



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Working with our community to **prevent** disease and injury, **protect** the environment, and **promote** health.



# LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR



**Welcome to the 2023 edition of Douglas County Health Department's Annual Report. While we have been in operation for nearly two years, 2023 was our first full year as an independent health department. Our team has worked hard to build the right health department for Douglas County, providing the services you need while being fiscally responsible.**

**During 2023, we completed our first strategic plan and are making good progress toward meeting the goals in that plan. We expect to begin working toward national accreditation with the Public Health Accreditation Board in 2024, helping to ensure that we meet all standards for a local health department. My staff and myself hope that you will enjoy reading this report and that you will see how far we have come in less than two years.**

**I want to remember to thank the many partner agencies without whom we could not be successful. Our staff works with many other state, county and local government agencies as well as various nonprofit and for-profit organizations serving the needs of our community. Our Board of Health and Board of Douglas County Board of Commissioners have been extraordinarily supportive and helpful in our journey. The residents of Douglas County are fortunate to have these dedicated leaders working on their behalf.**

**Please enjoy our report, and we look forward to serving you in 2024.**

**Sincerely,**

**Michael Hill, MPH, MPA, FACHE  
Executive Director**





## VISION

Douglas County residents have access to opportunities for achieving their healthiest possible lives.

## MISSION

We provide education and evidence-based services to improve health in Douglas County.

## VALUES

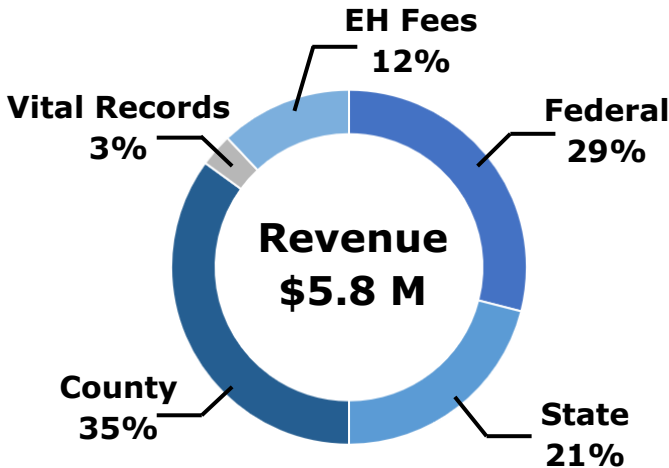
Collaboration, Education, Inclusiveness, Professionalism, Responsiveness, and Transparency.

## BOARD OF HEALTH

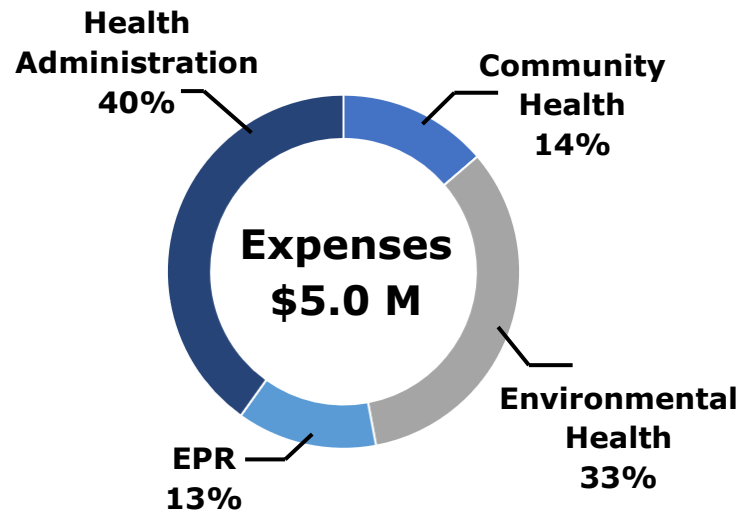
- **Douglas H Benevento (President)**
  - Donald L Parrot (Alternate)
- **George Teal (Commissioner)**
  - Kevin Michael Bracken (Alternate)
- **Lora Thomas (Commissioner)**
  - Katheryn A Wille (Alternate)
- **Dr. Linda M Fielding**
  - Kathleen C Waugh (Alternate)
- **Kim M Muramoto**
  - Todd W Devoe (Alternate)



The Executive Director oversees the Vital Records Office, Quality Improvement, Performance Management, and Accounting functions of the department. They are a conduit that provides information to the County Board of Health and to the State of Colorado.



Douglas County Health Department employs approximately 43 individuals. Most are residents. In 2023 we had a 79% retention rate.



## VITAL RECORDS





The Community Health team spent much of 2023 creating partnerships through participation in community events. Through their efforts, the team:



**Created relationships with 63 Community Partners**



## Tobacco Focused Community Assessment

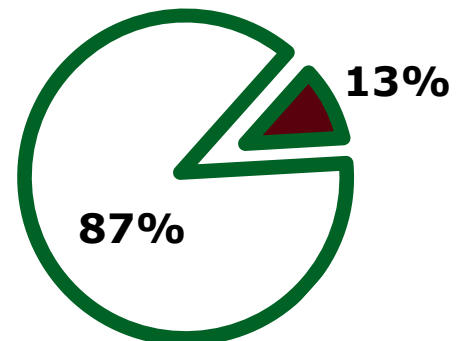
- 47% of Douglas County residents considered commercial tobacco use a moderate or serious problem.
- 12.2% of Douglas County students reported using an electronic vapor product in the last 30 days vs 3.3% smoking a cigarette.
- There is a perception that vaping is safer than smoking.



**Tabled 31 Community Events**

The Community Health Team has many strong community partnerships. SECORCares serves county residents who are struggling with suburban poverty. The community health educators provide a resource table at SECORCares once a month. We are able to meet and interact with families and individuals to provide information and connect with resources.

## IMMUNIZATION CLINICS

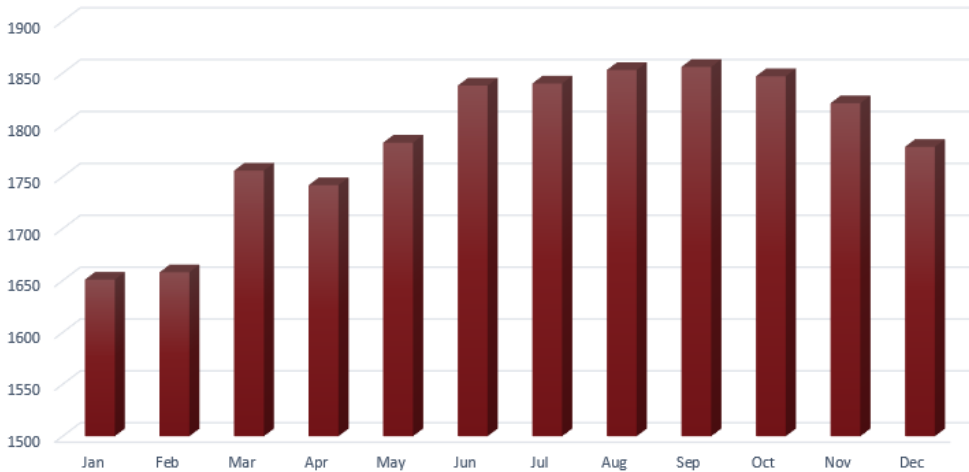


- DCHD hosted 4 immunization clinics
- Served 90 children and adults
- Administered 241 Vaccines

87% of administered vaccines were funded by Vaccines For Children and 13% were covered by personal insurance.

**Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) is a nutrition program that provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, healthy food, and other services free of charge to Colorado families who qualify. Pregnant women, breastfeeding women (with a child under one year), and families with children under the age of five years may qualify.**

**WIC ENROLLMENT**



**3,058**

**A total of 3,058 unduplicated individuals were served during the calendar year through WIC**

**Retail Locations in Douglas and Elbert Counties**

**24**

**\$1.5M**

**Dollars redeemed by WIC recipients at WIC retail locations in 2023**



**11,250  
diapers**

**50 lbs.  
of clothes**

**WIC and MCH has partnered with WeeCycle to distribute clothes and diapers in 2023. Through this partnership, we distributed 11,250 diapers and 50 pounds of clothes to families in Douglas County.**

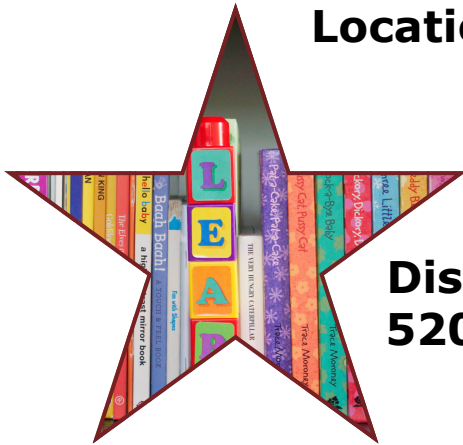




**Attended  
14 Outreach Events**

A child's brain produces 700 new neural connections every second from birth to age 3.

**Established  
4 Bookshelf  
Locations**



**Distributed  
5200 Books**



**Reading is a powerful tool during this period of high growth for children, making access to age-appropriate books vital to healthy child development.**

**"The books that the Douglas County Health Department provides have been very well received by the clients who frequent SECOR. SECOR is primarily a food pantry. However, with the introduction to a small library, we were able to create with the donations of the Douglas County Health Department, we have put so many books in the hands of children, many of who do not have many (if any) books at home. When our market is open, children are often in the waiting area reading a book alone, with a parent, or with a sibling. This additional opportunity has been very well received by families."**

**- Debbie Blair, SECORCares**



## FREE LITTLE LIBRARIES

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, these little libraries provide access to books for all community members. Reading has a profound impact on the health of children and families. Reading early and often stimulates brain development, creates strong bonds between caregivers and children, improves kindergarten readiness, and contributes to lifelong academic success. These libraries are part of a national network of Little Free Libraries.



# uhealth

UCHealth Highlands Ranch Hospital was excited to sponsor a hospital-wide diaper and baby item drive. Chelsea Carlson, Director of Patient Services - Women's and Infants Service Line stated, "We are truly proud of the contributions of the staff at UCHealth Highlands Ranch Hospital. It was so rewarding to see departments come together to provide donations to such a worthwhile cause. We are so excited to have another drive in 2024 to benefit the citizens of Douglas County."

**2665** DIAPERS

**27 lbs.** OF BABY FOOD





Environmental Health focuses on preventing the spread of diseases through the environment, such as through food or water. Environmental Health staff inspect restaurants, childcare facilities, body art facilities, septic system installation, and landfills. We also review land use cases.



**229** Childcare centers inspected



**91** Plan reviews for new restaurants



**1109** Retail food locations inspected

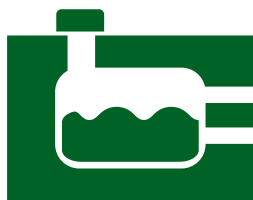


**20** Body art facilities inspected

In May 2023 DCHD Environmental Health implemented a Recreational Water Program. Three water team inspectors learned the Colorado Regulations for Swimming Pools and Mineral Baths. The inspectors were trained in conducting inspections, responding to pool complaints, and reviewing plans for new public swimming areas. After several training inspections, the inspectors were signed off to conduct recreational water inspections independently. We are happy to report that the team successfully conducted full-scope inspections at all of the public recreational water facilities in Douglas County. They also conducted chemical checks at all of the facilities. As the program continues to grow, inspectors will attend Certified Pool Operator classes to grow their knowledge of recreational water.



**238**  
Complaints investigated across all programs



**122**  
New septic permits issued



**118**  
Recreational water locations inspected



The Douglas County Health Department’s Emergency Preparedness and Response Division (EPR) works with many local, regional, and state partners to plan and prepare for public health emergencies. EPR staff focus on planning, training, and exercising the response to public health emergencies like pandemics, bioterrorism events, and natural disasters. Staff integrates an all-hazards approach to planning and exercise functions to remain agile and swift with hazard identification, mitigation, and response. We embrace proactive collaboration with partners, peers, and public elements in all of our processes.



## DCHD Responded to four major incidents

- Highlands Ranch Tornado
- Elbert County Flood
- Elbert County forest fire
- Hospital loss of water supply

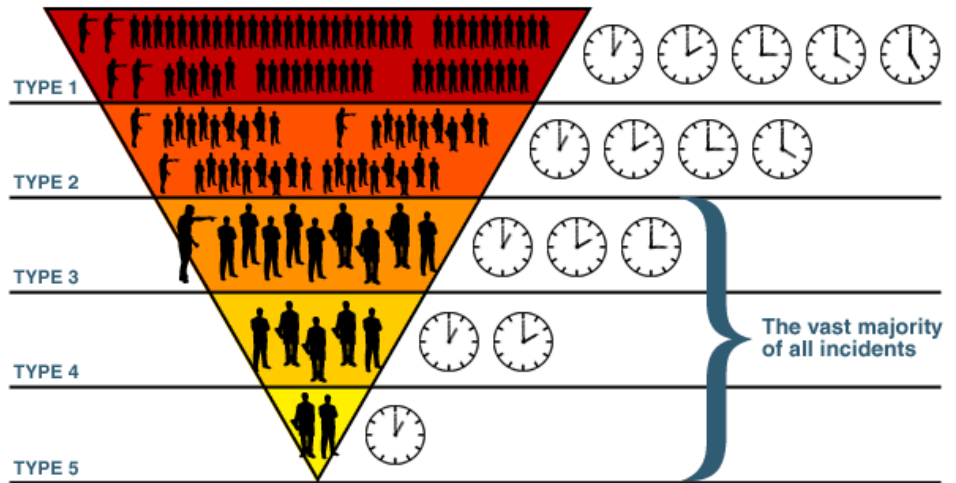


## EMERGENCY PLANNING AND TRAINING

### LEPC

Local Emergency Planning Committee

Participated in Full Scale Exercise (FSE) with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM)



### ICS

Incident Command System

- 3 ICS trainings with the Coroner’s Office
- Taught APX 12 ICS 300/400 courses in Douglas and Pueblo County



## ICS TRAINING & STAFF RECOGNITION EVENT

In honor of its first anniversary, the Health Department conducted an Incident Command System (ICS) training exercise to plan and execute a staff recognition picnic. Staff from multiple divisions filled incident command roles to train in incident response and promote inter-departmental coordination. Training culminated in a staff recognition event to celebrate the accomplishments of the first year in operation.







The epidemiology team collaborated with IT staff to implement a public-facing online reporting system for diseases, animal encounters and outbreaks. Residents can now report illness, outbreaks, and animal encounters in a single form online, 24/7.

## Top 5 Infectious Diseases

Positive COVID tests Reported from labs and healthcare facilities.

5,846

Hospitalizations

517

Deaths due to COVID

56

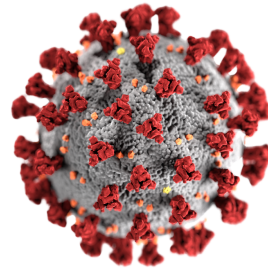
Campylobacter

West Nile Virus

Salmonellosis

E. coli

Pertussis



## PARTNER AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The epidemiology team continued to strengthen partner relationships by participating in community outreach events. We met with animal control partners to standardize animal encounter response protocols and to acknowledge the hard work our partners do.

We received 415 animal bite reports and either referred them to animal control partners or directly followed up.



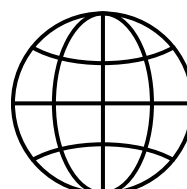
**The Douglas County Health Department expresses gratitude to its dedicated staff, esteemed community partners, frontline workers, Board of Health, County Commissioners, and all county stakeholders for their collective efforts in promoting the well-being of our residents. Your contributions, perspectives, and inventive ideas play a crucial role in our county's achievements. Special thanks to the members of the Douglas County community who shared their voices with us throughout the past year. We anticipate updating you on our continued progress next year.**



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<https://www.douglas.co.us/health-department/>