknown Communicable Disease Multi-Jurisdictional Outbreak (April 24) – Tabletop exercise sponsored by the North Central Wisconsin-Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition (NCW-HERC). Partners included Emergency Management, Sheriff's Department, Board of Health member, Social Services, Commission on Aging, Aging and Disability Resources (ADRC), Human Service Center, and Ascension Healthcare. Capabilities Intended to be exercised:
 - Emergency Public Info and Warning
 - Surveillance & Epi Investigation

- Responder Safety and Health
- Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
- Medical Surge
- Mass Casualty, Mass Fatality, Family Assistance Center Tabletop Exercise (September 18) – Tabletop exercise sponsored by NCW-HERC. Partners included Emergency Management, Sheriff’s Department, Eagle River Fire Department, Board of Health Member, Vilas County Public Information Officer (PIO), Peter Christensen Healthcare Center, Social Services, Commission on Aging, Aging and Disability Resources (ADRC), Human Service Center, and Ascension Healthcare. Capabilities intended to exercise included:
 - Medical Surge
 - Mass Fatality
 - Public Information & Warning

Community Health Improvement Process – the Assessment (CHA) and the Plan (CHIP)

Vilas County Public Health Department continued to work with Forest and Oneida Health Departments and Ascension Health Care on implementing the 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan. The plan consists of goals and objectives that were chosen based on the Community Needs Assessment, community forums, small focus groups and interviews. The plan’s focus areas include: Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA), Chronic Disease, and Mental Health. Community coalitions have been formed to work on implementing evidence-based strategies for each health priority. For a copy of the tri-county CHIP, visit

<http://www.vilaspublichealth.com/index.php?page=Reports>

Essential Service 6:

Enforce Laws and Regulations that Protect Health and Ensure Safety.

Food Safety and Recreational Licensing

The Vilas County Public Health Department (VCPHD) is contracted as an agent of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to provide public health inspections and licensing for a variety of establishments. For the 2017-2018 licensing year, 1185 licenses were issued for public facilities such as taverns, restaurants, temporary food stands, hotels/ motels, tourist rooming houses, bed and breakfasts, recreation and education camps, campgrounds, swimming pools, retail food stores (grocery and convenience), and body art facilities.

Type of Facility Inspected	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Restaurants	252	247	244	216	214
Campgrounds	28	29	27	30	33
Recreational Camps	13	14	14	14	13
Pools	33	33	33	34	35
Bed and Breakfast	7	5	5	4	3
Tourist Rooming Houses	441	460	453	481	692
Hotels/Motels	208	206	205	200	117
Schools	8	8	8	8	8
Retail Food Establishment	72	73	71	70	77
Temporary Food Stands	40	38	41	16	6
Tattoo/Body Piercing	0	0	0	0	1

Water Quality Issues

Through a contract with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), transient non-community water supply systems (wells that serve 25 or more people 60 or more days a year) and wells were tested and inspected in the county, ensuring safe and dependable water to the public. In 2018, 353 transient non-community water supply systems were sampled, with 18 needing corrections. 1120 private wells were sampled.

VCPHD also provides pregnant women or families with children age 1 or less with free water testing kits. The kit measures bacteria, nitrates and fluoride levels in the water sample. In 2018, 7 water test kits were distributed to these families in Vilas County; 4 were returned.

15 public beaches are monitored at several locations throughout the summer (Memorial Day weekend - Labor Day weekend). The beach water is tested for fecal coliforms and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) as indicators of more hazardous bacteria. This is completed through a partnership with UW-Oshkosh. In 2018, 15 Vilas County beaches were tested once weekly for 15 weeks.



Essential Service 7:

Link People to Needed Personal Health Services.

WIC - Nutrition

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC helps:

- Income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women,
- Women who recently had a baby,
- Infants and children up to five years of age who are at health risk due to inadequate nutrition.



The program improves pregnancy outcomes:

- Providing or referring clients to support services necessary for full-term pregnancies.
- Lowering infant death by lowering the incidence of low birth weight (infants under 5 ½ pounds are at greater chance of breathing problems, brain injuries and physical abnormalities).
- Providing infants and children with a healthy start in life by improving poor or inadequate diets while saving long-term medical costs.

Vilas County Public Health Department had 301 WIC clients in 2018.

The health department has two nurses who are Certified Lactation Specialists. Both are members of the Northwoods Breastfeeding Coalition. The lactation specialists provide specialized breastfeeding education, encouragement, support, and resources.

Mother, Child and Family

Infant mortality is an important measure of a community's health. Our prenatal and postnatal programs aim to help families support their children's healthy growth and development. Research shows that families who are part of these programs have healthier babies, improved parenting skills, positive community relationships, children have less behavior problems, and a reduction in tobacco exposure and alcohol use.

Prenatal and Postnatal Care

Vilas County Public Health Department provides information and resource referrals to assist families after the birth of their baby, whether it is their first child or if they have other children. Moms receive support, baby weight checks, health teaching on parenting and child development, home visits and referrals to community services.

Referrals are also made to medical, social, educational and other services for pregnant women who are considered high risk for adverse pregnancy outcome. Northwoods Healthy Families partners with the Health Department to provide a home visitation program for at-risk families.

Oral Health

Vilas County Public Health Department spearheads the Northwoods Dental Project, an oral health partnership with Vilas, Oneida, Forest and Florence Counties. In 2018, in the four counties, 806 children at Early Head Start, Head Start and 4K programs had varnishes applied to their teeth.

The Seal-A-Smile Program applied sealants to second and sixth grade children in area schools in 2018. In total, 1,211 children received oral health education, 894 received oral health exams, 480 received sealants and 885 of these children also received fluoride treatments.



Essential Service 8

Assure a Competent Public and Personal Health Care Workforce.

Linkages with Academia

Every summer, Vilas County Public Health Department works with UW-Oshkosh to offer summer internships in environmental health to students. Students are offered hands on opportunities to inspect Tourist Rooming Houses, collect well water samples and beach testing.

VCPHD also partners with UW-Green Bay to host RN to BSN candidates during their community health practicum. In 2018, we had 1 nursing student learn and work with the community health improvement process.

Essential Service 9:

Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility & Quality of Personal and Population Based Health Services.

Consolidated Contract & State Grant Program Reviews

Each year the State Division of Public Health enters into contracts with local health departments for a package of grant dollars targeting various public health initiatives. These grants are performance based and require attainment of negotiated objectives to assure future funding. In 2017, all deliverables for state contracts were met. Grant Funding includes:

- WI Department of Public Health Prevention (WI DPH) Program Grant
- WI DPH Preparedness Program Grant
- WI DPH Woman and Children (WIC) Grant
- WI DPH Communicable Disease Funding
- WI DPH Childhood Lead Grant
- WI DPH Immunization Grant
- WI DPH Maternal and Child Health Grant
- Northwood's Tobacco Free Coalition

Public Health Accreditation

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) was created in 2007 to implement and oversee public health department accreditation. Public health accreditation:

- Measures a health department's performance against national quality standards and measures;
- Improves and protects the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance within a health department;
- Ensures that programs offered at every health department in the nation are consistent with one another.

Vilas County Public Health Department continues to work towards accreditation through updating policies and procedures, staff training, carrying out the performance management plan, strategic plan, quality improvement plan and the community health improvement plan.

Essential Service 10:

Research for New Insights & Innovative Solutions to Health Problems.

Wisconsin Public Health Research Network

Public Health Research Networks (PBRN) are organized groups of public health agencies engaged in ongoing collaboration with public health research centers to conduct rigorous, applied studies designed to identify strategies to improve the organization, financing, and delivery of public health services in real work community settings. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded an initial round of five states for PBRNs. Wisconsin received second round funding at the end of 2009.

Other Research Involvement

Vilas County Public Health Department, in collaboration with Forest County Health Department, Oneida County Health Department and Ministry Health Care, worked with University of Wisconsin – Stout (Applied Research Center) to assess and complete the 2015 – 2016 Community Health Assessment (CHA) Report. The Health Department also co-authored blastomycosis article with Dr. Dennis Baumgartner, Medical College of Wisconsin. Gina is a member of the Advisory Board for UW-Oshkosh Environmental Health Program.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Visit our website at
www.vilaspUBLICHEALTH.com

Information Sources: National Association of County and City Health Officials, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WI Department of Health Services, US Census