

WASHBURN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



PROVIDING SERVICES SINCE 1936

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

CONTACT US



715-635-4400



715-257-4585



health@co.washburn.wi.us

Hours

Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-12:00PM
1:00 PM-4:30 PM

304 2nd St PO Box 250 Shell Lake WI 54871

CONNECT WITH US



FIND US ON FACEBOOK @ WASHBURN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



FIND US ON INSTAGRAM @ WASHBCHD

ABOUT US

Vision

Healthy People Creating Health Communities.

Mission

To promote, protect and improve the lifelong health of individuals and communities in Washburn County through the effective use of data and evidence, community-driven prevention strategies, leadership, advocacy, partnerships, and the promotion of health equity.

WHO WE ARE



Marie Schrankel
Director



Cheri Nickell
Health Officer



Elise Anderson
Public Health Specialist



Dawn Brost
Public Health Nurse



Julie Erickson
WIC Director



Mary Slisz-Chucka
Public Health Nurse



Joan Romanowski
Account Clerk II

2022 Staffing Changes

The Health Department was finally able to fill the Public Health Nurse position vacated by Tim Nickell in November 2021. Dawn Brost started in February. Dawn is an experienced Public Health Nurse, and was able to hit the ground running. That, combined with falling COVID cases, allowed us to discontinue the LTE COVID nurse position filled by Bethany Deneen. Bethany did a phenomenal job, and we very much appreciated her work.

Mary Slisz-Chucka moved from an LTE COVID nurse position to the new permanent part-time Public Health Nurse position in January.

Elise Anderson joined our staff as the new Public Health Specialist in December, filling the vacated spot by Cassidy Watson in March.

VOLUNTARY ADVISORS

Kristen Dall-Winther, MD, Public Health Medical Advisor

Allen Pederson, DVM, Veterinary Advisor



HEALTH PRIORITIES

Washburn County Health Priorities

2022 Community Health Needs Assessment–Top Identified Health Issues

- Substance Abuse: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
- Mental Health
- Access to Health Care

2022 Community Health Improvement Plan–Health Priorities

- Substance Abuse: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
- Mental Health
- Access to Health Care



ACTIVE PROGRAMMING

2022 Grants and Mandated Programs

- Reproductive Health Programming
- MCH Early Childhood Systems
- Childhood Lead Surveillance Program
- Preparedness Planning
- WIC Nutrition Program
- ForwardHealth Community Access Point (CAP)
- Childhood Immunization Program
- Communicable Disease Surveillance/Program
- Rabies Control/Ag 13
- Human Health Hazard Investigations
- Narcan Distribution
- COVID Enhancing Detection

COALITION MEMBERSHIPS

The Washburn County Health Department is a member of the following coalitions:

- Child Death Review Team (CDR)
- Children’s Coordinated Services Team (CCST)
- Continuum of Care (COC)
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- Multidisciplinary Team (Includes Drug Endangered Children)
- Northwest WI Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition (NWWIHERC)
- Washburn County Community Alliance for Prevention
- Mental Health Task Force of Washburn County
- WI Association of Local Health Departments & Boards (WALHDAB)
- Western WI Public Health Readiness Consortium (WWPHRC)
- WI Family Planning Reproductive Health Association (WFPRHA)

SERVICES

CHA & CHIP

Local health departments are required under Wisconsin Statute 251 to regularly undergo the “Community Health Improvement Process,” or the process of conducting a Community Health Assessment followed by developing and implementing a Community Health Improvement Plan. A Community Health Improvement Plan is a long-term, systematic effort to address problems based on the results of community health assessment activities and the community health improvement process.

The Community Health Assessment (CHA) was completed in partnership with Spooner Health on January 13, 2022, and is posted on the Washburn County Health Department website. The three priority areas identified include:

- Mental Health
- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
- Access to Care

Example Data from the CHA is shown below:

What are the three (3) most important social/environmental issues that affect the health of our community? (select up to 3)		
Lack of access to mental healthcare	31%	97
Lack of affordable/safe housing	28%	89
Lack of job opportunities	24%	77
What are the three (3) most important health problems affecting those living in our community? (select up to 3)		
Drug abuse/overdose	49%	156
Mental health(depression, anxiety)	49%	155
Alcohol abuse	48%	154



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

As part of efforts to enforce laws and regulations to protect health and safety, the Health Department investigates environmental hazards as they are reported. Environmental complaints are only investigated if they are human health hazards.

Under Wisconsin Statute 254, the Health Department is responsible for investigation and abatement of immediate Human Health Hazards to the public.

Washburn County Health Department conducted **1** immediate Human Health Hazard investigation in 2022.

This investigation involved an uncapped well and was referred to the DNR. To learn more about the importance of well maintenance and safety visit: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Wells>

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

Wisconsin Statute 252 requires that medical providers report communicable diseases to Local Health Departments for investigation and surveillance. Preventing the spread of disease remains a public health priority. In 2022 the Washburn County Health Department conducted 314 Non-COVID communicable disease investigations, confirming **213** cases.

Tick-borne diseases, including including Lyme, Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasma, and Babesiosis, continued to account for almost one-third (**1/3**) of the reported diseases.



NARCAN

In 2022, the Washburn County Health Department was a participant in the NARCAN® Direct Program. This program provides free NARCAN® for community distribution. Through this program, Washburn County Health Department was able to provide NARCAN® and education to individuals and organizations within the county. Addressing opioid overdose in Washburn County is an important public health practice as more people die of opioid overdoses in Wisconsin each year than car crashes, according to the WI DHS: Dose of Reality.

The Health Department provided education to **4** community organizations, including: Spooner School, Shell Lake School, Lakeland Family Resource Center, and the Tavern League. **30** individuals were trained to use Narcan.

Engaging with opioid users was not successful, although the pharmacies distributed educational material for us to customers getting opioid prescriptions. Only **1** community member received training in 2022.

Source: <https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/index.htm>

RABIES CONTROL

State Statute 254 requires that the Health Department investigate all animal bites/exposures involving humans. Rabies is almost always fatal, unless post-exposure prophylaxis (treatment) is given.

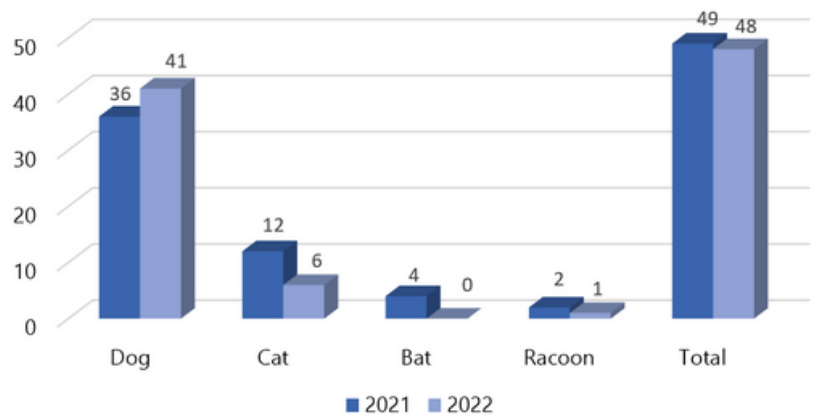
Public Health Nurses provide education regarding the need for human medical evaluation. They also order and enforce animal quarantine or rabies testing. All domestic animals, including dogs, cats, and ferrets, must be quarantined for 10 days following a bite or other exposure to a human.

If an animal has a current rabies vaccine, they may be allowed to be quarantined at home. Unvaccinated animals must be quarantined at the Washburn County Area Humane Society at the owner's expense, which is approximately \$300.

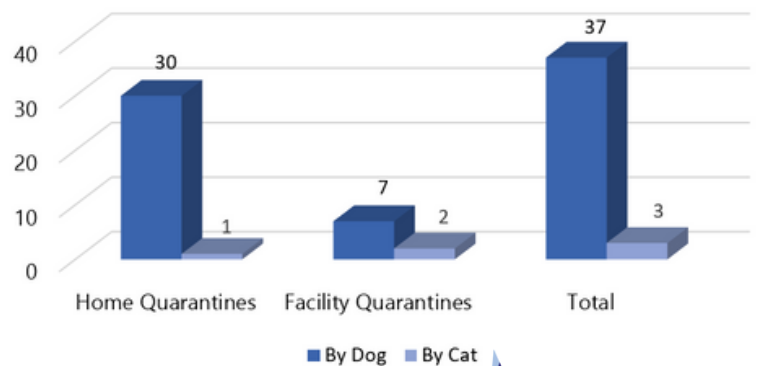
Wild animals involved in a bite to either humans or pets are humanely euthanized and tested for rabies.

In 2022, 48 animal bites/exposures were reported and investigated. 40 animals were quarantined; 31 home quarantines and 9 facility quarantines. **0 animals tested POSITIVE for rabies.**

Animal Bites in Washburn County



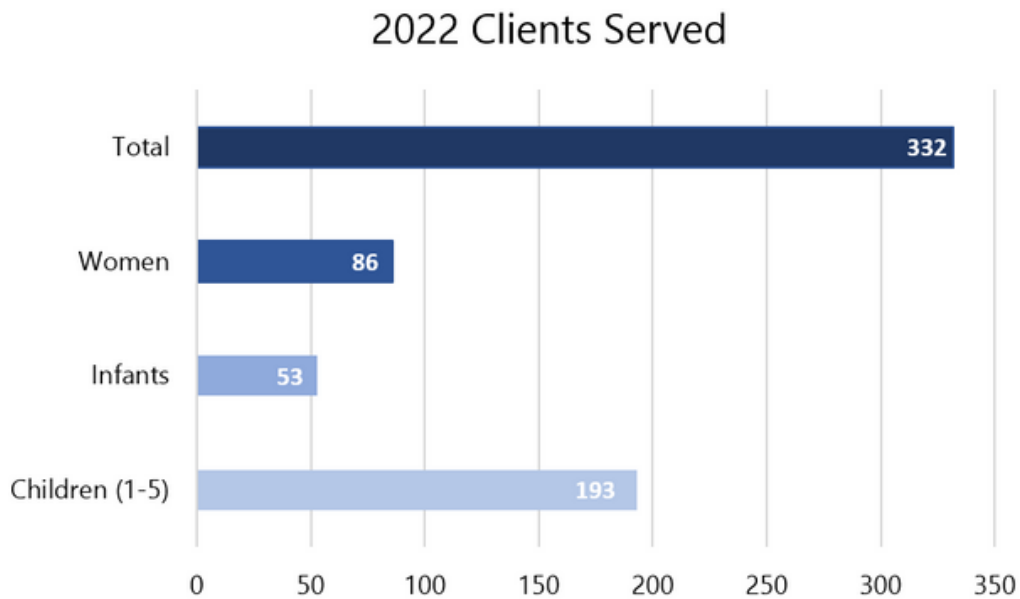
2022 Animal Quarantines in Washburn County



WIC (WOMEN, INFANTS, CHILDREN)

The WIC Program is a Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. WIC helps income eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 years who have a health risk due to inadequate nutrition.

The program improves pregnancy outcomes, reduces infant mortality and provides infants and children with a healthy start in life by improving poor or inadequate diets. In 2022, 332 participants received nutrition education and food benefits. WIC food benefits support our local businesses. In 2022, redeemed food benefits generated \$110,201.68 in revenue at grocery stores throughout Washburn County.



Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

Through the WIC FMNP, participants are provided food benefits to be redeemed at local farmers' markets. The WIC FMNP benefits both WIC participants and local farmers. In 2022, WIC FMNP redeemed benefits that totaled \$2,886. In the summer of 2022, every eligible family member was offered \$30 to spend at local farmers' markets. In the recent past, the allotment had been \$25-35 per family.

Since March 23, 2022, USDA has continued to extend waivers to allow 1) non-physical presence for certifications, 2) local agency monitoring to be done without file reviews required, 3) local agency monitoring to be done without on-site visit, and 4) no on-site visits for vendor authorizations.

CHILDHOOD LEAD MONITORING

The Washburn County Health Department provides Childhood Lead Screening Surveillance and Lead Abatement under Wisconsin State Statute 254. There is no safe level of lead in the human body. Even very low levels of lead can cause permanent brain damage and negatively affect health throughout life. The Centers for Disease Control defines lead poisoning as a blood lead level of 5 mcg or greater. There was **1** child with elevated blood lead levels in Washburn County in 2022.



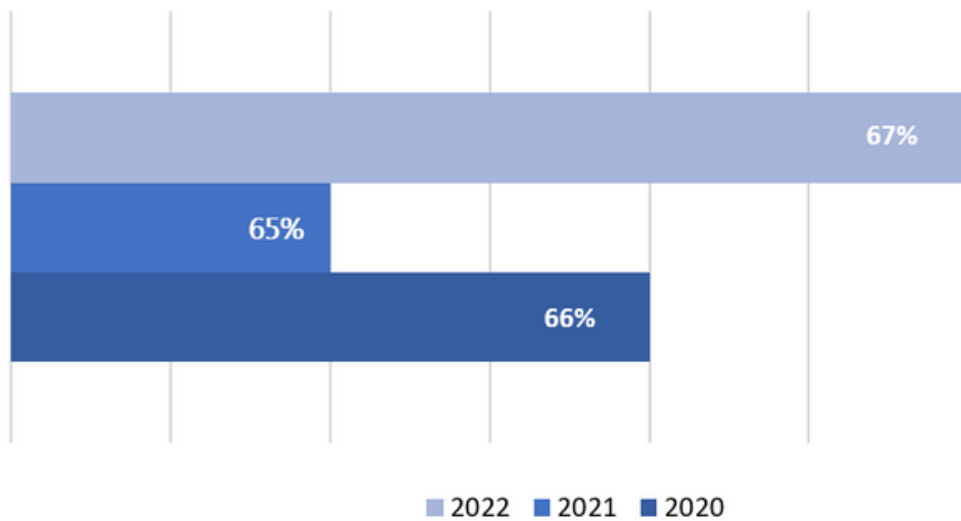
IMMUNIZATIONS

Under Wisconsin Statute Chapter 252 and in conjunction with the Vaccine for Children Program and the Wisconsin Immunization Program, The Health Department offers recommended childhood vaccines to children 0-18 years who meet program guidelines (no health insurance, have health insurance that does not cover all vaccines, have or are eligible for Medicaid, are American Indian or Alaskan Native or Pacific Islanders). Additionally, a limited selection of vaccines are available to adults with no vaccine insurance coverage.

As part of our chronic and communicable disease surveillance duties, we monitor the immunization records and send vaccine reminder letters quarterly to the parents of all Washburn County children under the age of three. In 2022 **949** total letters were sent to parents.

In 2022, 63% of all Washburn County 2 years old's were up-to-date, with 67% considered late up-to-date (completed by age 3), a 2% increase from 2021, and a 1% increase from 2020. Nationally, on-time vaccination rates have declined as parents have delayed seeking care due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Washburn County's up-to-date rate is well below the 75%-95% required rate for herd immunity (depending on disease and vaccine), which is of concern as it means Washburn County is at risk for a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak, such as measles.

Late Up-to-Date Vaccination Rates in Washburn County



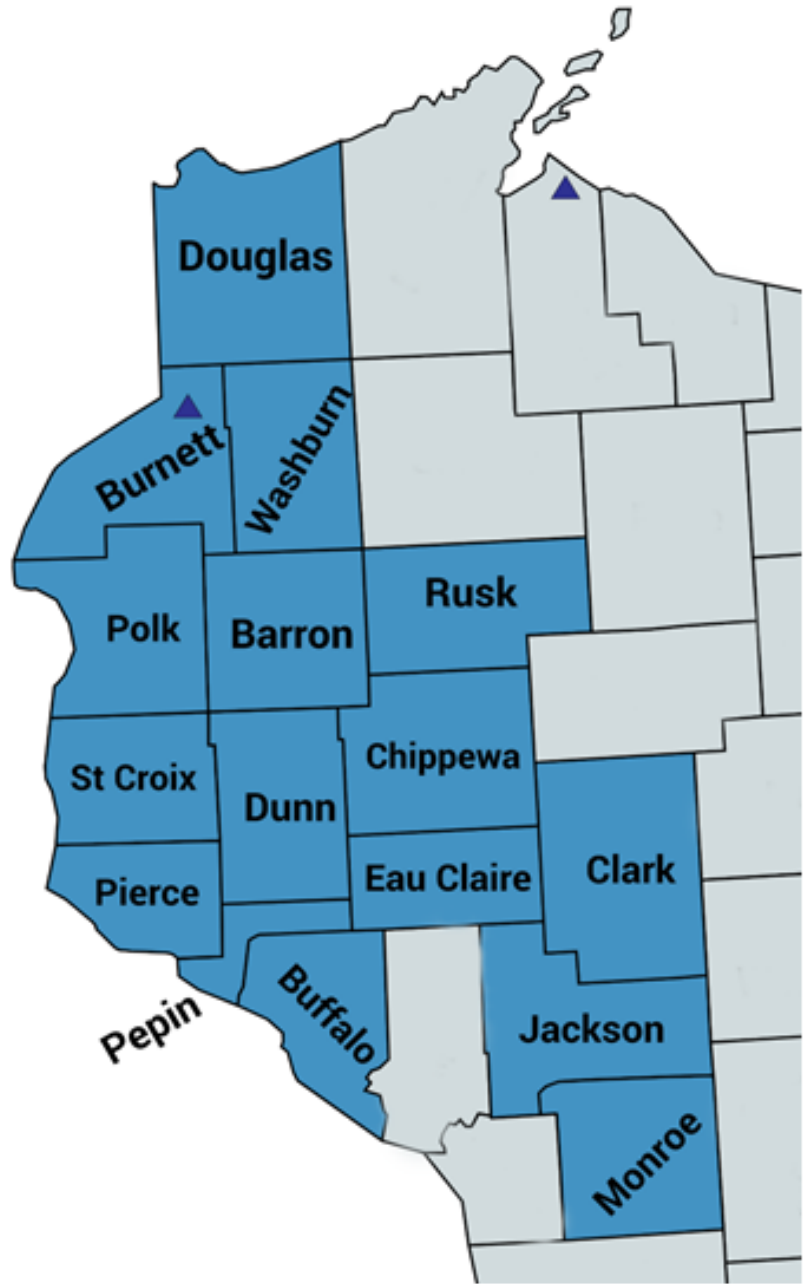
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Washburn County Health Department engages in a continuous planning process with community partners in preparation to respond to public health emergencies, from large scale disease outbreaks to acts of bioterrorism to ice storms.

The Health Department is a member of the Western Wisconsin Public Health Readiness Consortia (WWPHRC), a multi-county coalition that supports public health emergency preparedness. The WWPHRC has managed to remain a model and resource for member agencies, Wisconsin, and the country in the area of exceptional public health preparedness planning, training, exercising, and response since 2003.

Currently, the WWPHRC has sixteen local public health agencies and two tribal public health agencies as members, working hand in hand with the Northwest Wisconsin Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition and the multiple sectors it represents. This seamless approach provides a foundation for alignment of planning, efficiency of resources, removal of redundancy, and exceptional information sharing before, during, and after exercises and real events.

The WWPHRC was instrumental in allowing the western region to have a uniform response to COVID. The Consortia provided a forum for addressing the unique needs of the Northwestern Counties, as well as providing communication tools for use with our partners and the public.



Triangles denote Tribal Health members:
St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic,
Bad River Health & Wellness Center

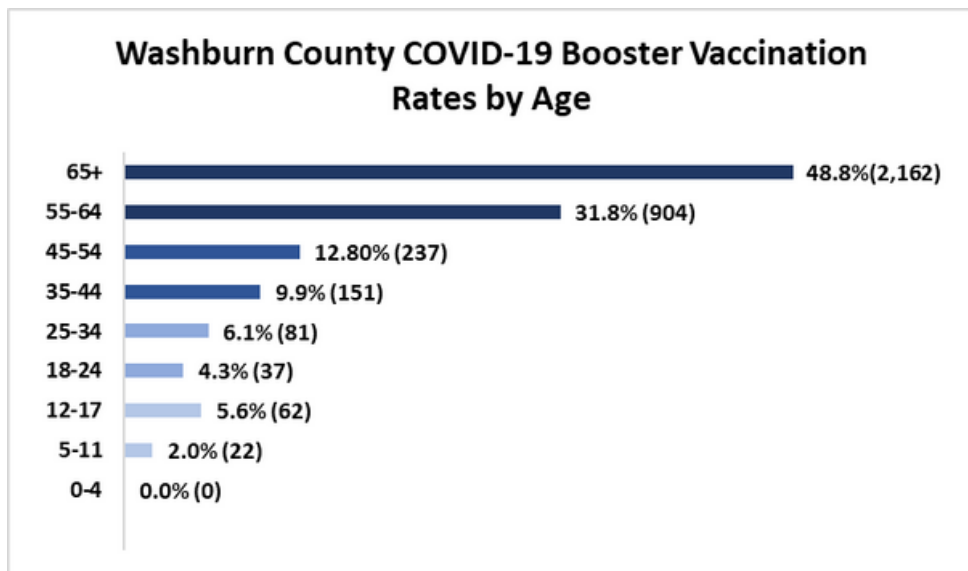
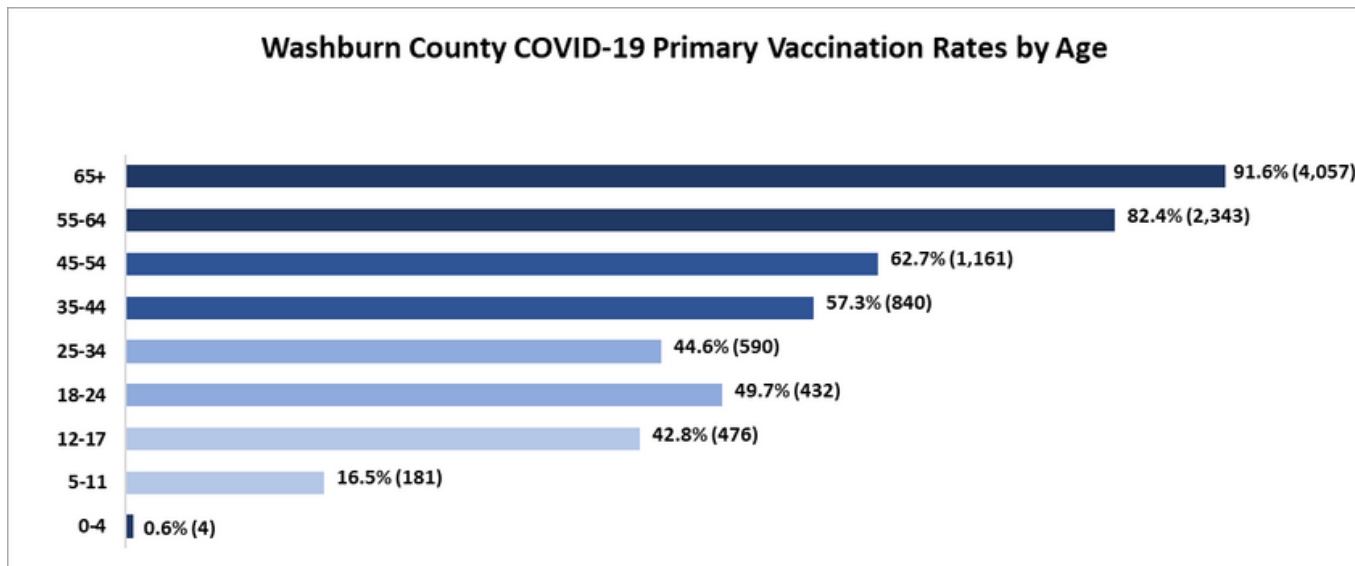
COVID-19 RESPONSE

In 2022, COVID-19 remained a large part of work within the Health Department. In 2022, there were **1,827** cases of COVID-19, **46** hospitalizations, and **7** deaths.

The Health Department provided COVID-19 PCR tests until 9/22/2022 when WI DHS ended the testing program. In June of 2022, WI DHS began providing home antigen test kits to the Health Department to distribute to the public. The Health Department gave out over 1,800 antigen test kits in 2022.

The Health Department hosted A.M.I for vaccine clinics in 2022. There was an increased interest from the community in receiving booster vaccines in May and September. Using A.M.I allowed the Health Department to offer every vaccine type to all ages.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WI DHS), **64.4%** (10,114) of Washburn County residents have completed the primary series for COVID-19 vaccinations. In addition from WI DHS, **23.3%** (3,656) of Washburn County residents have received the updated COVID-19 booster.



Resource: <https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-data.htm>

