



DATE: June 7, 2024

TO: State Board of Health Members

FROM: Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, District Health Officer

SUBJECT: District Health Officer Report

Extreme Heat

On May 16, the Southern Nevada Health District, Clark County and community partners launched a heat safety awareness initiative to provide resources, information and data to the public. Every year people die or are hospitalized because of heat-related illnesses. Hot weather can affect anyone, but people who are older, pregnant, or have chronic health conditions are more at risk. Knowing the signs and how to prepare for higher temperatures can help prevent heat-related illnesses and deaths this season.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recently launched a new Heat and Health initiative with the Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) to protect the public from heat exposure. The new initiative has three resources: a HeatRisk Forecast Tool; HeatRisk Dashboard; and CDC's new clinical guidance. The three resources combined are meant to work together so people can take proactive steps to protect themselves, stay cool and hydrated, and know the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

Go to <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/HeatRisk/> and enter your ZIP code to CDC HealthRisk information for the week. The updated Health District website was launched on May 16, and is available at www.SNHD.info/BeattheHeatSNV.

West Nile Virus

The Health District has announced the detection of the first West Nile Virus (WNV) mosquitoes in Clark County. With these early findings, the Health District is urging Clark County residents to join the Fight the Bite campaign to reduce the impact of mosquitoes.

The Health District's Mosquito Disease Surveillance Program trapped and identified the West Nile virus-positive mosquitoes in the 89031 and 89032 ZIP codes. In addition to identifying mosquitoes that commonly carry West Nile Virus, *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes known carriers of Zika, dengue, and chikungunya were detected with the virus. *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes have significantly increased in number since they were reported in Clark County in 2017.

Since starting mosquito surveillance on April 1, Health District staff have set more than 875 traps to survey mosquito quantity, species and infected mosquitoes. Traps are placed at parks, wash channels, wetland areas,

residential communities and other potential breeding sites. Captured mosquitoes are taken to a laboratory at the Health District's Main Public Health Center, where they are sorted and cataloged by species and location. The samples are then sent to the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory to test specimens for harmful arboviruses. To date, more than 9,000 mosquitoes have been tested this year.

West Nile Virus, a mosquito-borne disease, reached unprecedented activity in Clark County in 2019, with 43 human cases. In contrast, there was minimal activity in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Two human cases of West Nile Virus were reported in 2023.

Clark County has seen a substantial increase in the number of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. As the 2024 mosquito surveillance season begins, the Southern Nevada Health District announces the detection of the first West Nile Virus (WNV) mosquitoes in Clark County. With these early findings, the Health District urges Clark County residents to join the Fight the Bite campaign to reduce the impact of mosquitoes.

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2024 National Public Health Week

National Public Health Week is celebrated during the first full week of April. The Southern Nevada Health District observes the occurrence each year by highlighting public health accomplishments that have served to help protect the community's health and well-being as well as recognizing the contributions of its employees.

As part of this year's celebration, the Health District hosted a State of Public Health and Legislative Advocacy event. The event featured policymakers, community partners and staff members. Health District staff members presented a comprehensive overview about Congenital Syphilis and the challenges the community is facing, resources and services that are provided, and program and policy recommendations. The second part of the event included Health District staff members, partners and policy makers participating in a presentation and panel discussion about the Overdose Burden in Clark County. The panelists discussed their insights and perspectives on the increase in the use of and contribution of fentanyl overdose and deaths; the COVID-19 pandemic's role in exacerbating the trends; the availability of resources in the community; harm reduction strategies and more.

The State of Public Health is available to view on the Health District website [here](#), and the presentation is available [here](#).

Public Health Heroes

During Public Health Week, the Health District presents Public Health Hero Awards to individuals or organizations whose efforts positively impact the health and well-being of the community. This year's recipients are:

Dr. Andria Peterson with the EMPOWERED Program at Roseman University. Dr. Peterson is recognized for outstanding contributions to improving the health and well-being of pregnant and postpartum individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) through her leadership as the Executive Director of the EMPOWERED Program. Dr. Peterson has fostered collaborations with state, local and grassroots stakeholders to create a network of support, as well as facilitated access to comprehensive services for pregnant and postpartum individuals and their babies. Her involvement in policy development has helped implement training programs for health care providers in identifying and treating individuals with SUD. Dr. Peterson's role as an Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Roseman University also ensures the training of future health care professionals in the management of SUD and related complications.

Jennifer Budzinski, Employee Occupational Health Strategy Director/Sheri McPartlin, Health Services Director/Chief Nurse at Clark County School District, Health Services. In 2023, Health District staff conducted five investigations related to active tuberculosis disease exposures in the Clark County School District. After the first three investigations, the Health District developed intervention tools in the form of a voluntary risk questionnaire and guidance for testing and treatment. CCSD Health Services collaborated to disseminate the TB risk questionnaire to new hires for the 2023-2024 school year. Soon after, another exposure was discovered, and CCSD stepped up and assisted with the coordination and implementation of a large-scale testing event. At this event, approximately 250 individuals were tested. The fifth exposure was discovered during the planning phase of that event and approximately 550 individuals were identified as needing testing. CCSD staff again stepped up to help Health District staff navigate, plan and execute large-scale testing. CCSD Health Services provided staff, facilities and support. The collaboration between CCSD and the Health District has developed into a close working relationship.

Kimberly Krumland, Director, Stephen Johnston, Safety Coordinator, and the Safety Department Staff at Clark County School District, Risk Management Department. Director Kimberly Krumland and Safety Coordinator Stephen Johnston of the CCSD Risk Management are responsible for ensuring that the 300,000+ students enrolled in the CCSD attend schools that meet or exceed the Health and Safety requirements of the Nevada Administrative Code.

Director Kimberly Krumland and Safety Coordinator Stephen Johnston of the CCSD Risk Management and Safety Department have the responsibility of ensuring that the 300,000-plus students enrolled in CCSD attend schools that meet or exceed the health and safety requirements of the Nevada Administrative Code. As leaders, they supervise a department consisting of 15 staff members who work tirelessly to eliminate or mitigate hazards on school campuses throughout the Valley. In addition, Krumland and Johnston assist SNHD in responding to communicable disease outbreaks by disseminating the knowledge, tools and resources to respond to outbreaks and keep the school community safe.

Public Health Heroes are nominated by Health District staff members for their efforts in supporting one or more of the 10 Essential Public Health Services:

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and communities needs and assets.
2. Investigate and diagnose and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.
3. Communicated effectively to inform and educate people and health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.
4. Strengthen, support and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.
5. Create, champion and implement policies, plans and laws that impact health.
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.
8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research and continuous quality improvement.
10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.

National Minority Health Month

April was National Minority Health Month, and this year's theme was "Be the Source for Better Health," with a focus on improving the health of racial and ethnic minority communities and reducing health disparities. In observance of the month, the Health District called attention to a pair of programs that support minority health while striving to decrease health inequities.

Nurse-Family Partnership

The Health District's Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), a network partner of the national NFP, is an evidence-based community health program that helps pregnant, first-time mothers improve their lives and create better futures for themselves and their children.

Nationally, NFP has supported thousands of families facing socioeconomic barriers across 41 states, including Nevada and many tribal communities. The program is free and voluntary. Participants get their own personal nurse who provides education, resources, and significant support during regularly scheduled home visits from

pregnancy until the child is 2 years old. In Clark County, the program has supported 1,543 families during 13,843 in-person visits since its inception in 2008.

Every day, hundreds of children are born in the United States to mothers facing economic inequity. In some cases, mothers also face additional challenges like relationships, homelessness, substance use and intimate partner violence.

The first 1,000 days of a child's development, combined with the partnership that is built between the new mother and the NFP nurse, create positive changes that can have a lasting impact on brain development, school readiness, preventing child abuse and neglect, uplifting families and breaking the cycle of poverty.

In 2023, the Health District's Nurse-Family Partnership exceeded national NFP rates in several health outcomes:

- 8% of babies had low birth weight, compared to the national NFP rate of 13.2%.
- 100% of babies were current with their immunizations at 6 months, compared to the national NFP rate of 92.2%.
- 100% of babies were current with their immunizations at two years, compared to the national NFP rate of 90.2%.

Healthy Start

The Health District also highlighted its Healthy Start during National Minority Health Month is Healthy Start, a free and voluntary home-visiting program that aims to improve health outcomes for women during and after pregnancy, and for their children. Enrollment for families began in February 2024, with a focus on African American women who are pregnant or of childbearing age. However, the program is open to all races and ethnicities. Participants receive education, resources and support from community health workers and community health nurses, with a goal of reducing racial/ethnic differences in the rates of infant death and adverse perinatal outcomes.

Participants are encouraged to stay in Healthy Start until their child is 18 months old. The families and partners of women who enroll in the program are also welcome to participate in-home visits.

To learn more about the Nurse-Family Partnership, go to [Southern Nevada Health District Nurse-Family Partnership \(youtube.com\)](#) or [Nurse-Family Partnership – Southern Nevada Health District](#). For more information about Healthy Start, call (702) 759-1677.

Measles

The Health District reported a confirmed case of measles in a visitor to Clark County in April. The person traveled from out of state and visited multiple locations in Las Vegas and Henderson. The Health District issued a public notification because measles is highly contagious. The measles virus can live for up to two hours in the air after a person who is infected leaves the area.

To date, no locally transmitted cases of measles have been reported in Clark County. However, reports of measles continue nationally and internationally, the Health District is advising people to review their immunization status with their health care providers. The MMR vaccine is highly effective in preventing illness. Additional Health District recommendations for health care providers are available at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/news-info/health-care-professionals/public-health-advisories/.

Soda Free Summer Challenge

The Health District's Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion is holding its annual Soda Free Summer Challenge from Friday, May 3, through Saturday, Aug. 31. The campaign urges everyone to choose healthier beverages in favor of soda and other sugary drinks.

More information about how to participate in the Soda Free Summer Challenge is available at www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org or www.VivaSaludable.org. Information about local, upcoming events associated with this campaign, can be found at the Get Healthy Clark County Community Calendar or Calendario de la comunidad.

Most Americans are consuming too many added sugars in their diet. Sugar-sweetened beverages including sodas, energy drinks, and fruit drinks are a main source of added sugars. A regular, 12-ounce can of soda can contain a full 10 teaspoons of sugar. Because of the added sugar, soft drinks and other sugar-sweetened beverages can contribute to health issues including obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and tooth decay.

Sugary drinks include sodas, sports drinks and fruit drinks, as well as tea and coffee sweetened with added sugar. Nationally, 63% of youth and 49% of adults reported having sugary drinks once daily or more. On average, children consume more than 30 gallons of sugary drinks per year, enough to fill an entire bathtub. The average American consumes approximately 17 teaspoons of added sugar each day. Adolescents (12-19 years old) are the highest consumers of sugar-sweetened beverages. In Clark County, 11.4% of adolescents drank one can, bottle or glass of soda at least once per day during 2019. That rate increased to 13.3% in 2021. However, the 2021 rate was down significantly from the 23.3% recorded in 2007.

According to the American Heart Association, men should consume no more than 9 teaspoons of added sugar per day. For women, the recommended daily maximum is 6 teaspoons. Adults and children are encouraged to limit sugary drinks and opt for healthier alternatives including water, unsweetened tea and plain milk. Consumers are advised to read nutrition labels to determine how much added sugar is included in their drinks. For information about how to identify added sugars, visit the sugary beverages web page on the Get Healthy or the Viva Saludable Spanish language website.