



APPLETON HEALTH DEPARTMENT QUARTERLY REPORT July 1 – September 30, 2020

Executive Summary

The Health Department's day-to-day activities for the third quarter of 2020 are enumerated in the attached report. The Department continues to work toward fulfilling the goals of our Department, keeping in mind the belief statements that support and enhance our mission statement.

“Plays a vital role assessing and assuring the health needs and trade practices in the community”

Weights & Measures Specialist, Todd Schmidt, inspected the Appleton Downtown Inc., Farm Market on September 5, 2020. Of the 82 vendors inspected, there were 2 vendors with labeling issues and 1 vendor with unapproved scales. The overall compliance was very high. Weights and Measures staff met with vendors in May for the annual vendor information meeting which provides information regarding recent changes in policies. The meeting, which is a requirement to sell products, provides a great foundation of learning the requirements resulting in high compliance throughout the Farm Markets summer duration.

In July, Environmental Health Staff completed the establishment license renewal process. No establishments had to be closed for non-payment of license fees.

“Provides services to protect and promote the health and well-being of the citizen and consumer”

In July and August, Environmental Health was asked by WI Division of Public Health to assist in a national Salmonellosis investigation. The investigation included 29 cases in 10 states with 2 WI residents reporting eating at an Appleton restaurant. Ingredient invoices were obtained for a variety of menu ingredients for the time frame in question. After multiple interviews and visits to the restaurant, eventually the investigation led to a food supplier initiating a national recall for wood ear mushrooms, also known as Black Fungus or Kikurage.

“Provides services in a cost effective and efficient manner”

Public health nursing staff have followed up with 1,786 individuals with confirmed cases of COVID-19 during the 3rd quarter of 2020. During this same time period, nursing staff have also followed up with 117 probable cases of COVID-19.

“Develops and evaluates departmental programs, policies and procedures based on community needs and collaborate with community agencies and providers to assess those needs and ensure high quality services”

During the 3rd quarter, the focus of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was to make the EOC completely virtual to protect staff, increase testing capacity, collaborating with our regional partners on a testing strategy, and establishing an enduring testing site.

On July 15, City of Appleton, City of Menasha, Calumet County, Winnebago County, and Outagamie County submitted the Tri-County testing strategy to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). This testing strategy identified gaps for testing in our community and how we plan to address them. We identified many symptomatic individuals not being tested and close contacts not being tested. The plan to address this gap was to provide more community testing sites and a possible enduring site.

August 5th, a community testing site was provided at the UW-Oshkosh campus in Menasha. This site tested 750 individuals. Another testing site was provided at Sunnyview Expo Center in Oshkosh on August 7th and 8th. There were 890 individuals tested during those two days. August 11th through the 13th, Calumet County provided testing at the Calumet County Fairgrounds, and 1,326 individuals were tested.

On September 1st, the Sunnyview Expo Center opened as an enduring site running six days a week. The site will remain open until December 10, 2020. This site accommodates 750+ tests a day and the hours are 10am to 6pm. This site has been an amazing addition to the north eastern side of the state.

Much of September, the tri-county testing team and Emergency Management researched locations and resources to bring two additional enduring sites in Outagamie County and Calumet County. The testing sites require running water, heat, and drive thru capabilities so that citizens are not getting out of their vehicles. This research was no easy task, but two sites were identified at Appleton North High School and Christ the Rock Church. These sites were not operational until the fourth quarter in October.

While the response to COVID-19 continued, another gap was identified in September. Communities in the Tri-County area that do not speak English were not always receiving timely or accurate information. The Tri-County Multi-Cultural Emergency Communications Committee was newly developed with Appleton Public Health, Valley Transit, Red Shoes Inc, and Appleton Mayor's Office staff to engage and effectively communicate important information beyond COVID-19 to the communities previously identified. The first meeting was to identify the need and purpose of the proposed committee.

The intent is to invite several community organizations from the Tri-County area to make it a community committee and not City of Appleton driven. The first official committee meeting will happen in October.

“Professional staff works together as a cohesive team by cooperating, communicating and supporting each other to achieve departmental and individual goals”

In September, due to rising COVID numbers in the community, Environmentalists Michele Roberts and Ryan Mathew were once again asked to work from home. Roberts and Mathew received additional training on different aspects of contact tracing and have continued to assist the nursing staff in this capacity.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Eggebrecht, M.Ed., MCHES
Health Officer