



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Brown County Health Department

## 2024 Annual Report

I am pleased to submit the following annual report of the activities of the Brown County Health Department for the 2024 calendar year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Norman Oestrike, MD  
Health Officer

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# Table of Contents

---

Health Officer Report.....2

Brown County Government.....4

Brown County Health Department Staff .....5

Health Department Revenues and Disbursements .....6

Health Department Administrator .....7

Vital Records.....8

Emergency Preparedness .....10

Environmental Health .....13

Environmental Services – Food Division.....16

Nursing.....19

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# Health Officer Report

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*Submitted by Dr. Norman Oestrike, Health Officer*

November 1, 2025

The Indiana State Health Department did away with annual reports at the start of this year but have now reinstated them late in the year. I will do my best to reconstruct our activities in 2024 and our plans for 2025. Each department will also submit annual reports of their activities, achievements and plans which will be an integral part of this report.

2024 was administratively a busy year. Judy Hess, our long-time administrator, retired after many years of faithful service. An interim Administrator was appointed and resigned after a short tenure. Melissa Stinson Waddell, an Administrative Assistant with the commissioner's office, was appointed Health Department Administrator in August. Melissa knows County and State Government and is a great addition to the team.

We were also able to hire Addison Volbrecht to fill the Front Office position of Department Secretary / Administrative Assistant.

Since the Commissioners raised our nurses' salaries last year, we have been able to keep our full complement of nurses. This helps us to continue the high level of Public Health services.

Our Environmentalist's Department was stressed with staff shortages. We were unsuccessful in hiring any temporary Environmentalists to fill in. Recently College Graduates would not interview for our open positions because of our salary structure. A plan was developed to take the salary from an unfilled position, split it, and hire two "Helpers" to aide our Environmental staff.... one each for Onsite Sewage and for Food Services. Then, hopefully, train them over time to pick up progressively more responsibilities and thus increase our staffing in that manner.

Financing the Health Department has always been a burden for the County. The State of Indiana developed a plan to subsidize the County Health Department in partnership with the County. Funds were made available in 2025 to hopefully allow the Department to raise salaries and add personnel so that we can maintain our current level of services. Also, we hope to begin to add services requested by the State and by residents of Brown County. These would include more involvement with the school student's health, more involvement with mental health including suicide prevention (which have traditionally been provided by the Indiana Department of Mental Health) and hopefully some new types of home health care, and certainly a more

active role in drug addiction treatment and prevention. However, I want to stress that the Health Department is established, supervised and controlled by the State Health Department and Indiana Law, so many activities that local government, organizations and residents wish the Health Department would do, are not allowed or funded. In November of 2024, a newly elected Governor of Indiana, announced the new State funding arrangements might be altered in 2025, but hopefully, Public Health will be supported at a much-needed higher level, and we can rely on the State's promises...

We have also been exploring the possibility of getting more grants for additional funding for some of these activities. Certainly, we currently have substantial grants that do fund some of our activities and supplement some salaries, particularly Corey Frost and our Emergency Preparedness program.

Lastly, yours truly, who agreed in 2013 to work for the Health Department as Health Officer for one year, has developed personal health issues and retired December 31, 2024, after serving 11 years. I want to thank everyone for their help and dedication, including all employees, the Health Board, The Commissioners, the County Council and our residents.

We have been successful in finding a new experienced Health Officer, Dr. Michael Conway. I have every confidence that he will serve Brown County admirably.

Sincerely,

Norman W Oestrike, MD

RETIRED

# Brown County Government

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## Brown County Commissioners

Jerry Pittman  
Ron Sanders  
Blake Wolpert\*

## Brown County Council

Darren Byrd  
Gary Huett  
Jim Kemp  
Joel Kirby  
David Redding  
Scott Rudd  
Judy Swift-Powdrill

## Brown County Board of Health

Linda S. Bauer  
Michael Day, MD (Vice Chair)  
Thomi G. Elmore (Chair)  
Thomas J. Martin, MD (Assistant Health Officer)  
Cynthia S. Rose, RN & Attorney  
Catherine Rountree, MSN, BSN, RN  
James Zimmerly, RPh

Norman Oestrike, MD  
*Health Officer/Secretary*

\*Blake Wolpert was appointed after Chuck Braden resigned mid-term.

# Brown County Health Department Staff

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Taylor Alton/Addison Volbrecht	Registrar/Clerical Support/Special Projects Coord.
Corey Frost	Public Health Coordinator
Jennifer Heller, BFA	Environmental Health Specialist (Food Division)
Judy Hess/Melissa Stinson-Waddell	Administrator
Kelly Hilligoss, BSN, RN	Public Health Nurse
John Kennard, BS	Environmental Health Specialist – Supervisor
Norman Oestrike, MD	Health Officer
Kimberly Prendergast, ASN, RN	Public Health Nurse
Ernie Reed, AS	Environmental Health Specialist
Seleah Settle, BSN, RN	Public Health Nurse – Supervisor

# Health Dept. Revenues and Disbursements

<b>Tax Revenues:</b>	<b>2024</b>
Property Tax 1159	\$347,744.56
Financial Institution Tax 1159	\$947.47
Excise Tax 1159	\$24,380.71
Commercial Vehicle Excise Distribution 1159	\$ 1,947.14
<b>Total Tax Revenues:</b>	<b>\$375,019.88</b>
Health First Indiana Funds 1160	<b>Total HFI Revenues:</b>
	<b>\$175,167.53</b>
<b>Fee Revenues:</b>	
Food	\$34,677.00
Installer License	\$4,600.00
Nursing	\$9,290.81
Septic	\$31,100.00
Visual Inspections	\$400.00
Vital Records <i>(Includes coroner training and continuing education funds)</i>	\$7,614.75
<b>Total Fee Revenues:</b>	<b>\$87,682.56</b>
<b>Grant Revenues:</b>	
Local Heath Maintenance Fund	\$31,874.76
Local Health Department (LHD) Trust Account	\$99,112.69
Public Health Coordinator Base Grant	\$25,000.00
Cities Readiness Initiative	\$12,500.00
<b>Total Grant Revenues:</b>	<b>\$168,487.45</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$806,357.42</b>
<b>Disbursements:</b>	
Personnel Services	\$485,332.73
Supplies / Operating Expenses Health	\$155,755.16
Local Heath Maintenance Fund	\$19,932.12
Local Health Department (LHD) Trust Account	\$3,390.76
Public Health Coordinator Base Grant	\$25,000.00
Cities Readiness Initiative Grant	\$12,962.98
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:</b>	<b>\$702,373.75</b>

The Local Health Maintenance Fund and Trust Account grants were established by the State to provide local boards of health with funds to provide public health services. The amount given to each county is based on population. These dollars are used to offset part of the salary of one Environmental Health Specialist and one part-time Registered Nurse. They also pay for advertising, CPR manikins, education and training, supplies and other items. According to IC 16-46-10, these dollars cannot be used by the general fund. All expenditure must be approved by the State Department of Health and must follow State code. Health First Indiana Funding is not from local tax funds and is required to comply with the IDOH Key Projects Indicators that are established by the IDOH. The Public Health Coordinator Base Grant and Cities Readiness Initiative Grant are reimbursed through a Federal grant from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. The Public Health Coordinator Base grant helps offset the salary of this position.

# Health Department Administrator

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***Submitted by Judy Hess/Melissa Stinson-Waddell, Office Administrator***

The Administrator assumes many of the responsibilities delegated by the Health Officer. The following are a few of the duties assigned to this position.

- Attend meetings as needed.
- Assists in interviewing and hiring of employees.
- Helps to resolve conflicts with the public and/or employees. Consults with individual department supervisors.
- Makes decisions on day-to-day business regarding the department.
- Prepares the office budget, attends budget hearings and submits to Health Board for approval. Works with the Auditor and Council to complete proper channels for submission to IDOH Red Cap. Works
- Prepares all financial reports regarding grants and budgets. Sends to ISDH as requested and responsible to State Board of Accounts for audits.
- Attends meetings with various county offices as needed.
- Keeps personnel records for staff.
- Responds to and gathers information for requests for records.
- Reviews time sheets and answers questions regarding time sheets, corrections.
- Approves time off requests for staff, per health officer. (Health Officer approves time off for Administrator.)
- Prepares biweekly payroll.
- Coordinates meetings for Health Officer and Board.
- Meets with the Health Officer and keeps him informed of all events, concerns, etc. within the department.
- Prepares board minutes for Health Officer.
- Attends Health Board meetings.
- Coordinates and facilitates staff meetings when needed.
- Oversees the needs of the building and grounds maintenance and upkeep.
- Completes Account Payable and Account Receivable actions, funds and accounts.
- Coordinates with Health Officer, Legal and staff on daily duties being performed by the department and staff.
- Arranges and assists with the execution of the health department services.

The Administrator works closely with the county health officer. The Administrator spends time working with the health officer regarding any Health Department issues such as budget, personnel, health officer duties, arranging trainings for the health officer, letter reviews, etc. Also works with department supervisors and employees within the departments as needed. She decides content and creates the agenda for the health board meetings which are held six times a year or more when necessary. Also completes daily activities in the office such as answering questions from the public, answering the phone, filing, deposits, bookkeeping duties, monthly claims for accounts payable, issues receipts, issues septic permits, septic searches, food licenses, pool licenses, farmer markets permit, collection reports, all state reports concerning grants and grant reviews. Assists with vital records and the claims process as needed.

# Vital Records

## Submitted by Addison Volbrecht, Registrar

There were 131 deaths reported in 2023 living an average age of 75 years.

They were classified as:

Cancer	26
Anal	1
Appendix	1
B-Cell Lymphoma	1
Bladder	2
Breast	1
Cholangiocarcinoma	1
Colon	1
Head/Neck	3
Kidney	1
Lung	8
Neuroendocrine System	1
Pancreatic	1
Prostate	3
Stomach	1

Heart Disease	45
Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease	1
Arrythmia	2
Cardiac Arrest	1
Congestive Heart Failure	7
Coronary Artery Disease	2
Diastolic Heart Failure	6
End Stage Heart Failure	2
Hypertension	2
Myocardial Infarction	18
Systolic Heart Failure	4

Respiratory	18
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	7
Pneumonia	3
Pulmonary Embolism	1
Respiratory Failure	6
Respiratory Failure due to SARS-COV2	1

Other	42
Accidental: Blunt Force Trauma	1
Accidental: Positional Asphyxia	1
Alzheimer's/Dementia	5
Anorexia/Malnutrition	2
Aspiration with Asphyxiation	1
Degeneration of the Brain	10
Gangrene	1
Lewy Body Dementia	1
Liver Failure	1
Metabolic Encephalopathy	1
Parkinson's Disease	4
Renal Failure	1
Seizure Disorder	1
Sepsis	1
Septic Shock	1
Stroke	3
Suicide: Hanging	2
Suicide: Self-inflicted Gunshot Wound	5

Grand Total	131
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Registration of Home Births

Female (1)      Male (1)

Registration of Deaths

Female (49)      Male (82)

Certified Copies Issued

Birth (12)      Death (691)

Did Tobacco Use Contribute to Death?

Yes (9)      No (50)

Unknown (66)      Probably (6)

2023: 36 Veteran Deaths

2022: 31 Veteran Deaths

2023: 75 Average Age at Death

2022: 75 Average Age at Death

Vital Records

Out of County Deaths but In-County Residents

Information provided via reports from the Indiana State Department of Health

There were 72 deaths reported in 2023 living an average age of 75 years.

They were classified as:

Cancer	11
Breast	1
Leukemia	1
Liver	2
Lung	3
Pancreatic	1
Prostate	2
Tongue	1

Heart Disease	14
Acute Catastrophic Cardiac Event	2
Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease	2
Cardiac Arrest	2
Cardiomyopathy	1
Congestive Heart Failure	3
Coronary Artery Disease	1
Myocardial Infarction	2
Vascular Disease	1

Respiratory	16
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	3
Pneumonia	3
Pulmonary Disease	1
Pulmonary Embolism	1
Respiratory Failure	8

Other	31
Accidental: Blunt Force Trauma	3
Acute Cholecystitis	1
Alzheimer's/Dementia	1
Anorexia/Malnutrition	1
Anoxic Encephalopathy	1
Brain Hemorrhage	2
Degeneration of the Brain	5
Ethanol Toxicity	1
Fentanyl Toxicity	2
Fentanyl & Methamphetamine Toxicity	1
Hemorrhagic Stroke	1
Lewy Body Dementia	1
Renal Failure	2
Sepsis	2
Septic Shock	2
Streptococcal Peritonitis	1
Stroke	1
Thermal Injuries	1
Unknown Drug Toxicity	1
Urinary Tract Infection	1

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>
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2023: 75 Average Age at Death

2022: 72 Average Age at Death

# Emergency Preparedness

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Submitted by Corey M.B. Frost

## BUDGET

- Base Budget of \$25,000 was accepted.
- CRI (Cities Readiness Initiative) available budget of \$15,571 was accepted.

## REGULAR MEETINGS ATTENDED

- District 8 meetings held bi-monthly, representatives from all counties in District 8 are present. Those counties are Monroe, Lawrence, Orange, Bartholomew, Jackson, Washington and Brown.
- Attend and LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) meetings.
- Monthly mobile office meetings with District 8 staff.
- EPPC meetings (Emergency Preparedness and Planning Coalition) bi-monthly
- Attend EMAC (Emergency Management Advisory Committee) meetings.
- Serves as the District 8 Local Health Department Representative to the Hospital Healthcare Coalition that meets monthly.
- Individual meetings with District 8 staff and the Indiana State Department of Health for the purpose of achieving grant deliverables and to use templates to update the ESF-8 (Essential Support Function) and the County Emergency Management Plan.
- Quarterly City Readiness Initiative Meetings with IDOH and other CRI Staff
- Quarterly Local Preparedness Planning meetings with LHD staff, incorporate into monthly staff meetings
- Attended several eclipse-focused meetings from traffic strategy to communications. These meetings started in February 2023
- Attended monthly National Association of Counties steering committee meetings
- Attended IDOH requested meeting with leadership on Health First Indiana rollout
- Attended a seminar on public health emergency preparedness at Indiana University
- Started the Community Health Needs Assessment project which should be completed in late 2025
- Attend executive board meetings for District 8's healthcare coalition.

## ACTIVITIES

- Hosted quarterly IDOH mobile clinics at EMS Base
- Executed tabletop exercise for District 8 Healthcare partners in Orange County
- Attended Local Emergency Planning Committee Seminar on Railway Safety as related to transportation of hazardous materials.
- Activated as ESF8 for Eclipse in the Emergency Operation Center
- Assisted with bringing in the Active Integrated Response Course that will deploy on Jan 5-7, 2024, utilizing Louisiana State University personnel and the Indiana Guard Reserve as actors.
- Updated plans as needed with more for the next 12 months as staff changes warrant.
- Present Social Vulnerability Index to staff
- Execute Emergency Support Function 8 Communication Drills
- Execute Volunteer Notification Drills utilizing SERV-IN
- Execute Command Staff Notification Drill
- Creating an exercise to fulfill immunization grant and CRI grant deliverable.
- Building out District 8 Disaster trailer as a mass fatality incident management asset.
- Appointed to the National Association of County Officials Public Health Steering Committee and to attend the conference in July. Continued effort is ongoing on Policy Resolutions being presented to U.S. Congress in February of 2024.
- Completed Crisis Emergency Risk Communication and Continuity of Operation Plans
- Evaluated state skills for emergency medical responders and EMT recertifications.
- Attended Indiana Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Symposium
- Provide command structure and Emergency medical response resources to several special events in-county.

## TRAINING

- Assisted in the development and execution of a District-wide Exercise, while providing several education breakout sessions of speakers on various topics.
- Provided Stop the Bleed Training and BLS CPR training as an instructor
- Completed Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS) and Advance Disaster Life Support (ADLS) re-certifications.
- Complete the American Red Cross and National Transportation and Safety Board's training on Family Reunification and Family Assistance Center.
- Attended STD/HIV training put on by IDOH at our local health department.

- We provided an Emergency Medical Responder course for local responders with 11 students. The course ran from January until April.
- Inventory all AED's and verify status across county properties.

## FUTURE GOALS

- Start Emergency Medical Technician course in 2025.
- Develop another district-wide exercise for April 2025
- Create a broader catalog of trainings offered at the training institute including more specialized curriculum
- Build out Emergency Operation Center's ESF 8 workstations
- Resupply Point of Distribution Trailer
- Update any Memorandum of Understanding that is in place and prioritize what is necessary.

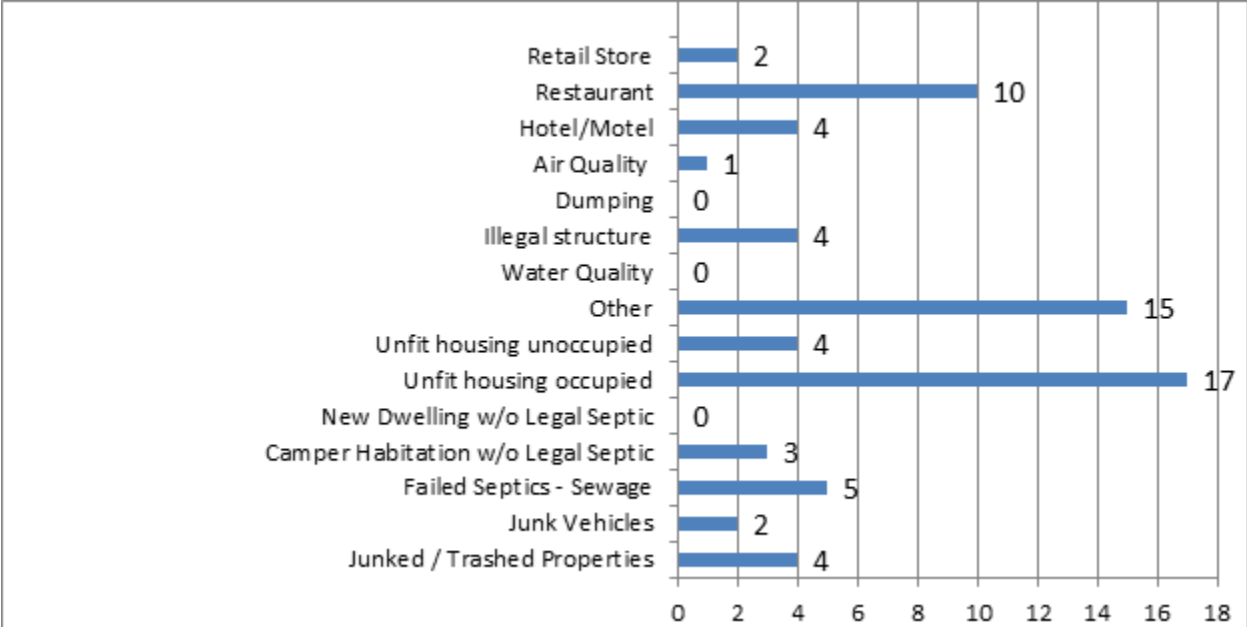
# Environmental Health

**COMPLAINTS, WASTEWATER, PROJECTS,  
VECTOR CONTROL, SANITATION, WATER QUALITY**

**COMPLAINTS**

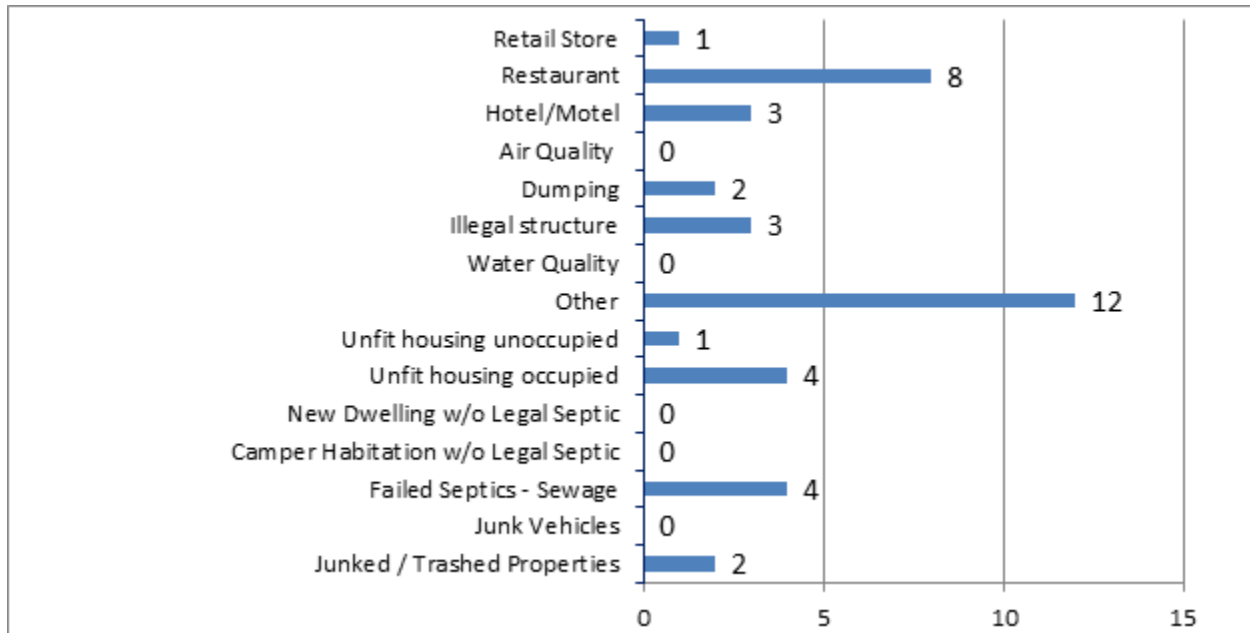
At the end of 2024 there were 159 active complaints, this includes 101 carried over from 2023. These numbers show a 5% increase over 2023 with 151 complaints.

**Type And Number Of Complaints Filed In 2024**



Note: This list is based on the number of complaints the health department has received, and not the number of complaints found to be valid. This data does not reflect the total number of complaints but rather the number of complaints received by two of three environmental health specialists.

## Type And Number Of Complaints Resolved In 2024



## WASTEWATER

Two hundred nine (209) soil evaluations submitted for review and specification work sheets issued in 2024.

One hundred thirty (130) Septic permits were issued in 2024, compared to one hundred sixty (160) issued in 2023.

2024 septic inspections: 394

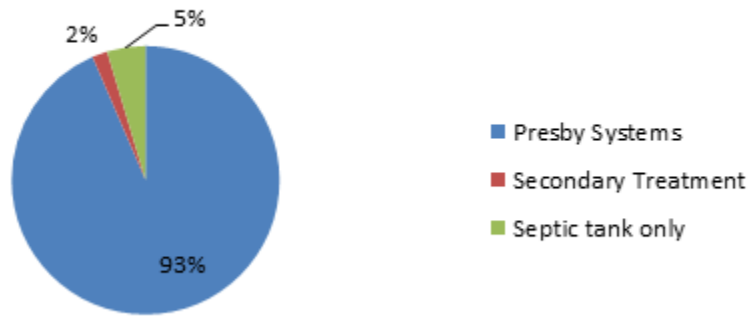
2024 site consultations: 250

2024 site evaluations: 209

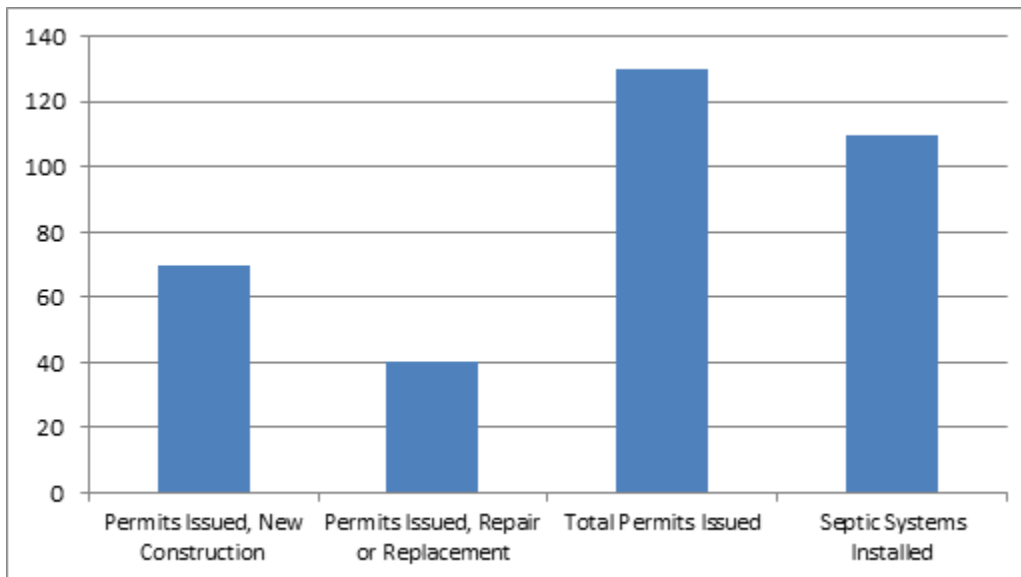
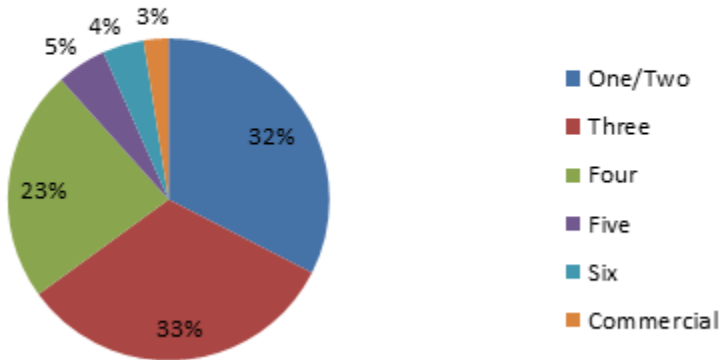
Septic systems installed in 2024 were 110, compared to 156 installations in 2023.

Brown County presently has 43 registered septic installers.

## Types of Septic Systems Permitted



## Number of Bedrooms per Septic Permit



# Environmental Health-Food

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## **Meetings**

- Attended 103 scheduled meetings including regional, state, and national environmental health associations, Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management, Indiana Department of Health, and the Local Septic Ordinance Committee.

## **Inspections**

- Completed 177 inspections across local restaurants and mobile food trucks serving in the county.

## **Education Provided**

- Delivered ServSafe or Food Safety training to 72 participants.
- Authored educational articles for local newspapers covering:
  - Alpha-Gal Syndrome
  - Ticks
  - Heat Exhaustion
  - Food Safety
  - Careers in Environmental Health
  - Mosquitoes
- Presented at the National Environmental Health Association Conference on an incident investigated as a possible foodborne outbreak.

## **Eclipse Preparation**

- Developed a temporary permit specific to Eclipse-related activities.
- Created an Eclipse Mobile Truck packet for mobile food vendors.
- Inspected mobile food trucks in preparation for the Eclipse event.

## **Guidance & Consultation**

- Provided guidance on 50 occasions to community members, restaurant owners, and staff.
- Consultation topics included:
  - Mobile water tanks
  - Mobile Food Trucks
  - Aftermath of watermain break
  - Food safety and additives
  - Vector control
  - Quail eggs
  - Ice making
  - New restaurant openings
  - Food safety post power outage
- Consulted and approved construction remodeling for **2 new coffee shops, 1 restaurant** and required changes needed in transition of ownership of a third establishment.

## **Education & Training (Received)**

- Attended 41 classes/training sessions.
- Courses focused on wells, wastewater/septic, KPIs for food safety, and multiple sessions on changes to the Indiana food code (now 410 IAC 7-26).

## **Program Updates**

- Updated the **Home-Based Vendor Document** to reflect newly legislated regulations.
- Updated existing ServSafe training materials to newly revised 2022 Food Code changes for ServSafe instruction in class.

## **Additional Achievements**

- Presented at the National Environmental Health Association Conference:
- Presentation on a past possible foodborne illness outbreak in Brown County.
- Served as a panel member on NEHA Disaster Response Preparedness, acting as Past Chair of the Terrorism and All Hazards Preparedness Committee for the Indiana Environmental Health Association.

# Nursing

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*Submitted by Seleah Settle, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse Supervisor*

Prepared By Seleah Settle

## **2024 Nursing Division Staff**

Seleah Settle, BSN, RN Public Health Nursing Supervisor

Kelly Hilligoss, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse

Kim Prendergast, RN, Public Health Nurse- Resigned August 2024

Sherri Rice, RN, Public Health Nurse- Started October 2024

## **2024 Main Focus- Health First Indiana**

With the beginning of 2024, came the roll out of Health First Indiana. This program allows the Nursing Division to expand our capabilities and services that we offer. We were tasked with implementing new ways to reach our community and improve the health of our residents. One way we targeted to achieve this was to attend as many outreach community events as we could. We participated in DCS's Family Fun Day, Back the School Bash, On the Road Again Back to School Fair, Overdose Awareness Day, Hope Fest 2024 and a Community Baby Shower. This was in addition to our routine events such as visiting Hickory Ridge monthly and hosting several immunization events. At these events, we promoted our services and handed out free giveaways such as hand sanitizer, toothbrushes, Naloxone, infant sleep sacks, baby wipes, and water bottles. In addition to the giveaways, we were able to provide educational resources like immunization schedules for children and adults, tick information, safe sleep practices for newborns and infants, and smoking cessation resources. This year, we have added the availability to perform A1C checks for patients and have continued to promote our new service from 2023 of HIV and Hepatitis C testing. In October, we were very excited to add Sherri Rice to our team as our new PHN and School Liaison. Sherri's background in public health nursing and school nursing has been a great addition to our division. She has hit the ground running by meeting with the schools and developing ways to assist them in vaping cessation and education and in getting our students up to date on all immunizations. At the Brown County Health Department, our Nursing Division is always striving to be the best resource we can be for our residents, and we take this role very seriously.

## **Blood Lead Levels**

The Brown County Health Department completes investigations and follow-up for children who have elevated levels of lead. The Health Department provides lead testing at no charge. Blood samples are collected and sent to the Indiana Department of Health Lab for testing. The nurses call the parents or guardians with children whose blood lead level is considered borderline to

educate them on lead dangers, the importance of good nutrition, and having clean home environments and will schedule follow-up testing when needed. An initial blood lead level of 3.5 mCg/dL triggers the need for the nurse to initiate follow-up with the patient's medical provider and the parents or guardians. A confirmatory test is needed when initial blood lead levels are at 3.5 mCg/dL or above. A confirmatory test that is equal to 5.0 mCg/dL or greater initiates a case investigation into the cause of the elevated blood lead levels. During 2024, the Health Department performed less than 5 lead tests and did less than 20 lead investigations.

### **Adult Screenings and Community Outreach**

A key focus for the Nursing Division is patient education. This is done in a variety of ways including in person during appointments, over the phone, and during community outreach. One of the primary outreach programs that we have at the Brown County Health Department is Hickory Ridge. Hickory Ridge is a group of seniors that frequently meet together. Once a month the nurses go to perform a wellness check on the members. This includes checks on blood pressure, blood glucose level, hemoglobin, heart rates, oxygen saturation and weight. The nurses also answer any health-related questions the members may have. If needed, the nurses can reach out to the primary care physician to gather information or share information for the member, as well. This is a great opportunity for the members to have their values checked regularly and have conversations about any concerns they may have. The Health Department visited Hickory Ridge 9 times in 2024 and saw 42 patients. The Nursing Division is also able to perform rapid HIV and Hepatitis C testing. In 2024, 7 HIV and/or Hepatitis C tests were performed. The Nursing Division also partnered with Purdue Extension in November to sponsor a Food As Medicine class at the senior apartments, Willow Manor. There were 9 residents that participated in the class. Health Department nurses attend the class to provide vital/ health screenings and offer Influenza and COVID immunizations. Health First Indiana money was used to fund meal kits for the participants.

Below are the totals of patients screened at Hickory Ridge and the Health Department:

Blood Pressure/Pulse=68

Diabetes Screenings=54

Cholesterol Screenings=2

Weight= 68

Hemoglobin=55

A1C= 7

### **Maternal Health**

The Brown County Health Department is happy to offer free pregnancy tests for the community. Along with the pregnancy tests, the nursing staff provides education and resources for maternal and fetal health, child health and development, child safety and well-being, immunizations, breastfeeding, nutrition and family planning. Parents are informed of the assistance programs within the county, such as WIC, Food Bank, Clarity, Salvation Army, Mother's Cupboard, St. Vincent DePaul, and the food pantries with an emphasis on the importance of nutrition on maternal and child development. Expectant mothers can also be referred to other community programs such as Nurse Family Partnership and Healthy Families. Women with a negative pregnancy test are offered condoms and referred to agencies for STD testing, family planning, and preconception education. In 2024, 0 pregnancy tests were conducted. This year, the Nursing staff met with Clarity and WIC to promote our services and offer resources to their clients. In September, we also participated in a Community Baby Shower where we gave away a goodie bag that included sleep sacks, baby wipes, immunization schedule information, safe sleep resources and various other resources from IDOH. All nurses successfully completed training for safe sleep practices for newborns and infants and can pass along the training to new and expecting mothers and families. The nurses also participate in the Fetal Infant and Child Mortality Review Teams. These teams consist of several stakeholders in the community and look to find ways to decrease infant and child deaths in the county.

## **Immunizations**

One of the main focuses for the Nursing Division at the Brown County Health Department is immunizations. Keeping the public up to date on vaccinations is a huge part of keeping our community safe. With help from the Indiana Department of Health Immunization Division, the Brown County Health Department offers all the vaccinations that children need from infancy through their college years. Children who are without insurance, are on Medicaid or CHIP, are underinsured, or are Alaskan Native or American Indian have access to these vaccinations without charge through the Vaccines for Children program with the State. We also have many vaccinations for adults through our 317 programs. This program is for adults who are uninsured or are underinsured and provides these immunizations to those qualifying individuals for free. It is very important to the Brown County Health Department to have these programs in place to remove financial barriers to getting vaccinated. For those that have insurance, we can bill their insurance through VaxCare. For a second year in a row, we also participated in a CDC promoted program through the Indiana Department of Health called IQIP (Immunization Quality Improvement Program) to develop ways to improve our immunization rates and have children and adolescents vaccinated on time. This is a multi-year project, and we will continue to meet with IDOH to check in on our progress. For the last several years, the Nursing Division has partnered with the Brown County School Corporation Nurse to provide immunizations to school aged children at their back-to-school registration days. This is a great partnership with the school, as we can get many students up to date with their vaccinations required for school. On these two days of 2024, we saw 38 students and administered 72 vaccinations. We also had two vaccination clinics outside normal business hours. These included an evening clinic and a Saturday clinic during the summer months. This was done to overcome the possible barrier of parents and guardians not being available during our normal hours of operation. In 2024, we vaccinated a total of 488 patients and administered a total of 731 vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines.

## **Tuberculosis**

The Nursing Division is responsible for proper screening and management for tuberculosis. We routinely conduct tuberculosis skin tests for those needing this service. Once a skin test is

placed, the patient will return to the Health Department within 48-72 hours for the test to be read by nursing staff. If any patient is reported and diagnosed as having latent or active tuberculosis, the nursing staff conducts interviews and provides education for the patient. The nursing staff will also help the patient acquire the needed medications. This is done by a close working relationship between the Brown County Health Department, the Indiana Department of Health, the patient's provider and Purdue Pharmacy. During 2024, 137 tuberculosis skin tests were performed. There were less than 5 cases of active tuberculosis and latent TB.

## **Communicable Diseases**

The nurses are responsible for conducting patient interviews for the communicable disease investigations that occur in Brown County. The purpose of conducting these interviews is to gather as much information about the possible origin of the disease, any symptoms and identify others who may need to be notified. To complete these investigations, the Brown County Health Department gathers information from the reporting facility and the patient and reports the information to the Indiana Department of Health. In 2024, less than 50 investigations were conducted. For the purpose of this report, COVID-19 cases are not included in this count.

## **Naloxone**

For the last several years, the Brown County Health Department has received a grant from the Indiana Department of Health to distribute Naloxone, also known by the brand name Narcan. These doses can be distributed to others, such as Centerstone, the Brown County Sheriff's Department, Nashville Police Department and local fire departments. The Naloxone can also be distributed to community members. For community members, education pertaining to how to administer the Naloxone and resources regarding treatment centers are provided along with the Naloxone. Fentanyl test strips are also provided to individuals picking up Naloxone. The nursing staff also participated in the Overdose Awareness Day in the community in August. At the event, the nurses provided Naloxone administration training to those in attendance. In addition to Overdose Awareness Day, the nurses had a booth at Hope Fest 2024. At this event, CPR demonstrations were shown, Naloxone was available and information on our Hepatitis C and HIV testing was handed out. In 2024, 663 doses of Narcan were distributed through the Brown County Health Department.

## **Sharps Containers**

The Brown County Health Department has a sharps container exchange program for the community. Residents can come to the Health Department to take a sharps container home with them. Once the container is full, the resident is able to bring the sharps container back to the Health Department for us to properly dispose of it with our other medical waste through Stericycle. This program is very beneficial to the community, so these needles do not end up in the landfill or get put in a container that is not meant for needle disposal. This program is free of charge to the residents. During 2024, the Health Department gave out 123 sharps containers.

## **CPR**

Kelly and Selehah at the Brown County Health Department are certified to teach CPR classes to community members, as well as healthcare professionals. The nursing staff can hold in-person

classes and complete skills check offs for those completing the class portion online. In total, 33 people were certified by the Brown County Health Department nurses in 2024.

### **School Health Liaison**

Our partnership with Brown County Schools was strengthened as we began our work with a School Health Liaison designated by the Brown County Health Department. Kim, and then Sherri, filled this role for us this year. This year, we started developing new ways to partner with the school and enhance other pre-existing partnerships. The School Health Liaisons helped the schools complete required vision screenings and helped to ensure students stay up to date on necessary immunizations. Sherri also became a certified Catch My Breath instructor which teaches students of various ages about the dangers of vaping. We look forward to building these programs in the new year.



Nursing Supervisor, Seleh Settle, instructing a CPR class

**The mission of the Brown County Health Department is to encourage organized community efforts to address public health issues by applying medical, scientific and technical knowledge to prevent disease and promote health.**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.