



Dedicated to YOUR Wellbeing

KENDALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

WINTER EDITION, 2023

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Reflections of a Board of Health Member

As the governing body for the Kendall County Health Department, the Kendall County Board of Health is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of the people in our community. Robyn Vickers joined the Board of Health in December of 2020 as the County Board Liaison. An advocate for public health in our community, Robyn served two years as liaison before her term ended in December. Robyn spent a few minutes to share her experience with us.

What did you learn from your time on the Board of Health?

"I thought I knew a lot about the Health Department, but I'm amazed at how much I learned in two years. KCHD provides so many services that most people aren't aware of. People hear 'health department' and they think of restaurant inspections - but there is so much more. The county is so fortunate to have such wonderful, dedicated staff at KCHD. "



Robyn Vickers

What challenges do you feel the Board of Health stepped up to?

"I attended my first meeting in January 2021. At that point COVID was here and vaccines were just around the corner. The BOH was busy adjusting and implementing the mass-vax plan. Seeing how the plans were adapted to fit the pandemic and the vaccines was just incredible. The fact that the BOH had already established good working relationships with other local governments really helped with the implementation of the plan. It's truly no wonder that Kendall's Vaccination Clinic became an example to the rest of the state."

What would you want the community to know about the Board of Health?

"The BOH is made up of individuals from very diverse backgrounds united in a common goal of ensuring that KCHD meets the health and well-being needs of every resident. Personal politics are kept out of the boardroom and decisions are based on what's best for the community."

What is your favorite memory from your time on the Board of Health?

"I have so many, but I think my favorite memories are working at the vaccination clinic. People were so relieved to be getting their first vaccines and to play a tiny part in that was just rewarding."

Kendall County Health Dept. thanks Robyn for her dedication to our community.

Radon - An Outreach Story

Radon gas is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and we work hard to educate the public about the dangers of this gas in their homes. In our outreach, we understand that this hazard affects all Kendall County citizens. Also, knowing that different populations of people across every demographic in the county get their information in different ways and formats, we have tailored our outreach accordingly.



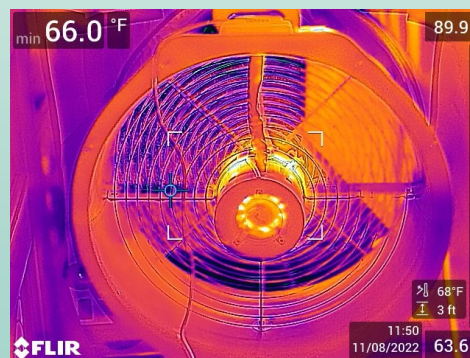
We have utilized traditional print news releases in local papers as well as social media posts. We have produced radio ads and movie trailers. Professionally produced posters were even put up in restaurant bathrooms. Staff are directly involved as well, appearing on local television and radio where they've been interviewed about the subject. Over the last 6 or so years, we've annually mailed radon-themed postcards and utilized village water bills in different parts of the county to educate on the dangers of indoor radon gas. These recent methods of outreach have enabled us to reach a tremendous amount of residents annually.

Overall, we can confidently state that we have reached tens of thousands of residents and provided the best information so they can make the right choice about radon gas inside their own homes.

Pictured: The front of our radon-themed postcard.

Weatherization Works

The Illinois Weatherization Assistance Program helps make low-income families' homes more energy efficient. And in time, saves them money on their utility bills. The process begins with an assessment of the home using various diagnostic tools. One of our more exciting and new tools is what's referred to as an Infra-Red Camera. While running a blower door diagnostic on the home, which puts the equivalent of 20 mile-per-hour winds on each side of the house, we are able to pinpoint air infiltration using thermal images. In these pictures, you can see the purple areas where the colder air is finding its way through various areas in the home. After using thermal imaging, we can call for insulation and air sealing measures to help the home withstand the weather and help save families money in the process. It is truly a wonder to see what technological advancements can do to aid us in helping transform people's lives.



Pictured: Infrared image of the back of a house, infrared image of a blower door, infrared image of a heat supply in ceiling.

Smoking - An Unhelpful Habit

When we are struggling with either mental/emotional health, including substance use, we tend to turn to something that we believe will aid us – including unhelpful habits. One of these may be smoking cigarettes. It has been shown that although nicotine, found in cigarettes, may provide a temporary decrease in symptoms such as poor concentration, low mood, and stress – it also increases anxiety and tension. Additionally, because nicotine creates dopamine – a neurotransmitter located in the brain that makes us feel happy – smoking also tells the brain that it doesn't need to make more dopamine. So, once you're done smoking that increase in dopamine goes away. Seeking help for mental health and substance use concerns is important to keep those positive changes in thinking and overall mood. Quitting smoking can be a tough choice to make, it doesn't have to be something done without support. We are a referral partner with the Illinois Tobacco Quitline, a free resource to aid in stopping smoking - 1-866-784-8937.

Adult Smoking

Focusing on People with
Mental Illness*

1 in 3 

More than 1 in 3 adults (36%) with a mental illness smoke cigarettes, compared with about 1 in 5 adults (21%) with no mental illness.

3 in 10 

About 3 of every 10 cigarettes (31%) smoked by adults are smoked by adults with mental illness.

1 in 5 

Nearly 1 in 5 adults (or 45.7 million adults) have some form of mental illness.

*Mental illness is defined as a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder, other than a developmental or substance abuse disorder.

Source: CDC Vital Signs, February 2013 | www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns

Winter Preparedness

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Winter storms including blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice and high winds.

Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Remember the needs of your pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights. If you are unable to afford your heating costs, weatherization or energy-related home repairs, contact the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for help.



In case you are stranded while traveling, keep an emergency supply kit in your car with these automobile extras: jumper cables, flares or reflective triangle, ice scraper, car cell phone charger, blankets, gloves and hats, map, bottled water, and cat litter or sand (can be used to create better tire traction).

Our Kendall County Emergency Preparedness Team continue to educate our community and community partners on preparing for and responding to natural and man-made emergencies. Be Safe.... Be Prepared!



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Mission

The mission of the Kendall County Health Department is to promote physical health, mental health, environmental health, protect the community’s health, prevent disease, and promote family economic self-sufficiency through both person-based services and population-based programs.

Vision

Partnering to build a thriving Kendall County where all people have equal opportunity for overall health and well-being.

Values

Integrity • Accountability • Commitment to Excellence • Inclusion • Compassion



Looking for something? Click [here](#) to see the Resource Directory.

KCHD’s New Mobile Clinic Van

Kendall County Health Department has a new mobile clinic van. This vehicle has been designed to offer services off-site as well and conduct outreach. Staff can now meet the community where there are to provide services such as vaccinations, program registrations, blood pressure checks, and many others. The mobile clinic van was purchased in conjunction with the Kendall County Board through American Rescue Plan Act funding.

