



Wood County
Health Department

2024 Annual Report



Wood County Health Department

2024 Annual Report

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Message from the Health Commissioner

I am honored to present the 2024 Annual Report for Wood County Health Department. This report highlights work focused on building strong leadership, meaningful partnerships and a shared commitment to community health. We expanded access to care through new and enhanced services, including mobile outreach, health screenings and vaccination efforts. By collaborating with community partners, we strengthened our ability to protect residents from infectious diseases and promote healthier environments, ensuring that every effort supported the well-being of our community.

While our team focused on expanding services and deepening our connection to the community, the Board of Health focused on long-term sustainability by approving a building project and initiating a strategic plan to ensure that we can effectively serve the public in the years to come. Together with our dedicated staff, partners and community members, we are striving for continued progress in public health. Through collaboration and shared vision, we remain committed to advancing the health of Wood County for all who call it home.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Robison, MPH
Wood County Health Commissioner

2024 Wood County Board of Health



Nilgun Sezginis
President



DJ Mears
Vice President



Sonja Apple-Chamberlain



Kim Hertzfeld



Bob Midden



Thomas Milbrodt



Cathy Nelson



Richard Strow



Susan Yoder



Dallas F. Ziegler

The 10-member Board of Health appoints the Health Commissioner and provides oversight to ensure the Wood County Health Department protects the health of our community.

For contact details, meeting schedules and minutes, visit
woodcountyhealth.org/board-of-health

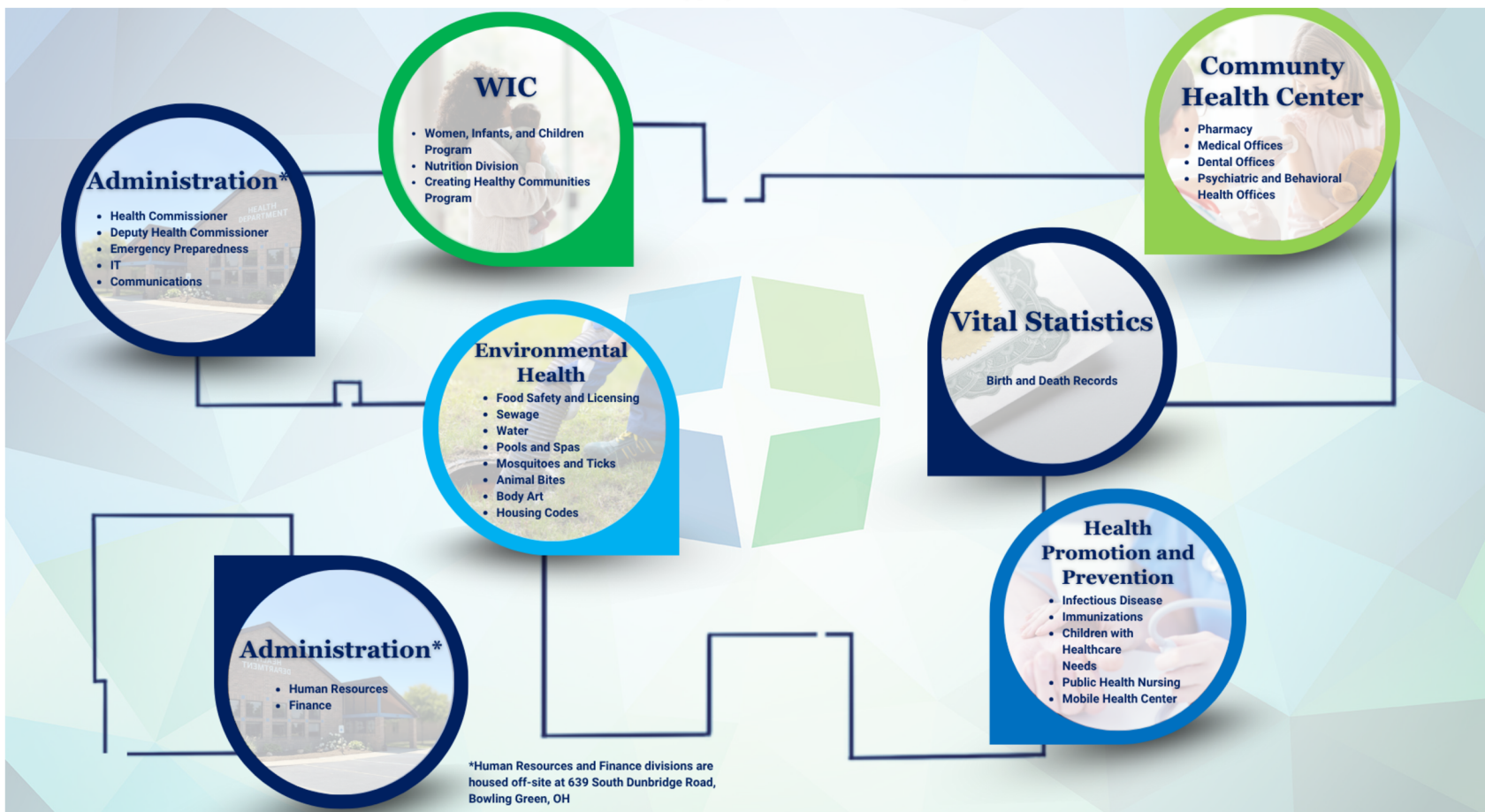


About Wood County Health Department

The mission of Wood County Health Department is to prevent disease, promote healthy lifestyles and protect the health of everyone in Wood County.

Welcome to  Wood County Health Department

Located at 1840 East Gypsy Lane Road, Bowling Green, OH



To learn more about the health department and its divisions, scan the QR codes below or visit woodcountyhealth.org



Wood County Health Department and Vital Statistics



Wood County Community Health Center



Wood County WIC



Environmental Health



Health Promotion and Prevention (HPP)

Statement of Receipts & Disbursements

The 2024 Statement of Receipts and Disbursements provides a clear overview of Wood County Health Department's financial activity, outlining all funds received and all expenditures made throughout the year. This summary reflects our commitment to transparency and responsible stewardship of resources.

Although three, short-term factors led 2024 expenditures to exceed revenue, WCHD remained within its approved budget. These factors did not impact operations or services to the community.

1. Building Renovation:

WCHD began the design for a building renovation, resulting in some project expenses in 2024.

2. Schedule of Grant Reimbursements:

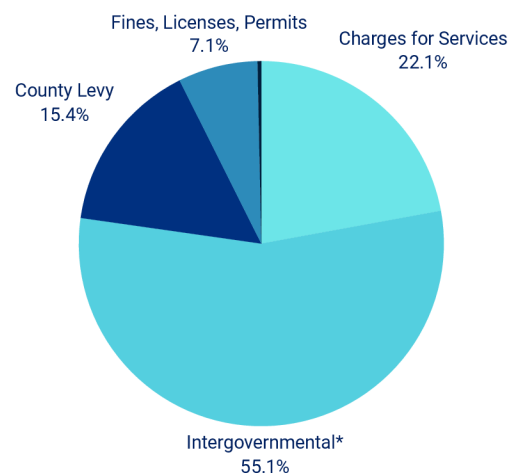
Grant funded expenses occurred in December 2024, with reimbursement received in January 2025.

3. Return of Grant Funds:

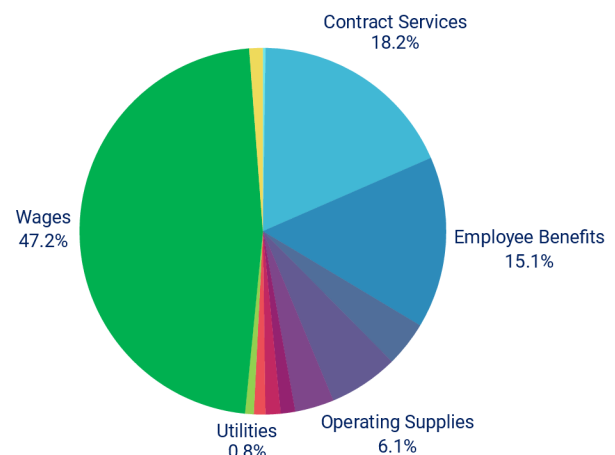
Grant funds from 2023 that had been overpaid were returned to the Ohio Department of Health.

Cash Receipts	Amount	Rev %
Charges for Services	\$2,268,736.83	22.1%
County Levy	\$1,575,315.19	15.4%
Fines, Licenses, Permits	\$723,919.44	7.1%
Intergovernmental*	\$5,653,738.35	55.1%
Miscellaneous	\$33,736.91	0.3%
Grand Total	\$10,255,446.72	100.0%

*Included with intergovernmental revenues shown above are various awards and grants obtained to fund health department operations



Cash Disbursements	Sum of Amount	Exp %
Boiler & HVAC Debt Reduction	\$26,338.00	0.2%
Contract Services	\$1,975,567.07	18.2%
Employee Benefits	\$1,642,190.49	15.1%
Equipment and Capital	\$433,155.94	4.0%
Operating Supplies	\$665,311.01	6.1%
Other Expenses	\$374,038.36	3.4%
Outreach	\$139,016.43	1.3%
Pass Through and State Fees**	\$144,467.46	1.3%
Travel and Training	\$109,794.10	1.0%
Utilities	\$83,222.98	0.8%
Wages	\$5,124,453.95	47.2%
Computer Software & Support	\$129,657.22	1.2%
Grand Total	\$10,847,213.01	100.0%



** During 2023, grants obtained through ODH allowed WCHD to pass through grant funding to 7 different community agencies. WCHD administered these grants and recovered our administrative costs through these grants.



Leadership in Action: Community & Public Health

Through coalition work, professional presentations, trainings and targeted grant initiatives, Wood County Health Department leads efforts that strengthen public health and expand impact both locally and beyond.

From Funding to Impact

Wood County Health Department continues to grow and strengthen our ability to serve the people of Wood County. Grant funds allowed our agency to increase access to fresh, healthy food, opportunities to be physically active and live tobacco-free, as well as infectious disease prevention, increase access to healthcare and promote environmental programs.

Funding Source	Amount	Impact
EO Grant	\$3,500,000	This source helped our staff provide vital resources to stop illness before it spreads.
Home Sewage Treatment System (HSTS) Repair & Replacement Grant	\$150,000	This grant helped homeowners cover the cost of fixing or replacing failing home sewage systems, protecting local water quality and preventing health risks.
Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) Grant	\$110,000	The grant supported a community garden in North Baltimore and began work in Plain Township to improve transportation and inclusive play—efforts that will continue over the next five years.
Project Firstline	\$200,000	This grant allowed WCHD to provide local healthcare facilities with tools and training to prevent the spread of infections, helping ensure safer care for patients and families. WCHD was one of 15 local health departments to be awarded this grant.
Tobacco Prevention & Cessation	\$90,000	Offered education and resources to help youth and adults quit smoking and avoid tobacco use, improving overall community health.
MRC Strong Grant (Medical Reserve Corps)	\$310,212	Strengthened our community's ability to respond to emergencies by training volunteers—both medical and non-medical—to assist during disasters or health crises.
H5N1 Grant	\$50,000	Supported response efforts during the first case of bird flu in an Ohio livestock operation, helping protect local farms and preventing wider spread.
Mosquito Control	\$20,248	Funded mosquito surveillance and control programs in collaboration with Ohio EPA and BGSU to reduce bites and prevent mosquito-borne illnesses, helping keep outdoor spaces safer for everyone in Wood County.

HSTS Grant Impact

 **\$150,000**
in funding



10 homeowners helped in 2024*



*68 homeowners helped since 2016

Local Action, Broader Influence

Throughout the year, agency staff shared expertise at national and state conferences, including the NACCHO Preparedness Summit, NACCHO360, American Occupational Health Conference and Ohio Environmental Health Association events.

On October 4, the Environmental Health Division hosted its second annual Fall Seminar, drawing over 55 attendees. The event provided CEUs for professionals and learning opportunities for students, covering topics such as illicit fentanyl in Ohio's opioid crisis, human trafficking, harmful algal blooms, PFAS and the science of cannabinoids. Experts from the Ohio Attorney General's Office, REACH, U.S. EPA and the University of Toledo also presented.



Environmental Health Specialist, Ambrose Amoako, presenting at the 2024 Fall Seminar.



Epidemiologist, Tyler Briggs, presenting at the 2024 Ohio Environmental Health Association Conference.

VAPE Coalition

Wood County Health Department formed the VAPE Coalition, a student-led initiative focused on educating and training young people about the harmful effects of vaping and nicotine use to become champions of change in their communities. This group met once a month at the Health Department and created their own plans to tackle this public health issue in Wood County. Some of their work included attending events at BGSU to perform tobacco screenings and referrals as well as presenting to community members on the dangers of nicotine use.

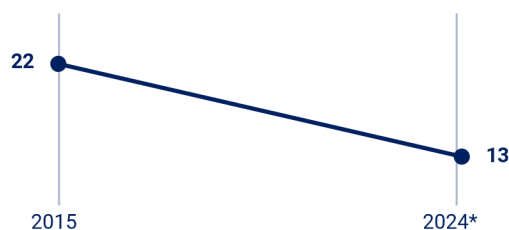


VAPE Coalition members participating in a tabling event.

Impact Through Mental Health Initiatives

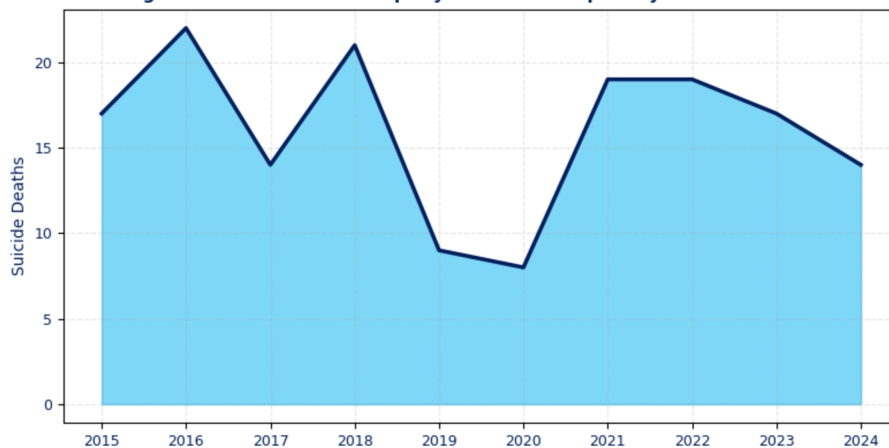
Mental health is a key indicator of health status and was a focus of the health department in 2024. Suicide and drug addiction are two major conditions used to evaluate mental health. However, mental health is complex and requires additional assessments for an accurate measure. Wood County suicide deaths have decreased in recent years but death by suicide still remains a major cause of premature death. Wood County accidental overdose deaths have decreased by 41% since 2015.

Accidental overdose deaths have decreased since 2015



*2024 data is not yet finalized

Despite an increase in 2021, suicide deaths continue to decline in Wood County. Reducing the number of suicides per year remains a priority.



*2024 data is not yet finalized

Expanding Who We Serve Through Harm Reduction

Project DAWN is an Ohio Department of Health (ODH) initiative providing naloxone distribution and overdose education and Wood County Health Department proudly serves as one of its local program sites. First responders receive training to use naloxone when they encounter an overdose emergency. In the Fall of 2024, we collaborated with ODH's Project DAWN program to extend this training to tow truck drivers who work alongside first responders.

Through Project DAWN, our partners at ODH provided training to our staff and members of our Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteer program who signed up to be program trainers. Trainings and free Narcan distribution began in Fall of 2024 to tow truck drivers who work alongside Wood County first responders. Refills can be obtained through the Wood County Community Pharmacy, through the NARCAN vending machine, or online through the Project DAWN website. Beyond local impact, this program supports expansion to other counties across Ohio.



This program was developed in collaboration with Ohio Department of Health, WCHD, Representative Haraz Ghanbari, Wood County EMA, and the Wood County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board.





Public Health Hero | Sharon Schaeffer

Each year on Public Health Thank You Day, Wood County Health Department takes a moment to recognize an individual who has made a significant contribution to improving the health of our community. In 2024, the Health Department was proud to honor Sharon Schaeffer, a dedicated member of our Health Center Board who has served three terms and has been an invaluable asset to our work. Sharon's leadership has been instrumental in the growth of our health services, including the expansion of our dental and behavioral health programs. As Chair of the Health Center's Quality Committee, she oversaw numerous clinical improvements and helped secure key recognitions from the National Committee for Quality Assurance and the Health Resources and Services Administration. With a background in nursing and public health, Sharon has been a vital advocate for both staff and patients, making complex health concepts accessible to all.

Sharon has also spent over 17 years working in public health, including roles with Erie County's WIC program. She currently serves as a faculty member at Bowling Green State University, educating future public health professionals. Sharon's leadership has left an indelible mark on our Health Center and she will be deeply missed as she retired from the Board in 2024.

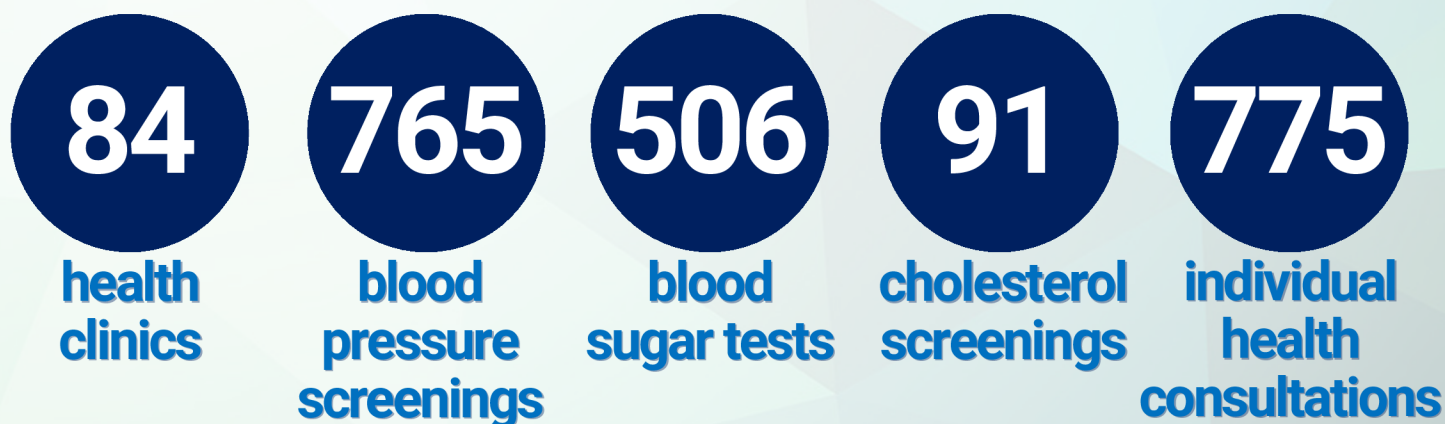
Strengthening Partnerships & Community Health

In 2024, the Wood County Health Department focused on advancing community health through expanded collaboration and strengthened partnerships.

Wood County Committee on Aging

In 2024, WCHD continued its strong partnership with the Wood County Committee on Aging by ensuring access to vaccinations for seniors and vital health screenings such as cholesterol checks. A registered nurse was present at each clinic to provide health education, resource referrals and personalized consultations, ensuring seniors received the support they needed to maintain their well-being. These monthly clinics were held at senior centers in Bowling Green, Rossford and Walbridge — a special effort in 2024 that helped make preventive care more accessible for older adults.

Senior Center Impact

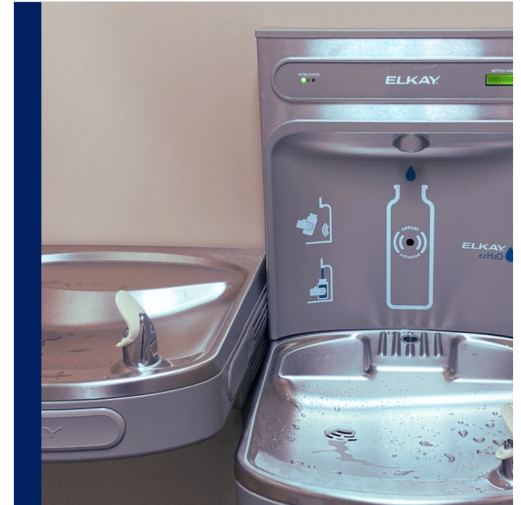


Educational Partners

Partnering with educational institutions is essential for health promotion and preparedness, and, in 2024, the Health Department made significant strides in this effort. Continued work with Bowling Green State University, the University of Toledo and Southern New Hampshire University public health interns allowed students to gain valuable experience and while providing support to the efforts of the Health Department. Additionally, communicating with Wood County school nurses regularly provided a strong connection between local public health and education.

Broadening Access to Prevention and Support

Recognizing the importance of healthy environments throughout Wood County, the health department implemented community resource improvements including touchless water bottle fill stations, new sinks to promote safe handwashing and HVAC cleaning to enhance air quality. Access to essential infection control resources remained a priority with continued operation of the infection hotline and distribution of home test kits.



Water bottle fill station

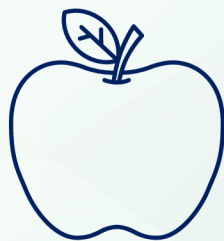
Community Resources: Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides nutrition and breastfeeding education, healthy foods and referrals to health and social services.

2024 WIC Impact



1,964
participants



\$1,220,829.51
in WIC dollars spent at
local grocery stores



Community Resources: Creating Healthy Communities

In October, Wood County Health Department's Nutrition Division was awarded the Creating Healthy Communities (CHC) grant, building on the work completed through the HEAL Capacity Building grant in the previous year. The CHC grant provides the agency with the opportunity to collaborate with priority communities in Wood County, like North Baltimore, to prevent and reduce chronic diseases by improving access to affordable healthy food and increasing opportunities for physical activity.

Community Resources: Vital Statistics

The Vital Statistics Office at Wood County Health Department issues birth and death certificates for individuals born or deceased in Ohio. These records are important for many life events, from enrolling in school to applying for a passport, and our team is here to make the process simple and convenient.

Vital Statistics Service	Amount
Hospital Births	344
Home Births	15
Birth Certificates Issued	2,191
Wood County Deaths	1,205
Death Certificates Issued	5,922

Clean Plate Award

In June 2024, the Clean Plate Award was presented to 38 licensed food facilities in recognition of their commitment to outstanding sanitation and food safety practices. To be eligible, facilities must meet strict criteria. There are over 800 licensed food facilities in Wood County.

To learn more about
the Clean Plate Award and the
2024 winners, scan the QR
Code or visit
[https://woodcountyhealth.org/
local-licensed-food-facilities-
honored-with-clean-plate-
award/](https://woodcountyhealth.org/local-licensed-food-facilities-honored-with-clean-plate-award/)



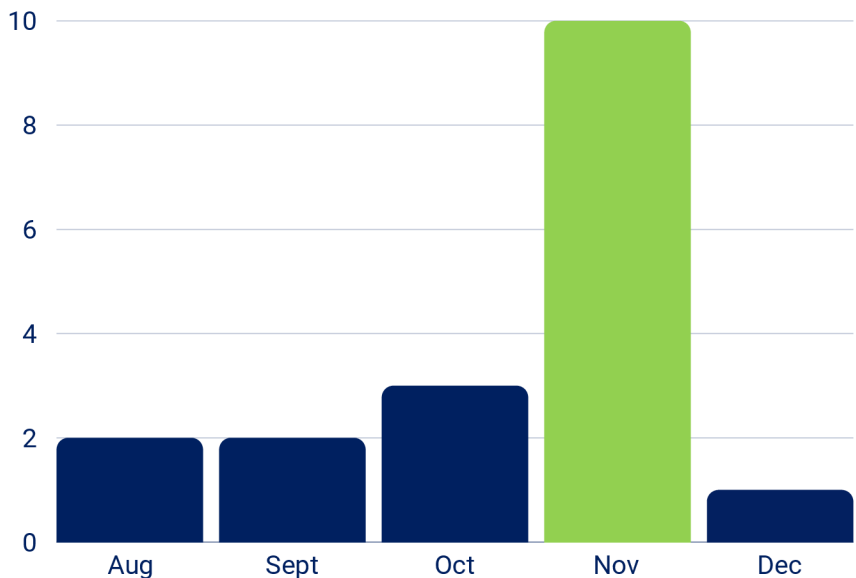
Protecting the Community Against Disease

Infectious disease outbreaks are monitored by WCHD epidemiologists. When a potential outbreak occurs, investigations are conducted to prevent further spread of a disease, determine its cause and reduce the likelihood that it will reoccur. There are over 80 diseases that are required to be reported to the Wood County Health Department per the Ohio Administrative Code.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory illness that resembles a common cold such as sneezing, runny nose, low-grade fever and a mild cough. Within two weeks, the cough may become severe and cause episodes of numerous rapid coughs followed by a crowning or high-pitched whoop.

During 2024 there were 18 pertussis cases in Wood County which peaked in the month of November. This is a significant increase from the typical 1-2 cases in previous years.



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza A (HPAI H5N1)

HPAI H5N1, commonly known as “bird flu,” is a virus that has been detected among wild birds, poultry flocks, dairy cattle and mammals. In Wood County, there were no human cases and two animal cases (1 dairy cow, 1 cat). Individuals who come into contact with H5N1-infected animals or consume raw milk face a higher risk of infection. This first detection of HPAI in an Ohio livestock operation underscores the importance of rapid response, coordination and monitoring to protect animal health, safeguard the food supply and minimize economic and public health risks. La Conexión and WCHD also worked together to provide Spanish-language information on H5N1 prevention for farmworkers.

Our New Mobile Health Center

In 2024, Wood County Health Department introduced a new way to bring essential health services directly to our community—a mobile health center designed for long-term impact. Made possible through grant funding from the Ohio Department of Health, the mobile unit provides no-cost health screenings, respiratory illness testing and serves as a hub for health education throughout Wood County. These services help ensure our community stays healthy, informed and prepared year-round.

The mobile health center offered free screenings for blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol, along with flu and COVID-19 testing for all ages and RSV testing for youth under 18. To launch this new service, WCHD partnered with community organizations including Wood County Hospital, Mercy Health, La Conexión and the Wood County Committee on Aging to host mobile health clinics across the county throughout the fall of 2024. These events brought preventive care directly to residents—offering flu and COVID-19 vaccines, health screenings, on-site mammograms and tobacco cessation resources, with Spanish-language materials available to improve accessibility.

From August through December 2024, the mobile health center visited community events such as La Conexión's Latin Heritage Festival, the First Presbyterian Church Holiday Breakfast and the Veterans Day Lunch and Resource Fair. Residents had the opportunity to tour the mobile clinic, receive free COVID-19 tests and cold-season care kits and connect with staff for health information and referrals. By December 2024, more than 2,000 community members and stakeholders had engaged with the mobile health team.

Beyond screenings, the mobile health center continues to serve as a valuable resource for health education and disease prevention. Staff provide guidance on protecting against infectious diseases and other health concerns, reinforcing WCHD's commitment to building a healthier Wood County. By bringing these services directly into neighborhoods, WCHD is breaking down barriers to care and making health resources more accessible than ever.



WCHD Mobile Health Center at St. Mark's Church Community Meal



WCHD Mobile Health Center at NAMI After Burn



Learn more about the Mobile Health Center

Strengthening Partnerships & Community Health | Wood County Community Health Center

An Award-Winning Health Center

Wood County Community Health Center (WCCHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and represents a beacon of comprehensive care. In 2024, WCCHC earned recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home with Distinction in Behavioral Health Integration by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. The health center also received national recognition from HRSA, earning a Health Center Quality Leader – Bronze badge and an Advancing Health IT for Quality Award. Among Ohio health centers, Wood County Community Health Center is in the top quartile for six clinical quality metrics and ended 2024 as #1 in the state for appropriate IVD Aspirin Use, #4 for Depression Screening and Follow-up and #4 for Tobacco Use Screening and Cessation. These honors place WCCHC among the top-performing health centers nationwide.



Serving Our Community



4,236 medical visits



2,736 dental visits

**Over 8,000
medical, dental
and behavioral
health visits**



1,086 behavioral health visits

11.2%

Increase in patient visits between 2023 and 2024

Expanding Behavioral Health Access

In 2024, the Community Health Center strengthened its behavioral health program with added expertise in child and addiction services. The team actively collaborates with community agencies to support case management, housing and family services. As a result, mental health and substance use disorder visits increased by more than 60% in 2024.

Strengthening Partnerships & Community Health |

Wood County Community Health Center

Patients of  Wood County Health Department
Community Health Center



Appendix

A.1 Environmental Health

Hours spent by Environmental Health staff in 2024 in each of the county's townships, villages and cities.

Community	Hours Worked		
Bairdstown	2.25	Millbury	62.25
Bloom Township	37.5	Milton Center	10
Bloomdale	11.25	Milton Township	19
Bowling Green	1100	Montgomery Township	19
Bradner	31	North Baltimore	81.5
Center Township	35	Northwood	454
Custar	8.25	Pemberville	59.25
Cygnet	24.25	Perry Township	34.5
Freedom Township	49	Perrysburg	871
Grand Rapids	80.75	Perrysburg Township	443.5
Grand Rapids Township	15.75	Plain Township	33
Haskins	10	Portage	20.25
Henry Township	34.5	Portage Township	10.25
Hoytville	4.5	Risingsun	14.25
Jackson Township	10	Rossford	245.5
Jerry City	4.25	Tontogany	0
Lake Township	95.75	Troy Township	46
Liberty Township	32.75	Walbridge	96.5
Luckey	16	Washington Township	22.5
		Wayne	9.25
		Webster Township	20.75
		West Milgrove	1
		Weston	34.75
		Weston Township	3.75

A.1 Environmental Health

Hours spent by Environmental Health staff in 2024 in each of the county's townships, villages and cities.

Environmental Health Department Comparison Report		Household Sewage Systems	
2024			
Food Service			
# of Food Service Plan Reviews Paid	47	# of Site Evaluations Paid	93
# of Food Service (FSO) Licenses Issued	512	# of Design Reviews Paid	28
# of Retail Food (RFE) Licenses Issued(incl MME's)	233	# of Septic Permits Issued	82
# of Temporary Food Licenses Issued	100	# of Sewage Alteration Permits Issued	30
# of Mobile Food Licenses Issued	50	# of Operational Permits Paid (initial O&M1)	174
# of Vending Licenses Issued	75	# of Operational Permits Paid (renewal O&M2)	283
Private Water		# of Property Improvement Permit/Consult	41
# of Well Permits Issued	52	# of Sewage Abandonment Permits Issued	53
# of Water Realty Inspections Paid	0	# of Septic Realty Inspections Paid	0
# of Water Samples Paid	162	# of Septic Installer Licenses	57
# of Single Family Pond Permits Issued	0	# of Sewage Service Provider Licenses	30
		# of Sewage Hauler Vehicle Permit	64
		Other Programs	
		# of Pool/Spa/Special Use Pool Licenses Issued	79
		# of Bathing Area Licenses Issued	2
		# of Body Art Licenses Issued	20
		# of Camp Licenses Issued	4
		# of Temporary Camp Licenses Issued	5
		# of Animal Bites Reported	245
		# of Nuisance Complaints	272



A.2 HPP

Infectious Disease Reports by Year

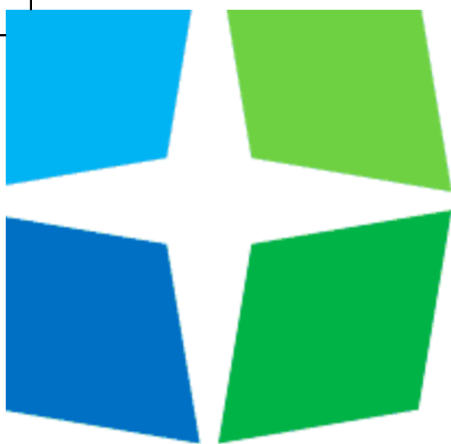
Year	Communicable Disease Cases Reported*
2019	878
2020	728
2021	667
2022	827
2023	758
2022	721
2021	763

Note: Disease case counts only include Probable and Confirmed case classifications. Case counts are based on event date, which uses the earliest of the following dates: illness onset date, diagnosis date, date report to local health department or date reported to Ohio Department of Health. Data is preliminary and may change in future reports.

*Reports do not include COVID cases

Most Commonly Reported Diseases in 2024

Disease	Case Count
COVID-19	1935
Chlamydia	347
Influenza-associated hospitalization	117
Gonorrhea	57
Hepatitis C	50
Campylobacteriosis	37
Salmonellosis	28
Pertussis	18



Contact us

Environmental Health: 419-354-2702

Community Health Center: 419-354-9049

Pharmacy: 419-354-9052

Infectious Disease: 419-354-4306

Birth and Death Records: 419-354-1050

WIC: 419-354-9661

Main Line: 419-352-8402

Main Office:

1840 E. Gypsy Lane Rd.
Bowling Green, OH 43402

WCHDHealthDept@woodcountyohio.gov

Website:

www.woodcountyhealth.org



Facebook:

@WCHDOhio

@WCHealthCenter

@WCWIC



Wood County
Health Department