



# MINNEAPOLIS Health IN THE CITY



A quarterly update from the Minneapolis Health Department

Winter 2016

## The Minneapolis Health Department now has a Social Media Presence!

We've launched Health Department Twitter, Facebook and YouTube accounts to make it easier to stay current with the Department and public health in Minneapolis. You can find them at the following links:

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#)

## Preventing chronic diseases through primary care practices

One out of three Minnesotans has prediabetes and is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Yet, the progression from prediabetes to chronic disease can be delayed or prevented by making moderate lifestyle changes. To this end, the Minneapolis Health Department has funded organizations to work together to:

- Provide diabetes prevention classes based on the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) to delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes in pre-diabetics.
- Raise awareness that type 2 diabetes is preventable.
- Create a citywide action plan to make NDPP sustainable.
- Encourage worksites to offer NDPP to employees.

NDPP provides real-life lessons on how to eat healthy, increase physical activity, and enhance problem-solving skills. The goal is to reach 150 pre-diabetic individuals through public awareness efforts and through diabetes screening events.

The health department has also awarded funds to three community clinics—Neighborhood HealthSource, Northpoint Health and Wellness Center, and Community University Health Care Center. More than 50% of adults served in these clinics are from populations that have higher rates of mortality and poorer health outcomes. Community Health Workers will provide patients with self-management support; refer patients to health related community resources; and link clinics with community pharmacists for medication therapy management and adherence support. The implementation of a blood pressure self-management program will also enable patients to take charge and monitor their condition better. This project is funded by the Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. For more information contact Lara Pratt at 612-673-3815 or [lara.pratt@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:lara.pratt@minneapolismn.gov).

## Addressing climate change via energy benchmarking

To tackle climate change locally, the City of Minneapolis has partnered with several organizations to develop the Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions citywide by 30 percent by 2025. Because energy waste and building inefficiencies data are not readily available, in 2013 the City of Minneapolis established an Energy Benchmarking program to make energy data accessible through its [Energy and Air Pollution Ordinance 47.190](#). The ordinance requires public commercial buildings over 25,000 square feet and private buildings over 50,000 square feet to report energy and water performance using the federal ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®. The data is published annually to help businesses and consumers make more informed decisions that take actual energy costs into account when buying or renting property.

With 2016 being the first year the program will be completely rolled out to buildings, health department staff are sending out individualized scorecards to buildings; incorporating Xcel Energy's new automated meter data transfer service into training materials; and putting the final touches on its new Benchmarking Management System software to make compliance more effective. By making building energy performance more transparent, the program is driving the City's largest energy users to re-think building energy through compliance, improving data quality, and ultimately addressing a key information gap.

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## Reducing public health risks through paid sick leave

More than 75,000 low-wage Minneapolis workers are estimated to not have access to paid sick leave. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, this group likely includes workers in food service, childcare, community health and other “front line” health workers, along with certified nursing assistants, technicians and personal care attendants. Among people who work in Minneapolis, more than 15,000 full-time food preparation and service workers do not have paid sick leave, though the true estimate is likely much higher when part-time workers are considered.

According to the CDC, food-borne illnesses are so common that one in six Americans are sickened each year. These illnesses are often spread by infected food handlers. Food workers with the “stomach flu” are advised to stay home for at least three days after symptoms end. But, for those who live paycheck-to-paycheck with no paid sick leave, this advice is unrealistic. In as

few as five days an infectious disease can become widespread if people are not able to follow medical advice and stay home.

To find solutions to the health inequities related to unpaid sick leave, the City Council convened the Workplace Partnership Group to make policy recommendations based on a study of fourteen other U.S. government entities that have enacted similar laws. Commissioner Musicant shared information on health impacts of the proposed policy at City Council and Partnership Group meetings as well as at public listening sessions. Protecting health is a foundational value of the effort. The Workplace Partnership Group will give its recommendations to the City Council in March. The study of paid sick leave is aligned with the City’s “One Minneapolis” initiative to eliminate racial, economic and health disparities among Minneapolis residents.

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## URBAN HEALTH AGENDA

### UCare project reduces asthma burden

Through a project funded by UCare, the Minneapolis Health Department has been working to reduce and eliminate asthma triggers for children with uncontrolled asthma through home inspections. The year-long project focused on Minneapolis children who depend on emergency department visits to address asthma attacks. Home visits systematically created an asthma “safe haven” in the child’s bedroom where mattress and pillow encasements were provided and HEPA air purifier installed. Other interventions included providing a vacuum with HEPA bags to reduce dust mites; checking furnace filters; and identifying mold. During the home visit, health department staff also counselled families on how to identify and prevent asthma triggers in the future.

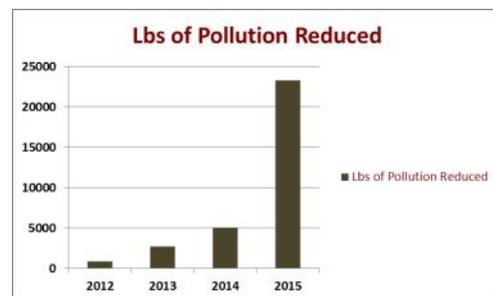
After completing home inspections, staff reported findings to the child’s primary care doctor as means of ensuring ongoing diligence on addressing triggers. During the year, 17 homes visits were completed, assisting 24 children many of whom were high users of emergency departments. Before this intervention, 13 used the emergency department 33 times with an average of 2.5 visits each and six children were hospitalized with an average of 1.5 admittances. Considering the average cost was \$388 per home visit to reduce asthma triggers, the project provides a glimpse into the possible return on investment by reducing high-cost emergency department visits and hospitalization, along with decreasing missed school days and the burden of asthma symptoms. The Enhanced Asthma Care programs across the country have shown that they reduce childhood asthma symptom days (21 days/year), reduce missed school days (12/year), reduce acute healthcare visits, and have a return of \$5.30-14.00 for every dollar invested. A 2007 Minnesota study showed that these interventions resulted in \$1,960 health care savings per child.

While the UCare grant proved successful, additional resources are needed to better identify asthmatic children who are high

users of emergency medical care. Insurance reimbursement for such healthy home visits could optimize asthma care and prevention. Legislation has been proposed to fund these efforts through the Enhanced Asthma Care Services for Minnesota’s Children (see House File 1453 and Senate File 1737). Project partners included the Hennepin County Medical Center Pediatrics Department and MVNA. For more information, contact Eliza Schell at 612-673-2606 or [Eliza.Schell@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Eliza.Schell@minneapolismn.gov).

### City supports businesses to go green

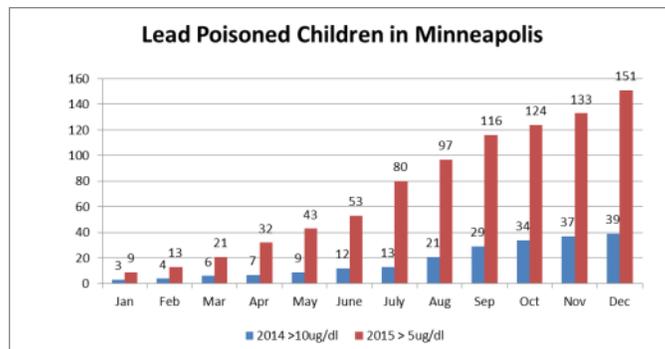
Through matching funds, the City of Minneapolis’ Green Business Cost Share Program continues to help businesses implement greener, cleaner and healthier practices. The program provides incentives for



businesses to go above and beyond existing regulations to improve environmental quality and reduce pollution. As examples, the Green program has helped auto body shops switch to waterborne paint; dry cleaners to stop using perchloroethylene, a hazardous chemical; and printers to reduce volatile organic compound emissions. To date, the City has worked with 11 businesses to prevent a total of 23,000 pounds of pollution from being emitted into the environment. If you know of any business large or small that is looking for an opportunity to become greener and more sustainable, please share information about how [businesses can apply now for the Green Business Cost Share Program](#).

## Lowering lead levels to prevent child poisoning

To increase the prevention of lead poisoning in children, the Minneapolis Health Department's Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Unit started inspecting homes of children found to have low levels of lead in their blood. The national threshold for lead poisoning is 10ug/dl, but in 2014 the Minnesota Department of Health lowered it to 5 ug/dl. As illustrated by the chart above, this change has increased new cases by 387 percent. Now many more Minneapolis children poisoned with lead are having their homes inspected to identify and repair hazards.



This photo is of one of the first properties inspected for one of these low-lead cases in which a child was poisoned. By taking action, the lead poisoning of two other young siblings was prevented. As part of the lead prevention strategies, owners receive corrective orders and occupants with qualifying incomes are enrolled in the HUD Lead Hazard Control grant which covers the majority of the cost for lead hazard reduction. For more information, please contact Lisa Smestad at 612-673-3733 or [lisa.smestad@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:lisa.smestad@minneapolismn.gov).

## HEALTHY CITY UPDATES

### Little Earth biochar pilot yields impressive results

The results are in on an innovative pilot project with Little Earth of United Tribes housing complex to grow more food in the limited space of urban gardens. In a partnership with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, the health department worked with Little Earth to examine whether the use of biochar could grow more and higher-quality food. Biochar is a 2,000 year-old practice that converts agricultural waste to enhance soil and boosts plant growth; biochar can hold up to eight times its weight in water, which helps during drier months.

Little Earth residents cultivated gardens planted in the traditional native method known as the Three Sisters where corn is planted in a mound, followed by beans in between the corn plants and then squash is planted around the mound to prevent weeds. Two plots were planted, one with just compost and the other with a mix of compost and biochar; each plot was cared for in the same manner. At the end of the season the biochar results were impressive: corn cobs were 50 percent larger and better developed; squash health rating was 50 percent better and produced six times more squash; and beans had double the health rating and produced more than 100 times the beans than those grown in compost alone.

### School Based Clinics join quality improvement effort

As part of a statewide coalition, the Minneapolis Health Department's School Based Clinic Program will take part in a national pilot program to improve health services to youth. The national School-Based Health Alliance and the Center for School

Mental Health were jointly awarded a Maternal and Child Health grant to expand the number and improve the quality of services of school-based health centers and comprehensive school mental health programs. As part of this effort, standardized national performance measures for School Based Health Care were developed through the School Health Services National Quality Initiative (NQI). Over the next year, quality improvement teams will be convened to implement and track local improvements based on NQI. Minnesota's Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) to reduce infant mortality is also participating in this effort by engaging clinic teams to implement Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles to test new ideas for sustainable practices.

#### Gretchen Musicant, Health Commissioner

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the Minneapolis Health Department at 612-673-2301 or [health@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:health@minneapolismn.gov).

People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000.

TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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#### Public Service Center

250 South 4th Street, Room 510  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
612-673-2301

[www.minneapolismn.gov/health](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health)

#### Get Connected

[facebook.com/CityofMinneapolisHealth](https://facebook.com/CityofMinneapolisHealth)

[twitter.com/CityMplsHealth](https://twitter.com/CityMplsHealth)

## Sanctuary Model® addresses trauma

On March 1, Healthy Start's Community Health Action Network held a workshop on the Sanctuary Model®, a trauma-informed care model to aid providers in responding more effectively to patients' trauma. As a first step, the model recommends addressing an organization's culture to promote their own staff's healing from psychological and social trauma so they can better address the needs of clients who have experienced similar adversity. The session highlighted an overview of the model, tools and resources, and how to implemented strategies.

## Coming attractions

Public Health Week themed "Healthy Minneapolis; 5 Days to a Healthier You" is scheduled for April 4-8 and will culminate with the Local Public Health Hero Award Ceremony, 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 5, 2016, in the City Hall Rotunda. Additional Public Health Week events can be found at [www.minneapolismn.gov/health/](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/).

In addition, Youth Violence Prevention Week is celebrated April 1-8 and will commence with a conference for young men of color called Bridges to Manhood, April 1, at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College. To register, please click on [www.BridgesToManhood2016.EventBrite.com](http://www.BridgesToManhood2016.EventBrite.com). This free event promotes the goals of My Brother's Keeper, an initiative launched by President Obama to help young men of color reach their full potential.

## Public Health Accreditation Board site visit

On April 21-22, the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) will conduct a site visit with the Minneapolis Health Department for its national accreditation review; a final decision to award accreditation is expected a few months after the visit. PHAB assesses public health departments against a set of nationally recognized, practice-focused and evidenced-based standards that promote and protect public health. In the four years since PHAB published its accreditation standards, 96 health departments have been accredited including two in Minnesota. PHAB reviewers will conduct interviews with health department staff and leadership, community and organizational partners, and members of the City Council. To prepare for the review, the health department has conducted an internal audit of its operating procedures, policies and practices, and implemented a department strategic plan, communications plan, workforce development plan, and quality improvement plan.

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## Staff Updates: Living our Values Award Winners

- **Jennie Markworth:** Invest in a Healthier Community. Highly invested in improving the emotional health and well-being of Washburn High School students, Jennie provides high-quality psychotherapy and comprehensive care coordination for her clients.
- **Sara Goodnough:** Investing in a Healthier Community and Engage with Communities. As the Senior Center coordinator, Sara is passionate about providing a warm, welcoming environment for senior citizens by cultivating a family-like atmosphere while diligently providing health and fitness programs and connecting seniors to resources.
- **Elizabeth Haugen:** Quality Inspires our Work. As a lead communicator and champion of the health department's work, Elizabeth (an employee of the City's Communication's Department) is responsive to staff requests and adept at transforming complex health issues into concise messages to create public awareness and improve residents' health.
- **Fardowza Omar:** Engage with Communities. With a smile on her face and keeping up with her regular job duties, Fardowza was integral in helping the Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Unit keep on track with securing a Minnesota Department of Health grant to increase awareness among immigrant residents of the health and safety hazards in Minnesota homes.

### New Employees:

- **Dane Huber** is a health inspector with Food, Pools and Lodging who recently worked on drinking water protection with the Minnesota Department of Health's Environmental Health Unit. He is a graduate from St. Olaf College with a degree in biology and environmental studies.
- **Brittney Douglas** is a health inspector with Food, Pools and Lodging primarily inspecting food establishments. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Stout and has a master's in conservation biology with an emphasis in environmental health.
- **Kathy Stachowski** is an office support specialist and former employee of the City's Community Planning and Economic Development Department, and Convention Center.
- **Mai Yang** is joining the Health Department as a Health Inspector I in the Food, Lodging and Pools unit.
- **Ashley Barrows** is a new Medical Assistant in Washburn School Based Clinic.

### Departing Employees:

- **Hannah Henschel** is leaving the Healthy Homes program to take a job with the Tennessee Department of Human Services doing program evaluation and quality improvement work.
- **JuAnita Ramey**, a medical assistant with the School Based Clinic Program, resigned in December to pursue new opportunities.