

What Did SCC Health Do For You in 2013?

When asked, “What does Public Health do?,” most respond that it’s involved with medical care or solely with providing aid to those in need. However, the community health system impacts every one of us each day, even though most of these activities are completed outside of public view.

In St. Charles County, the Department of Community Health and the Environment responds to the needs of the residents, business owners and visitors through the actions of three divisions (Environmental Health and Protection, Humane Services and Public Health). The Division of Public Health offers what many traditionally think of when listing public health services, including programs such as: immunizations, STD prevention and treatment, communicable disease investigations, health education and nutritional assistance for growing families, as well as issuing birth and death certificates and coordinating public health emergency response. The Division of Environmental Health and Protection promotes healthy conditions and reduces health risk through routine inspections of public providers like food service providers, day care centers, recreation facilities and much more; the implementation of the county’s mosquito and other pest control efforts; and the coordination of the county’s recycling and waste management programs. In addition to operating the Pet Adoption Center, the Division of Humane Service directs the county’s animal control program through education and ordinance enforcement.

This past year, the department introduced new initiatives and continued many popular programs that keep St. Charles County ranked as one of Missouri’s healthiest counties. To start 2013, Julie Eckstein, a 25-year health professional, was named the department’s director, and a new website (<http://health.sccmo.org>) was launched to enhance usability. Staff assisted emergency management and first responders in recovery efforts following the spring tornado and floods and winter storms. The Immunizations Clinic issued hundreds of Tdap vaccinations to children and their adult caregivers in a concerted effort to protect against a nationwide pertussis (whooping cough) strain, while many more were vaccinated through the program’s seasonal flu clinics. A free mattress recycling day collected more than 100 used mattresses that would have otherwise ended up in area landfills, and the two Recycle Works centers accepted more than 1.6 million pounds of material throughout the year. The Pet Adoption Center successfully placed nearly 2,000 pets in new homes, and the Animal Control staff returned almost 700 lost pets to their families.

In addition to direct efforts by department programs, staff collaborated with many agencies to further public health in the community. One such project was a series of Faith-Based Emergency Planning Workshops held to assist church leaders in St. Charles, Lincoln, and Warren counties prepare their congregations for potential disasters. In July, the Public Health division announced its partnership with the St. Charles County Sheriff’s Department to launch the Care Trak program that helps locate missing individuals affected with Alzheimer’s Disease, autism, and other medical conditions. Through a coalition of volunteers, veterinarians and Humane Services staff, the popular Sterile Feral campaign has helped reduce the cat population in our community by spaying and neutering.

2013 Highlights

- Investigated approximately 2,400 potentially threatening illness cases (communicable diseases and foodborne illness investigations)
- Recognized seven establishments with 24 Carrot Gold Food Safety Excellence Awards
- Issued 300 Tdap vaccinations in October alone and several hundred total throughout the summer and fall
- Administered more than 10,000 vaccinations overall to various populations
- Recognized by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as being one of Missouri's Healthiest Counties for the fourth consecutive year — placing first in the state in both the Health Outcomes and Health Factors categories
- Launched a new website – <http://health.sccmo.org> – with enhanced usability and interactive features
- Hosted a series of Faith-Based Emergency Planning Workshops, presenting preparedness and emergency response information to more than 180 participants representing 85 organizations in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area
- Introduced the Care Trak program in cooperation with the Sheriff's Department, aiding families of those with special needs
- Collected more than 100 used mattresses, which allows up to 95% of the material to be recycled instead of ending up in area landfills or dumps
- Collected more than 1.6 million pounds of recyclable material at Recycle Works Central and Recycle Works West
- Inspected more than 3,200 food service providers to ensure safe practices
- Responded to more than 5,400 animal welfare calls and returned nearly 700 lost pets to their families
- Adopted more than 2,000 pets to new homes
- Presented more than 350 educational classes/programs
- Served more than 1,600 clients every month with food supplements and nutrition education through the WIC program
- Generated more than \$2.6 million in general revenue