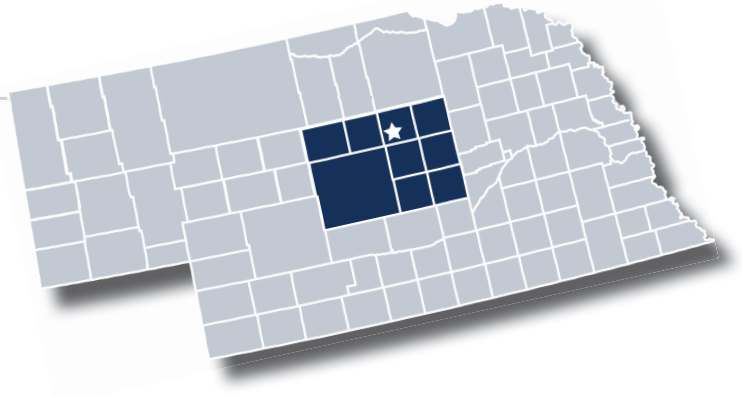


Loup Basin Public Health Department

*Serving Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Greeley, Howard,
Loup, Sherman, Valley, and Wheeler Counties*



Spotlight: Responding to the 2019 Floods



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On the evening of Tuesday, March 12, 2019 a storm system started approaching the Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) jurisdiction that lasted for 24 to 48 hours. The storm caused infrastructure systems to fail due to the snow, rain, and high winds causing ice jams in our rivers, resulting in significant flooding throughout the entire jurisdiction. This was a real-world natural disaster caused by a bomb-cyclone.

All nine counties of the LBPHD district had emergency declarations. LBPHD activated the Emergency Operation Center to respond to the event. Catie Larsen, Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC), stayed in contact

with all Emergency Managers in our district. LBPHD had MOU's set with partners they needed to contact during the flood including: Emergency Managers, hospitals, Region 26 Emergency Management, radio stations, newspapers, Region 3 Behavioral Health, Tri-Cities Medical Response System (TRIMRS), and other local health departments.

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Throughout the week of the flood, LBPHD sent out several press releases, via radio and social media, regarding water, food, safety, and disease prevention. The LBPHD ERC contacted Region 3 Behavioral Health when mental health needs arose. Through a partnership with Americares, LBPHD provided various supplies to help with the disaster relief efforts in Dannebrog, Lake of the Woods (St. Paul), North Loup, and Ord. These donated supplies included hygiene kits, first aid kits, lotion, body wash, leather gloves, baby wipes, masks, hand sanitizer, germicidal wipes, trash can liners, and band aids. LBPHD successfully supplied, administered, and distributed tetanus vaccine to those communities that requested the vaccine for first responders and individuals impacted by the flood.

Knowledge was gained during the flood regarding what worked and what LBPHD can do to improve our response plans.

This report includes examples of efforts of Loup Basin Public Health Department to make the “Good Life” a healthy one in their jurisdiction. The following examples reflect work supported through multiple sources of funding, including monies from the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (HCFA).

Local health departments act as communities’ Chief Health Strategists by assuring that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved. Local health departments do this by working in each of the **Three Core Function Areas of Public Health**:



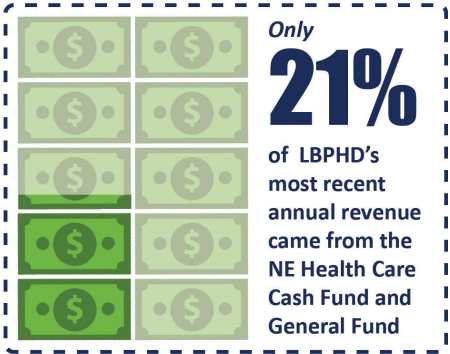
Assessment: Collect and analyze information about health problems in Nebraska communities.



Policy Development: Work with partners to apply data, educate the public, and develop programs and policies—all to address and prevent illness, disease and disability.



Assurance: Promote effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans.



Community Health Assessment (CHA) Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Every 3-6 years, Nebraska’s local health departments (LHDs) engage local partners (including hospitals, clinics, schools, law enforcement, military and veteran organizations, economic development agencies, businesses, foundations, other community organizations, and individual community members) to identify key, local health needs and issues through systematic, comprehensive data collection and analysis. This process is known as the Community Health Assessment (CHA). LHDs take the lead in coordinating this complicated process, synthesizing the outcome data, and prioritizing identified issues. The resulting formal assessment is used to create a community-wide plan aimed at strategically improving health – the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

With CHIPs in place, LHDs take a lead driving the work toward meeting CHIP goals and monitoring progress. Much of this work is done collaboratively through partnerships and workgroups that include the diverse sectors mentioned above.

The CHA/CHIP process ensures that local communities are able to work together toward a Good, Healthy Life for all Nebraskans.

CURRENT CHIP PRIORITIES:



Mental Health



Diabetes

ACCESS TO AND LINKAGE TO CLINICAL CARE

Access to and Linkage to Clinical Care includes (but is not limited to) coordination of services between medical providers and providers of health-related social needs, oral health/dental services, and behavioral/mental health.



Loup Basin Smiles is an oral health prevention program that provides fluoride varnish at Head Start programs, preschools, and elementary schools in Loup Basin Public Health Department's (LBPHD) district. Fluoride varnish can be applied 4 to 6 times per year, and can decrease further cavity development by about 38%. LBPHD uses public health certified dental hygienists to perform oral screenings and apply fluoride varnish treatments to children's teeth. Loup Basin Smiles reaches over 2,000 students during the school year.

CHRONIC DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Chronic Disease Control and Prevention includes (but is not limited to) asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, tobacco control, and worksite wellness.



As a component of the Community Health Assessment (CHA), conducted by LBPHD and area hospitals in the district, a community survey was launched to understand more about the health-related perceptions and health status of residents within the LBPHD district. Just under half (45.2%) of survey respondents indicated that heart disease and stroke was a health concern. In response to this, LBPHD's Well at Work program offers onsite health screenings to employees of local businesses and schools. Important health screening data, such as cholesterol, blood pressure, and thyroid levels, are obtained and personalized education is shared with participants.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Communicable Disease Control and Prevention includes (but is not limited to) communicable disease epidemiology (disease outbreak management/response), tuberculosis (TB), immunizations, sexually transmitted infections, and surveillance (tracking and following up on reports and provider/school reports).



LBPHD conducts surveillance, investigation, and follow-up of reportable communicable diseases as part of its core responsibilities. LBPHD utilizes an electronic reporting system called the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS), allowing LBPHD to receive communicable disease reports from a variety of health care entities within the district. LBPHD strives to reduce or eliminate cases of vaccine-preventable diseases through our immunization program. This program promotes and provides immunizations to adults and children. LBPHD staff members also work with school nurses across our district to assure compliance with the Nebraska Student Immunization Law.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Environmental Health includes (but is not limited to) radon, lead, emergency response, hazardous substances and sites, and Complete Streets initiatives.



Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, nationally, and is responsible for over 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year. LBPHD received the Radon Awareness and Risk Reduction Award, which enables LPBHD to educate the public about radon and its risks and distribute radon test kits to residents in all nine counties within the district. LBPHD also promotes effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans regarding radon exposure.



INJURY PREVENTION

Injury Prevention includes (but is not limited to) motor vehicle injuries, occupational injuries, senior fall prevention, substance abuse, car seat safety, binge drinking, and distracted driving.



LBPHD also promotes effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans regarding radon exposure. LBPHD has a public health nurse who is certified as a car seat technician and is available by appointment to assist caregivers and parents with installation, provide education, and inspect car seats. LBPHD coordinates car seat events with Team Physical Therapy, Safe Kids North Central/Avera St. Anthony's Hospital, Boone County Health Center, Nebraska State Patrol, and the Burwell Volunteer Fire Department. These events include car seat inspections and opportunities to purchase car seats at low cost, courtesy of a grant.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and Child Health includes (but is not limited to) Women, Infant, and Children (WIC), family planning, newborn screening, evidence-based home visitation, Early Preventative Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT).



LBPHD protects the families in our health district by providing a wide array of services such as immunizations, health screenings, communicable disease investigations, and car seat safety education and checks. Currently, LBPHD does not provide any specific maternal or child and family health programs. These needs are met by NE-DHHS or other resources in our area. LBPHD refers all candidates.

Additional public health activities that Loup Basin Public Health Department performs to assure that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved.

Research shows that people at risk for diabetes, including prediabetics, could significantly reduce their risk of diabetes by making modest lifestyle changes. Since 2018, Loup Basin Public Health Department (LBPHD) has been implementing the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP), an evidence-based lifestyle change program. This Centers for Disease Control (CDC)-recognized program can reduce a prediabetic person's risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by 58% by way of making modest, but lasting, lifestyle changes. NDPP participation can also lower the risk of a heart attack or stroke, improve overall health, and help people feel more energetic. This program meets for a full year to help participants stick to new habits and avoid slipping back into old habits, because making lifestyle changes is an ongoing process.

For more information about *Loup Basin Public Health Department*
please visit: www.loupbasinhealth.com

