



November 2018 | A quarterly newsletter from Public Health Madison & Dane County

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Helping in Flood Recovery

The record setting rain on August 20th caused unimaginable flooding and devastation to homes, businesses, and other properties in many areas of Dane County. For affected residents, it has been a long recovery period having to deal with immediate concerns like flooded basements, septic back-ups, contaminated drinking water, removal of damaged belongings, and the long-term impacts such as mold and restoration of property.

From the beginning of the flooding event, PHMDC was part of the collaborative emergency response. Our staff participated in Madison and Dane County's Emergency Operations Centers to coordinate city, county, and state resources and we also had many staff in the communities affected aiding in recovery efforts to insure health and safety.

Free Private Well Testing

We distributed close to 1,000 water testing kits and provided free private well testing for well owners in Mazomanie, Black Earth, Cross Plains, Town of Middleton, Town of



Montrose and Town of Verona to prevent illness caused by contaminated water. To date, we have tested 694 samples. A total of 134 (19.3%) tested positive for coliform bacteria, and 22 (3.2%) tested positive for *E.coli*. We called well owners who had positive results to provide consultation and advice on disinfecting their water and well.

Supporting and Advising Affected Restaurants and Grocers

Our sanitarians consulted with 120 affected restaurants and grocers about how to safely and properly clean flooded areas, what to do with food, and what steps needed to be taken before reopening.

Supporting and Advising Homeowners

We consulted with homeowners to help with flood clean-up issues such as proper clean-up to remediate mold and problems caused by flooded septic systems. We provided information through our [Flood Resources webpage](#), the news media and were available to help at the flood resource centers set up in Mazomanie and the Town of Middleton.

Monitoring Our Lakes and Beaches

We closed and monitored beaches, as flood waters flowing into the lakes and beaches carry contaminants that pose a risk to health and safety.

PHMDC is just one of many organizations and groups needed to help in natural disaster emergency situations like this historic flooding event. We were happy to be a part of the response.

Kim Whitmore Joins Our Board of Health

We are pleased to announce that Kim Whitmore, PHD, RN, has joined our [Board of Health](#). Kim is currently an Assistant Professor at the UW-School of Nursing and also serves as an affiliate on the Public Health Program faculty at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. She has had an extensive history in local public health working as a local Health Officer for the City of Cudahy, and as the Policy Section Chief and State Health Plan Officer for the Wisconsin Division of Health.



Kim has a research focus on better understanding the needs of children with special healthcare needs using a health services and systems approach.

Welcome Kim!!

Increasing Community Lactation Rooms

Food deserts are areas with limited access to healthy food options. The healthiest food for infants is widely recognized as breastmilk. However, many babies have limited access to its benefits because they face a food desert early in life – a “first food desert.” As the name suggests, first food

deserts are areas that do not have the resources and support necessary for families to meet their breastfeeding goals. These areas characteristically have few lactation rooms in public places, few employer lactation policies, and little access to lactation counselors or culturally appropriate lactation counselors.

This year, a focus of our Community Breastfeeding Team was to increase public lactation rooms in our community, especially in areas lacking private spaces for parents to nurse or pump. One such area is the area around the PHMDC office on South Park Street.

Results of a study of 30 businesses and other organizations in the area showed that there is a lack of lactation rooms available for staff and the community. The problem is illustrated by one woman's story who called her pumping experience a "nightmare." She described having inconsistent access to private places to pump and bounced around between 3 different places. Sometimes she needed to drive home during her breaks. Another woman reported having to pump in the McDonald's bathroom.

We are assisting organizations such as community centers, libraries, shelters, and food pantries in first food desert areas in establishing lactation rooms that are safe and welcoming places for nursing mothers to pump milk or breastfeed. Our Community Breastfeeding Team provides consultation and helps with funding for supplies and equipment. To date in 2018, we provided 10 sites with assistance and funding, and 3 more are in progress.

Recently, Centro Hispano did a remodel of their center and converted one of their rooms into a dedicated lactation space. We helped supply it with a variety of items such as a chair, mini refrigerator, boppy nursing pillow, breastmilk storage bags, a breastfeeding poster and more. Their lactation room is available for the public to use when they are open. Centro Hispano is in a key location since they are located next to the Madison Metro South Transfer Point.

Also, this week, our PHMDC office on South Park Street had a [Mamava lactation pod](#) installed for community use.

The Community Breastfeeding Team has mapped [Public Lactation Room locations in Dane County](#). Please [contact us](#) if you know of one that is not on our map, or are interested in creating a public lactation space.

Breastfeeding is a key strategy to improve public health and give children a healthy start in life. By working together with community partners, we can provide the necessary supports and remove the barriers for continuing to breastfeed as long as possible.

New lactation room at Centro Hispano



News You Can Use: Be Salt Wise This Winter

Feel free to use the information below in your newsletters, website, social media and other communications to spread this timely message to protect our lakes and drinking water.

Salt that has been applied to roads and sidewalks over the course of the winter ultimately ends up in our local lakes, streams, and drinking water. Road salt has been used as a de-icer since the 1950s, and as a result, chloride concentrations from salt in our lakes have steadily increased with harmful effects to aquatic life and our drinking water. It only takes one teaspoon of road salt to permanently pollute 5 gallons of water.



Starting at home, you can reduce the amount of salt that is used in the winter and still keep your sidewalks and driveways safe. The [Wisconsin Salt Wise Partnership](#) offers the following tips and a wealth of other information on ways individuals and our community can work together to reduce salt use.

- Shovel: Clear walkways and other areas before the snow turns to ice. The more snow you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it will be.
- Scatter: If you use salt, scatter it so there is space between the grains. One twelve-ounce container (like a coffee cup) is sufficient to salt sixty to seventy feet of sidewalk, or about 10 sidewalk squares.
- Switch: When pavement temperatures drop below 15 degrees, salt won't work. Switch to sand for traction or a different ice melter that works at lower temperatures.

On a broader level, in an effort to learn the balance between public safety and responsible salt use, a [Winter Salt Certification Program](#) helps private and municipal applicators lower their salt use by learning proper application rates and techniques.

By working together, we can reduce salt and protect our environment.

News of Note



Follow Us On Instagram

In September, we added Instagram to our social media accounts.

Instagram is a social media platform that uses photos and videos to connect with our community.

We are using it to educate, keep our community up-to-date on public health issues and visually tell our story about what we do and how we work in the community.

Check us out and follow us [@publichealthmdc!](https://www.instagram.com/publichealthmdc/)

The Health Insurance Marketplace is

OPEN

for business!

Health
Care
.gov

Time to Sign Up for Marketplace Insurance

Open enrollment for 2019 health care coverage is November 1-December 15. Consumers can enroll in an Affordable Care Act (ACA) plan directly at [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) and are encouraged to sign up early.

Help is available. For folks that would like enrollment assistance, Covering Wisconsin has trained health insurance navigators available at various locations throughout the open enrollment period. People can make an appointment with a navigator through the [Covering WI website](https://www.coveringwi.com).



Public Health
MADISON & DANE COUNTY

Healthy people. Healthy places.

