



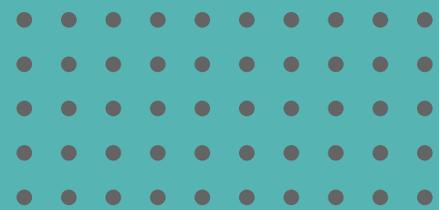
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# ANNUAL REPORT

Allegan County  
Health Department



HEALTH  
Department





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## A LETTER FROM OUR HEALTH OFFICER

To the Allegan County Board of Commissioners & Citizens of Allegan County,

On behalf of the Allegan County Health Department (ACHD), I am pleased to present the *2024 Allegan County Health Department Annual Report*. While the health department engages in a variety of projects, partnerships, and responses across the county, the following report highlights some of the significant accomplishments and success stories from the major programs housed at your local health department.

Greater than the number of services we provided or milestones we reached in 2024 is the dedication to our mission and the people whom we serve in Allegan County. Our purpose of “Together: striving for a healthier Allegan County” drives the work of ACHD employees each day and provides the foundation of the work that we do. I would also be remiss not to thank our amazing partners in and outside of Allegan County who support and contribute to ACHD’s purpose – your contributions to the health of Allegan County citizens are greatly appreciated.

Whether it is a sanitarian out in the field inspecting a well or septic system, a nurse providing health services to clients in clinics, a health educator sharing health education, or a community health worker connecting Allegan County citizens to local services, ACHD staff are working diligently to serve county residents’ individual needs and protect community health. ACHD staff are planning for the future as well. In a rapidly changing world, ACHD staff prepare for possible man-made or natural situations that could affect the health and well-being of community residents.

The accomplishments highlighted in the following pages are the direct results of the consistent and unwavering efforts of ACHD staff, community partners, and the continued support of the Allegan County Board of Commissioners. It is my hope that you will learn something you did not know about the Allegan County Health Department and glimpse some of the hard work that goes into creating the shield that protects community and individual health in Allegan County.

Together in Health,



Jacqueline Billette, MPH  
Health Officer

# GOVERNANCE



## Board of Commissioners



**Jim Storey**  
District 1



**Mark DeYoung**  
District 2



**Robert J. Sarro**



**Dean Kapenga**  
District 3



**Scott Beltman**  
District 4



**Gale Dugan**  
District 5

## County Administrator

In memory of Dean Kapenga, who was first elected as an Allegan County Commissioner in 2006 and served the citizens of Allegan County the 30 years prior at the Allegan County Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Kapenga demonstrated unwavering commitment to the people of Allegan County during his years of service.

### MISSION

The Allegan County Board of Commissioners shall plan, develop, and evaluate the necessary policies and resources to ensure our county continues to progress and prosper.

### VISION

The Allegan County Board of Commissioners is committed to providing our citizens superior and innovative services, being judicious and efficient in the expenditure of resources, and promoting a safe, clean, and healthy environment in which to live, work, and play.

# HEALTH ADMIN TEAM



**Jacque Billette, MPH**  
Health Officer



**Randy Rapp, RS**  
Environmental Health Manager



**Lisa Letts, BSN, RN**  
Personal Health Manager



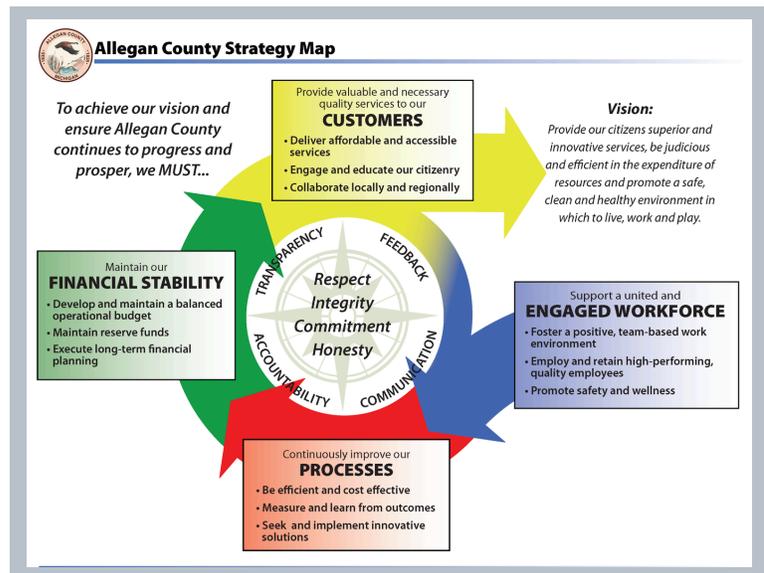
**Grant Ruppert, REHS**  
Planning and Preparedness Manager



**Rik Tooker, MD, MPH**  
Medical Director

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**Together: Striving for a Healthier Allegan County**  
Our strategic framework improves community health outcomes to better align with the Organization's vision and purpose of the Department.



# DIVISION OVERVIEW

## **ADMINISTRATION**

The Health Administration team provides leadership, many centralized functions, and guides the vision and implementation strategies for the entire department. They issue advisories and official letters to protect the public's health, and collect data to better support service delivery.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

The Environmental Health team provides services such as licensing and inspecting food establishments, campgrounds, public swimming pools, and septage disposal sites. The team issues permits and performs inspections for the installation of wells and septic systems, and provides beach sampling, vector-borne surveillance, groundwater contamination monitoring, and facilitates the Resource Recovery program.

## **PERSONAL HEALTH**

The Personal Health division offers clinical services such as immunizations and HIV/STI testing. Personal health includes programs for communicable diseases, lead, Hearing and Vision, Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS), and rabies monitoring. They also provide education and on-site inspections for medical providers participating in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.

## **PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS**

The Planning and Preparedness division provides health education and collaborates with community partners for projects such as the Community Health Needs Assessment. The team develops plans, helps coordinate the public health response to emergencies, conducts exercises, and communicates with community, regional, and state stakeholders to protect the public.

# YEAR IN REVIEW: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## ADMINISTRATION

Successfully completed state and program accreditation requirements

Onboarded a new Health Officer and Planning & Preparedness Manager

Began a new Community Health Needs Assessment cycle with many partner agencies

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH-FIELD

Several sanitarians became certified for Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control (SESC)

Completed grants for beach monitoring, vector-borne, & Harmful Algal Blooms

Implemented FetchEH Software for field services

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH-FOOD

Provided food safety training based on request & scope of food service provided

Team completed EATS training to help facilitate foodborne illness complaints

Worked on 31 plan reviews and 16 existing establishment site reviews

Trained two Public Health Technicians to audit specialized food venues

## RESOURCE RECOVERY

Household Hazardous Waste collection was available to all county residents

Two townships were onboarded & completed their first year in the recycling program

There was a 36% increase in participation in recycling events

# YEAR IN REVIEW: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## PERSONAL HEALTH

STI program expanded clinic hours to include walk-in availability

Conducted multi-agency response to Bird Flu, Mpox, chickenpox, and pertussis cases

Provided Medicaid outreach education to staff in order to capture more revenue

Added sensory equipment to waiting room and clinic room

Completed certification partnership for MI Vaccination Partners MVP

Staff member completed final training to be a vision screening technician

Two staff members attended Hearing & Vision 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event

Staff member completed Community Health Worker training and certification

Public Health Nurse position filled to support comm. disease & clinical care

Personal health and food team members certified in Basic Life Support (BLS)

Billing project ongoing to maximize efficiency & Medicaid outreach

Integrated monthly quality audits for all programs and tracking/reporting

Staff member conducted 2 training events for the community on TB testing & care

Staff member completed Infection Prevention & Long-term care training

Staff member completed training for HIV/STI testing

## PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

Implemented a new department-wide inventory management system

Sent staff to the 2024 NACCHO Preparedness Summit and NACCHO 360

Onboarded a new Health Educator and Public Health Technician

Community Information Exchange 60-day pilot program with Community Links

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: VECTOR-BORNE & BEACH MONITORING

21 Ticks collected at 2 sites (8 black-legged ticks & 13 deer ticks)

14 Mosquito sampling days at 5 sites

79 Total mosquitoes collected, 13 species identified



Mosquitoes and ticks are tested to look for species that can carry Lyme disease, West Nile virus, and more.

Surface water is tested and monitored for HABs and *E. coli*.



221 Total beach samples taken

8 Total beaches sampled for 14 weeks

48 Groundwater samples collected over 17 total days

3 Lakes sampled, 2 with confirmed Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

## Groundwater Study Work Group

In 2024, the Groundwater Study Work Group held two stakeholder meetings to discuss the progress of the study and help determine the future of groundwater for Allegan County. The work group collaborated with the Michigan Geological Survey (MGS), local units of government, and Kraai Well Drilling to install seven additional monitoring wells. The Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) also teamed up with the Outdoor Discovery Center (ODC) to create educational materials for schools and the community about groundwater protection in Allegan County.

## Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

In 2024, the Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) confirmed the presence of harmful algal blooms (HABs) at Swan Lake and Duck Lake. Harmful algal blooms are also known as blue-green algae or cyanobacteria. ACHD provided a press release on the dangers of HABs and best practices for avoiding water-related activities when HABs are present. ACHD also released newsletters for the residents of the affected lakes providing the latest test results and guidance. Additionally, advisories were posted on social media and at public access points (e.g. boat launch) to notify the public.



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: FIELD SERVICES

Sanitarians permit and inspect new, existing, and replacement septic systems and wells to maintain safe water and sewage disposal at residential homes and commercial sites.

**Customer Feedback**  
 "I wanted to personally thank you for your excellent communication skills, personality and willingness to help...I never have to wait for any Septic location requests which is super helpful..."

519 Residential well permits issued

335 Residential well final inspections completed

122 Abandoned wells plugged



2,685 Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control (SESC) inspections

356 Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control (SESC) permits issued

606 On-site sewage disposal permits issued

361 On-site sewage disposal final inspections completed

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: FOOD & OTHER SERVICES



100 Temporary food establishments inspected

727 Fixed food establishments inspected



54 Public swimming pools inspected

11 Body Art facilities inspected

21 Campgrounds inspected



Sanitarians conduct regular inspections of all food establishments, including restaurants, food trucks, and temporary locations such as fair stands, to protect the public from foodborne illness.

Inspections of body art facilities include tattoo shops, piercing locations, and more.

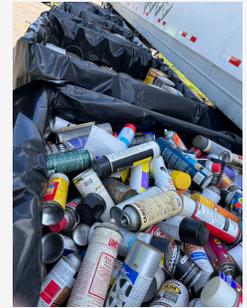
# RESOURCE RECOVERY

6 Total events held  
(3 tire, 3 Household Hazardous Waste)

3,175,100 Pounds of single-stream recycling

48,560 Pounds of E-waste recycled

59,955 Pounds of Household Hazardous Waste recycled



**\*Compared to 35,985 pounds in 2023**

113 Agriculture tires collected

4,447 Passenger tires collected



The Resource Recovery program helps Participating Governmental Units (PGUs) recycle and dispose of materials that can be harmful to the environment.

## Materials Management Planning Committee

The Resource Recovery program is currently in the process of updating the county's Solid Waste Plan written in 1997 to a Materials Management Program. This will include goals to increase recycling and use new methods for hard to manage materials such as organic waste, textiles, and styrofoam. The work program has been approved which provides a timeline to write the plan. This plan is important for environmental sustainability within our county and state.

### Proposed Milestone Schedule

Task	Completion Date/Deadline	2024				2025				2026			
		Q1 - JAN-MAR	Q2 - APR-JUN	Q3 - JUL-SEP	Q4 - OCT-DEC	Q1 - JAN-MAR	Q2 - APR-JUN	Q3 - JUL-SEP	Q4 - OCT-DEC	Q1 - JAN-MAR	Q2 - APR-JUN	Q3 - JUL-SEP	Q4 - OCT-DEC
Task 1 - Planning	7/2/2024	X	X										
Task 2 - Materials Management Planning Committee	8/22/2024		X	X									
Task 3 - Materials Management Plan Grant requirements	4/30/2025				X	X	X						
Task 4 - Materials Management Plan Request for Proposal	TBD					X	X	X					
Task 5 - Plan Management	TBD							X	X	X			
Task 6 - Data Collection	TBD								X	X	X		

# PERSONAL HEALTH

The personal health division offers clinical services such as STI testing and treatment, tuberculosis (TB) testing, case management for lead exposure, animal bite follow-ups, immunizations, Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS), hearing and vision screenings, and partners with My Community Dental Centers for oral health screenings.

852 Total Children's Special Health Care Services clients

306 Level 1 Plan of Care clients

438 Level 2 Plan of Care clients

1,229 Pre-K hearing screenings

1,456 Pre-K vision screenings

For more information on personal health services, visit [allegancounty.org/health/personal-health](http://allegancounty.org/health/personal-health)



74 Lead testing follow-up clients

1,860 Lead tests reported

4,323 School-aged hearing screenings

8,886 School-aged vision screenings



26,510 Wear One condoms distributed

183 Animal bite follow-ups

2 Rabies positive animals

352 Waivers provided



195 STI/HIV clinic visits

350 STI/HIV case follow-ups

54 Vaccine reallocations

962 Immunizations provided

711 Children's oral screenings

**Customer Feedback**  
 "I was a bit emotional in the exam room. The [ACHD Staff Member]...went above and beyond to ease my mind and make me feel comfortable."



595 Recommended for routine care

111 Recommended for dental treatment



# COMMUNITY LINKS

372 Total referrals

277 Successful referrals

44 New partnerships established

51 Healthcare service referrals

18 Primary care provider referrals

61 Medicaid or health insurance referrals

40 Behavioral health referrals

147 Housing resource referrals

1,117 Total services provided

58 Food assistance referrals

## Customer Feedback

“The Community Links program is amazing! [ACHD Staff Member] went above and beyond to make sure I was okay not just physically but mentally as well.”



Through the Community Links program, our Community Health Worker (CHW) connects residents to services they are struggling to access, such as food assistance, medical care, clothing, transportation, housing, and more.

Submit a referral at [allegancounty.org/health/community-links](http://allegancounty.org/health/community-links) or scan the QR code on the left



## Bird Flu Awareness

Bird Flu, also known as HPAI or Avian Influenza, is a type of Influenza A virus that mostly infects birds but can also spread to humans and other animals. Bird flu is a respiratory virus that spreads through the fecal droppings or nasal discharge of infected birds. Although the current risk to human health is low, it is a public health concern because the virus could mutate to spread more easily among humans. In 2024, Bird Flu was found in both domestic and wild birds across Michigan, as well as in cattle. Since March 2024, there have been 70 human cases reported in the U.S. and 989 confirmed cases in dairy herds in 17 states, including Michigan. Efforts to control the spread include increased surveillance of wild and domestic birds and taking precautions when handling animals that could transmit the virus. To help mitigate the spread, ACHD monitored infected herds in Allegan County, distributed PPE to impacted farms, and provided health education materials and information to Allegan County residents.

### What You Can Do:

If you see six or more dead wild birds, report it to the DNR at [Michigan.gov/EyesInTheField](http://Michigan.gov/EyesInTheField)

**OR**

Call the DNR Wildlife Disease Laboratory at 517-336-5030

If you suspect bird flu in domestic birds, like a backyard flock, contact MDARD at 800-292-3939

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

2,562  
Communicable  
disease  
investigations

138 TB skin tests

1 Confirmed latent  
TB infection



The annual ACHD communicable disease report uses data from 120 communicable diseases. Of these diseases, 19 (15.8%) showed an increase in case counts from 2023 to 2024. Of these 19 diseases, three of note include CPO, H. Influenzae, and pertussis. CPO, which had one case from 2020-2023, jumped to 5 cases in 2024. H. Influenzae had 4 cases from 2020-2023 and jumped to 3 cases in 2024. Pertussis had zero cases from 2020 to 2023 and jumped to 19 cases in 2024. View the full 2024 report at

<https://www.allegancounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1622>

4

Allegan County saw the same or decreased cases in foodborne illness, meningitis, rabies, STIs, vector-borne diseases, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis. Find more ACHD data at [allegancounty.org/health/data-and-reports](https://www.allegancounty.org/health/data-and-reports)

## What we responded to this year:

- Avian Influenza (Bird flu)
- Pertussis (Whooping cough) cases
- Harmful Algal Blooms and *E. Coli* in lakes and beaches
- Wayland water main break
- Fennville sewer main break
- Public education through food and product recalls, severe weather preparation, and outreach events

# PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

517,734 Mailchimp emails sent

5 Press releases

104 Total inquiries responded to

134 Health education materials created

7,259 Followers on Facebook

315 Posts on Facebook

81,873 Individuals reached on Facebook

48 Newsletters released

The planning and preparedness division sends out newsletters, press releases, and advisories; responds to inquiries and media requests; attends community outreach events; and implements emergency response plans when necessary.

## Outreach Recap

Attended 13 outreach events and provided health education materials and giveaways

### Boomer Bash



### Books, Balls, & Blocks



### Campit Outdoor Resort



### Senior Day at the fair



## 🔔 Allegan Alert Notifications

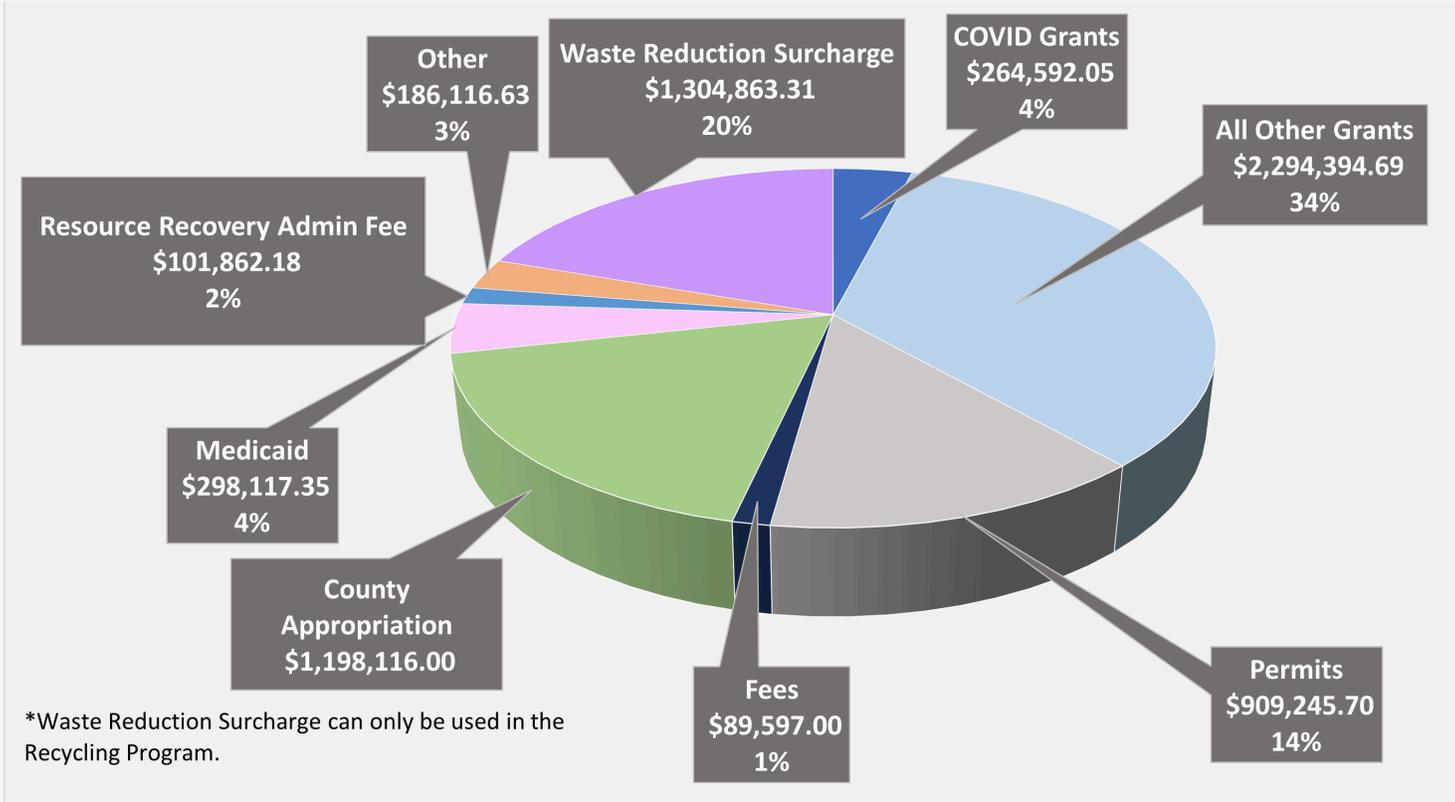
Allegan County Emergency Management and Allegan County Central Dispatch will use an emergency notification system called Allegan Alert. This provides real-time information to the public and contains potentially life-saving actions that can help keep you and your family safe. Stay informed of weather, traffic, and other emergencies in Allegan County. You can also provide information to 911 so they can better assist you in an emergency. This can include access and functional needs, health information, or the location of gates and doors. Your profile travels with you, so if you call 911, your information will be displayed to the call taker. Your personal information is secure and will only ever be seen by the dispatcher taking the call. Register by downloading the Smart911 app, scanning the QR code below, or visiting the Smart911 website: <https://smart911.com/>

Provided clinical services at 3 events

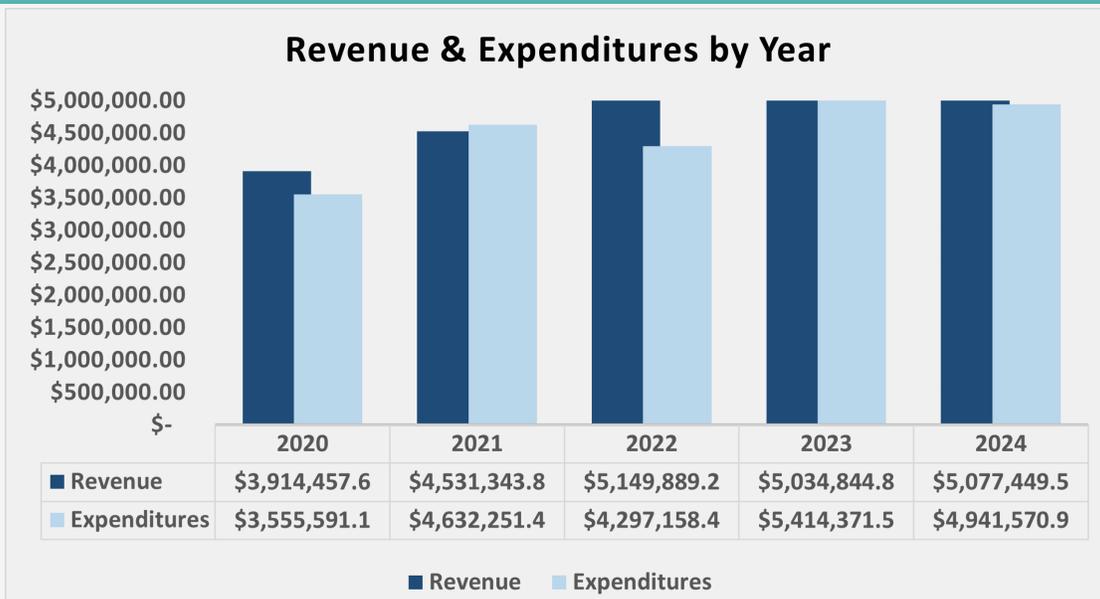


# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## 2024 Revenue



## Health Department Revenue & Expenditures





HEALTH  
Department

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