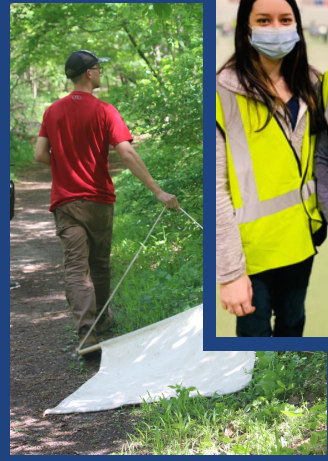


ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH NEWSLETTER

The Quarterly Newsletter for Calhoun County Environmental Public Health



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

National Radon Action Month

Body Art

Vector Update

Winter Preparedness

Licensing and Registration

Asthma and Winter Weather

2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

2022 was a year of transitioning for CCPHD's Environmental Health (EH) division. In early 2022, EH staff worked different aspects of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response. This included working vaccine clinics, conducting case investigations, and delivering personal protective equipment (PPE) to skilled-nursing homes. As the year progressed, staff were able to transition back into their normal roles of restaurant inspections, septic and well permitting, conducting tick drags and mosquito trapping, among other services that were reduced or limited during the pandemic response. 2023 plans are underway to increase our community and social media presence and to grow programs. Follow us on Facebook and stay tuned for some exciting things to come in the new year!

753

Routine Restaurant Inspections

144

Temporary Food Establishment Inspections

24

Restaurant Plan Reviews Approved

166

Well Permits Issued

207

Septic Permits Issued

4.3 miles

of tick dragging conducted



Free short-term radon test kits available during the month of January!



NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH

January

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) marks January as National Radon Action Month aimed at increasing the public's awareness of radon, and to promote radon testing and mitigation. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can cause lung cancer. Radon gas is odorless and the only way to know the level of radon present is through testing. To promote testing, CCPHD provides free short-term radon test kits during the month of January. The test should be placed in the lowest area of the home where people would spend extended periods of time, such as a finished basement or a bedroom. The test is placed for several days then mailed in using the pre-paid envelope. Results are sent back to you and CCPHD staff are available to help you interpret the results or provide resources for radon abatement. Test kits are available at the Battle Creek and Albion health department locations. For more information about the test kits, contact the Environmental Health front desk. For more information regarding radon and the health risks, visit the EPA's webpage [here](#).

BODY ART

In 2010, Public Act 375 was enacted stating that tattooing, branding, microblading, or body piercing cannot be conducted unless it is performed at a body art facility that is licensed by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Facilities that must be licensed include those that offer tattooing, piercing, branding, permanent makeup, and microblading. Body art facilities are regulated by MDHHS and local health departments with yearly inspections conducted to confirm that facilities and artists continue to meet sanitation and health safety requirements. CCPHD sanitarians conduct inspections on body art facilities to ensure that the artists are using the best methods of practice and that the facility is clean and meets specific requirements. Licensing is important within these facilities due to the potential to introduce infections and diseases when skin is pierced, punctured, or ink is injected. Unlicensed facilities can put clients at risk of infection or diseases, including Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV, when proper sterilization or cleaning practices are not in place. If you see something concerning in a licensed facility or know of an unlicensed facility in operation, you can file a complaint for CCPHD to investigate. For more information on body art facilities, the licensing process, or to file a complaint, visit the MDHHS webpage [here](#).



What to look for when choosing a facility:



Licenses, certificates, and the complaint disclosure form are posted and available

The biohazard box is clean and readily available



The artists open sterilized needles in front of clients

The artists wash their hands prior to procedures and practice proper glove use



Feel comfortable asking questions!

Continue to keep an eye out for ticks!

"Tick season" is typically thought to be in April-September, but ticks can be active anytime the temperature outside is warmer than 40°F! Take precautions when enjoying warmer days this winter. Staying on well-groomed trails while avoiding brush, high grass, and fallen leaves can reduce the potential of coming into contact with ticks.



VECTOR PROGRAM ENDED FOR 2022

The vector program wrapped up for the year near the end of September. In total, there were 4,894 mosquitos collected and identified. Target species of mosquitos were sent for testing and, of the 94 pools of mosquitos tested, there were no pools positive for the target diseases. Pools are groups of mosquitos that are trapped at the same site and sent together for testing. The target species of mosquitos are the ones that are able to transmit diseases such as West Nile, Zika, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Ticks were collected during seven different tick drags throughout the county with 82 black-legged ticks sent for testing. Black-legged ticks are the target species due to their ability to spread Lyme disease. Results from the testing are expected to be returned in late 2023.

Keep an eye out for the Vector Annual Report that will be available in mid-2023!

WINTER PREPAREDNESS

Winter storms can cause power outages that can last several hours to days. It's important to stay warm during outages and use safe heating sources. The following are ways you can stay warm and safe during a power outage:

1. Use a generator. You can run a large space heater or a whole home depending on the size of the generator. If using, make sure it is outside, at least 20 feet away from your home, and never run it in an enclosed space.
2. Gather in a southern-facing room. A sunny day can provide some warmth to the room. Collective body heat can keep the space warmer when other people are also in the room.
3. Seal window and door leaks. Keep cold air out by sealing windows and doors with caulk or clear plastic sheeting, and use draft guards on doors.
4. Use a fireplace or wood stove.
5. Camp inside. Using a tent and sleeping bags indoors can help provide warmth.



For more power outage tips, visit the Michigan MIREADY webpage [here](#).

Monitor for Hypothermia

Hypothermia can happen when there is prolonged exposure to cold temperatures. The following are warning signs of hypothermia:

In adults:

- Shivering
- Exhaustion
- Confusion
- Memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Drowsiness

In babies:

- Bright red, cold skin
- Very low energy

Hypothermia is a medical emergency. Seek medical attention if the warning signs are present, especially if the person's temperature is below 95°F.

Who is licensed or registered?

Body Art Facilities



Septic Installers

Sewage Haulers



Food Service Establishments

Campgrounds



Public Swimming Pools

LICENSING AND REGISTRATION

CCPHD works closely with state of Michigan departments (such as Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)) for licensing and registration of different areas where public health has a presence. Septic installers are registered each year, beginning in January, through CCPHD, to ensure that installers are up to date on our sanitation code and policies. All septic contractors who install systems must be registered in Calhoun County. Licensing is required by the state for several programs to ensure the rules and regulations within these programs are being followed to protect the health of the community. The licensing period for body art facilities is in January of each year, with food facilities, campgrounds, and pools in April of each year. Sewage haulers are the final program to be licensed with inspections occurring by August. If you have questions about licensing or registration, or would like to become licensed or registered, you can reach out the EH front desk during business hours.



ASTHMA AND WINTER WEATHER

The Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey found that in Calhoun County, 19.9% of adults have been told they have ever had asthma and 15.3% of adults report currently having asthma. Calhoun reported higher percentages than Michigan as a whole, who reported that 16% of adults reporting that they have been told they had asthma. Winter weather is a common asthma trigger and understanding how cold weather affects asthma is a good way to prevent flare-ups. In general, the more severe your asthma is, the more likely cold air is to affect you. Talk with your primary care provider to create an asthma management plan for the winter and follow their direction for medication use. For more information about potential asthma triggers and ways to prevent flare-ups when spending time inside as well as outside during the winter, visit the CDC's webpage [here](#).

Tips to Avoid Asthma Attacks During Cold Weather

1

Limit indoor triggers. Spending more time inside can expose you to indoor allergens. Using a HEPA filter or using a dust mite cover on pillows can help cut down on allergens.

2

Keep warm. Bundling up with extra layers and keeping warm can reduce the risk of asthma flare-ups. Covering your mouth and nose with a scarf or a mask can warm the air to minimize irritating your airway.

3

Avoid mouth breathing. Breathing in through your nostrils helps to humidify and warm the air before it reaches your lungs.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Bob Overley is a Program Coordinator in Environmental Health and has been with CCPHD for 34 years. Bob has worked under a variety of programs during his time here including food, wells, onsite wastewater, lead abatement, household hazardous waste, and various special projects involving vectors and rabies. Bob was one of the people involved in starting the household hazardous waste collection program for Calhoun County that continues today. Household Hazardous Waste Collection days are held several times a year for people to drop off items that shouldn't be thrown out in regular trash, such as cleaning chemicals, oil-based paints, and medications. Bob has enjoyed the daily variety that public health provides - every day is different. Public health is an ever-changing field and staff adapt with these changes to protect and improve the health of the people in Calhoun County.



CALHOUN COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

190 E. Michigan Ave
Battle Creek, Michigan 49014

115 Market Place
Albion, Michigan 49224

Phone: 269-969-6341

calhouncountymi.gov

facebook.com/CCPublicHealthDepartment

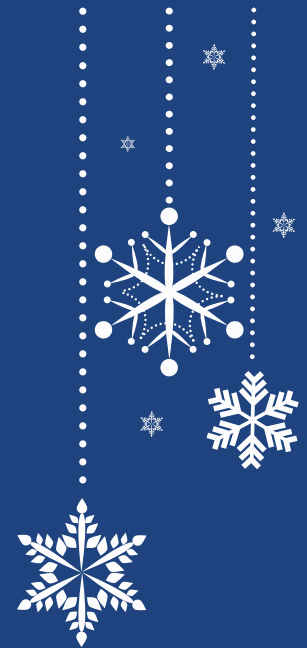
UPCOMING EVENTS

Food Safety and Certified Food Manager Classes

Classes are scheduled for the following dates:

January 17th
February 21st
March 21st
April 18th

Call the Environmental Public Health Department to
reserve a spot in the class.



"Working to enhance our community's total well-being"