



**THIS IS PUBLIC  
HEALTH.**

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



# 2013 Annual Report Summary



Eau Claire City-County  
**Health Department**

# Message from the Health Officer

It is my pleasure to share with you our 2013 Annual Report of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. This report provides you with highlights of public health accomplishments in 2013. These high quality public health initiatives promote positive health practices, protect the health of the community, and encourage healthy behaviors across the life span.

"Whether you realize it or not - you benefit from the public health prevention work that happens here every single day."

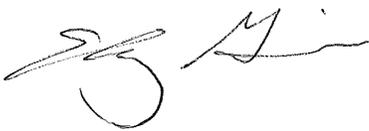
During 2013, staff continued to fulfill the responsibilities mandated by public health state statutes and administrative rules, city and county ordinance, and program grant requirements while initiating innovative activities to address changing public health needs. Among the Health Department activities highlighted in this year's report are:

- Strong community partnerships
- Services provided to high risk and vulnerable populations
- Prevention of disease and reduction of unsafe behaviors
- Identification of environmental risk and protection from hazards

This report describes only a subset of the critical work the Health Department does. Whether you realize it or not – you benefit from the public health prevention work that happens here every single day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Health Department staff and partners for all the work they do throughout the year to help fulfill our mission of keeping all Eau Claire communities safe and healthy.

I encourage your comments or suggestions regarding our performance and ways that we can serve you better. 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



## Check out the new Health Department logo!

The new logo uses a design created by senior graphic art design students from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.



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 three overarching principles:

Prevention - Promotion of health and prevention of disease, injury and disability is critical

Health Equity- Everyone should have equal opportunity to be healthy

Collaboration - People working together provide the best solutions

## 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.

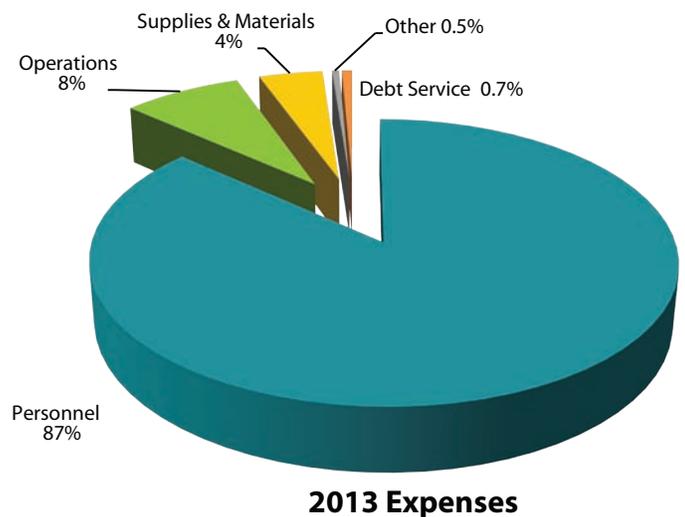
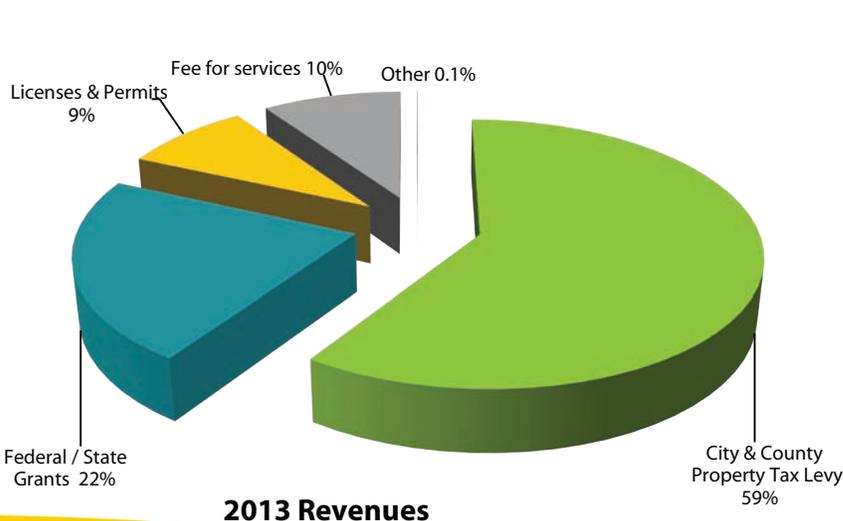
\*William Bethke, DDS  
Donald Bodeau, MD  
Kathy Mitchell, PhD  
\*Michael Murray, MD, MPH  
John Paddock  
Merrey Price, RN  
Elizabeth Spencer, RD  
Gerald Wilkie



Spencer, Mitchell, Price, Bodeau and Paddock

\*BOH term ended in 2013

## Budget



# A Pulse on our Community's Health

Health data provides a snapshot of the health of our community and shows us how health is influenced by many things, including our everyday surroundings - where we live, learn, work and play. Compared to other counties, data has shown Eau Claire County as a community with excellent access to health care services-clinics and hospitals. Data has also shown that Eau Claire County (and Wisconsin) has high rates of alcohol consumption compared to other states and counties across the country. Health data is important to the Health Department. Data leads the work that we do and help us to:

- Identify and understand current, emerging, or potential health problems or environmental public health hazards.
- Provide health information to departments, clinics, hospitals and community leaders so they can make informed decisions about where and how to target education and interventions that fit our local needs.
- Evaluate if the programs, policy and environmental changes are making a difference to positively influence our health.

## 2014 County Health Rankings

	Eau Claire County	Wisconsin	Top US Performers* <small>* 90th percentile, i.e. only 10% are better</small>
<b>Health Outcomes</b>			
<b>Mortality</b>			
Premature death	4,773	5,878	5,317
<b>Morbidity</b>			
Poor physical health days	3.1	3.2	2.5
Poor mental health days	2.0	3.0	2.4
Low birthweight	6.0%	7.0%	6.0%
<b>Health Factors</b>			
<b>Health Behaviors</b>			
Adult smoking	17%	18%	14%
Excessive drinking	24%	24%	10%
Adult obesity	29%	29%	25%
Physical inactivity	23%	22%	21%
Limited access to healthy foods	8%	5%	--
Sexually transmitted infections	407	431	123
<b>Clinical Care</b>			
Uninsured	10%	10%	11%
Primary care physicians	793:1	1,233:1	1,051:1
Dentists	1,199:1	1,703:1	1,439:1
Mental health providers	799:1	1,050:1	536:1
<b>Social &amp; Economic Factors</b>			
High school graduation	87%	87%	--
Unemployment	5.9%	6.9%	4.4%
Children in poverty	18%	18%	13%
<b>Physical Environment</b>			
Drinking water violations	2%	6%	0%
Air pollution- particulate matter	11.6	11.5	9.5

Learn how our Public Health Nurses and Nutritionists support women to have a healthy pregnancy on **page 7**.

Learn how the Alliance is working to reduce underage drinking, a type of excessive drinking, on **page 5**.

Learn how our Environmental Health division is working to keep your drinking water safe on **page 9**.

To learn more about the County Health Rankings go to [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)

## 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 has been working to reduce underage drinking to keep our youth safe since 2003. The Alliance strives to engage youth, parents and the community countywide in addressing the root causes of underage drinking – acceptance and youth access to alcohol.



In 2013, over 60 youth from all county high school SADD groups (Students Against Destructive Decisions) participated in the 5th annual day-long advocacy training sponsored by the Alliance. Youth learned how availability and acceptance contribute to the problems of underage drinking and were empowered with the knowledge and skills they need to become agents for change in their schools and community.

The Alliance also partnered with parents countywide through the Parents Connecting Network, a network of 700 families who have committed to not allow anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol in their home or on their property. A Network Directory assists parents in calling each other to confirm that gatherings will be alcohol-free and supervised by an adult. This is important because Eau Claire youth report they drink most often at home or a friend's home.

The Alliance has collaborated with Country Jam USA since 2006 to decrease youth access to alcohol at the festival. These changes; including volunteer education, a new over 21 wristband procedure, only ages 21+ allowed in beer gardens, narrowed beer garden entry and parents not allowed to buy alcohol for their children; have been made to prevent underage drinking. Improved rates of not selling alcohol to anyone under 21 during compliance checks have resulted – from 33% in 2006 to 99% in 2013.

To learn how you can help decrease underage drinking in Eau Claire County, go to [www.getinvolvedASAP.org](http://www.getinvolvedASAP.org).

### Community Health by the Numbers

**1430**  
hours invested by  
community partners

**26%**  
fewer youth say  
alcohol is easy to get  
than 10 years ago

**1542**  
fewer youth report  
drinking than 10  
years ago

### Eau Claire Healthy Communities Website

In 2013, the Health Department collaborated with community partners to launch the Eau Claire Healthy Communities website [www.echealthycommunities.org](http://www.echealthycommunities.org)! This website offers a new way to display, monitor and collect local health data, and collectively identify and implement programs that address health priorities at the local level.

# Eau Claire Healthy Communities: Community Health Improvement Plan

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.

Eau Claire Healthy Communities released its Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in December 2013-the culmination of a collaborative

effort by a diverse coalition of residents, community organizations, schools, health care providers, businesses, faith communities and government agencies. The Eau Claire County CHIP aims to mobilize residents, organizations and stakeholders to work together to prevent health issues. The CHIP outlines action that will lead to positive change in the three health focus areas (listed below) that were prioritized by more than 100 community partners in April 2013.

- Chronic Disease Prevention
- High-Risk Alcohol Use
- Mental Health

The three identified health priorities of Eau Claire County have a significant impact on the health of our community.

To learn more about how you can help create a healthier Eau Claire go to our website: [www.echealthycommunities.org](http://www.echealthycommunities.org).



## 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. The Health Department collaborates with partners to plan for, exercise and respond to events.

## Medical Reserve Corps

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) supports volunteer efforts of those who wish to work in their community as a team to support disaster efforts. The MRC provides an opportunity for medical and non-medical professionals who live, work and play in our great community to strengthen our local community emergency and disaster response plans.



In 2013, the Eau Claire MRC volunteers, with the support of the Health Department's Emergency Preparedness Specialist, assisted with seasonal flu clinics and vision screening in schools. Become a volunteer and help build strong, healthy and prepared communities! All volunteers receive basic information about the MRC.

MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians and epidemiologists. Non-medical community members, such as interpreters, chaplains, office workers and legal advisors, can fill other vital support positions.

Additional specialized training is available to volunteers depending on their function with the MRC. All training is free. Learn more about Eau Claire MRC by going to [www.BeReadyEC.com](http://www.BeReadyEC.com).

## Public Health Nursing

Public Health Nurses provide individual, family and community services to protect and improve the health of populations in their communities. Public Health Nursing ensures that there is a targeted approach to reaching vulnerable and high-risk populations, in addition to the community as a whole.

### The Year in Numbers

1577

vaccinations given to infants, children and adults

396

women received prenatal care coordination (PNCC) services

801

follow-ups were completed for reports of communicable disease to prevent spread to others

7345

school health screenings for vision, hearing and scoliosis were completed

26

nursing students completed clinical practice experiences with public health nurses

1097

women and men received contraceptive services

## Nursing

Our Public Health Nurses provide a wide variety of services to children, women, men and families to positively impact the health and well-being of all community members. From prenatal education to communicable disease prevention, our nursing department encourages and supports individuals making healthy choices and preventing disease for themselves, their families and the entire community.

- Family Visiting - In 2013, families received more than 1700 nurse visits to check growth and development of babies and older children, provide information and support to help parents promote healthy child growth and development, and to offer information and support on feeding, healthy foods, and ways to care for children and keep them safe.
- Family Planning - Nurses provided affordable Family Planning Clinic services to ensure that reproductive health needs are also met for families. Last year our newly remodeled clinic served 1,097 men and women for a wide variety of reproductive health needs. Expanded services now include long acting birth control methods and colposcopy, a cancer detection procedure provided in follow-up to an abnormal pap test.
- Communicable Disease Control - Nurses protected the public's health by taking action to prevent and control communicable disease. In 2013, nurses investigated over 800 reports of communicable diseases to prevent spread of illness to others. In addition, nurses provided immunizations; tuberculosis (TB) testing; HIV testing and partner referral; sexually transmitted infection testing, treatment and follow-up; community education and other effective disease control measures.

## Prenatal Care Coordination

Pregnancy is a time of change for families. Our Public Health Nurses and Nutritionists work closely together through the Prenatal Care Coordination (PNCC) program to provide a convenient one-stop shop for support and education and to connect with resources needed to have a healthy pregnancy and baby. PNCC services can include:

- Monthly visits with a nurse & nutritionist
- Preparation for caring safely for baby
- Breastfeeding support and nutrition information

To learn more about PNCC go to [www.ehealthdepartment.org](http://www.ehealthdepartment.org) or call 715-839-4718.

### Ask a Public Health Nurse:

- What other community services are available to me?
- Should I breastfeed my baby?
- How does smoking affect my baby?

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.

## Breastfeeding

The Health Department encourages and supports breastfeeding as the best way to feed a baby. All Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program staff and Public Health Nurses are aware of their important role in promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding. The WIC Program and nurses promote breastfeeding through:

- The Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program –As peers, mothers have a unique ability to help and influence other mothers. The Peer Counselor reinforces breastfeeding recommendations in a socially and culturally appropriate manner.
- Registered Dietitians –Our dietitians have received certifications in breastfeeding (Certified Breastfeeding Educator, Certified Lactation Counselor, Certified Lactation Educator), which make them better able to support families.
- “Feeding Your New Baby: A Very Personal Choice” class –This class helps prepare pregnant women and their support people for their baby’s arrival. The class encourages breastfeeding through education and connection with resources for support. Breastfeeding classes are held from 6:00-7:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. Call 715-577-6154 to register.
- The Northwestern Wisconsin Breastfeeding Network –A local group dedicated to promoting and supporting breastfeeding in northwestern Wisconsin. Work is done through community outreach efforts and by educating others that breastfeeding improves the health of infants, mothers and families. The Network hosts a bi-annual local educational conference for professionals. For more information about the conference call 715-839-2868.



### Public Health Nutrition and WIC by the Numbers

181 women received contact with a breastfeeding peer counselor

women participating in WIC started breastfeeding their babies 76%

1215 families received WIC vouchers to use in area farmers’ markets



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



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



women, infants and children were served by WIC 3419

## 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.*

### Importance of Well Water Testing

In 2013, the Health Department educated household well owners about the importance of testing their well water for bacteria and nitrate.

You can't tell that your water is contaminated by looking at it. To ensure your drinking water is safe, every well should be tested at least once. Wells used by pregnant women and infants should be tested

during pregnancy or at the birth. Testing for families with newborns living in Eau Claire County is free through the Health Department. If your well is located near areas where fertilizers are handled or manufactured; near an animal feed lot or manure-storage area; or ¼ mile or less away from a soybean, vegetable or corn field; your well should be tested annually.



High levels of nitrate in well water present many health concerns and can also indicate the presence of other contaminants, such as bacteria and pesticides. Drinking large amounts of water with nitrate is particularly threatening to pregnant women and infants (for example, when mixed in formula). Nitrate affects the ability of your body to deliver enough oxygen throughout the body; in infants when this occurs it is known as "blue baby syndrome."

### The Body Art Advisory Committee

In 2013, the Environmental Health division joined together shop operators to form the Body Art Advisory Committee. The committee started in 2013 and is working to revise the local body art code and update educational information for patrons. This means a safer, cleaner environment for you to get piercing, body modifications and tattoos in all establishments in Eau Claire County.

This committee grew out of the Health Department's initiative to increase collaboration and strengthen partnerships with industry partners. The partnership has not only strengthened the Health Department's relationship with shop owners, but it has identified areas of growth and improvement that can raise the bar for the industry in Eau Claire as well.

We welcome the new ideas and initiatives that the group is developing, and are excited to see some of the results in the coming year.



## Environmental Health by the Numbers

45% of tested homes had high radon levels



unsafe private drinking water bacteria tests 15.5%

715 restaurant inspections completed



trucks of usable donations collected during Don't Dump-It Donate-it 8



2306 housing consults were completed, providing education and expertise on housing topics to the community

spore tests came back safe 98%

## New Food Code

Foodborne disease still impacts the lives of Americans everywhere. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that each year roughly 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) gets sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die of foodborne diseases. But the state of Wisconsin and the Health Department are fighting back!

The state of Wisconsin implemented a new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code in September of 2013. The Health Department ensures that restaurants

are following this code through restaurant inspections. The FDA Food Code is a key component of the President's overall public health focused food safety framework for maintaining a safe food supply.

What this means to you:

- Inspected restaurants are no longer issued "critical" and "non-critical" violations. Instead, the violations are now designated as a "Priority Item," a "Priority Foundation Item," or a "Core Item". This new wording is reflected in the local newspaper under food/restaurant inspections.
- Requirements were also added to improve food worker awareness of food allergen concerns in the food service and retail setting.

The Health Department strongly believes in education and worked very hard to provide information and educate our local restaurant operators on the changes.

**Priority Item**—violations more likely to contribute to food contamination, illness or environmental health hazard

**Priority Foundation Item**—violations which support priority violations

**Core Item**—violations dealing with general sanitation, equipment design or general maintenance

## Health Department Staff

*Thank you for taking the time to read about some of the important and fulfilling work our staff accomplished in 2013. 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 2013 Annual Report and this Summary Report can be found at [www.ehealthdepartment.org](http://www.ehealthdepartment.org)