

DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH

“A Report on the Health of the District in 2000”

March 2001

Mahoning County

FLU VACCINE SHORTAGE BRINGS THOUSANDS OF SENIORS TO CLINICS

Nearly 6,000 Seniors and Others Come to Community Clinics

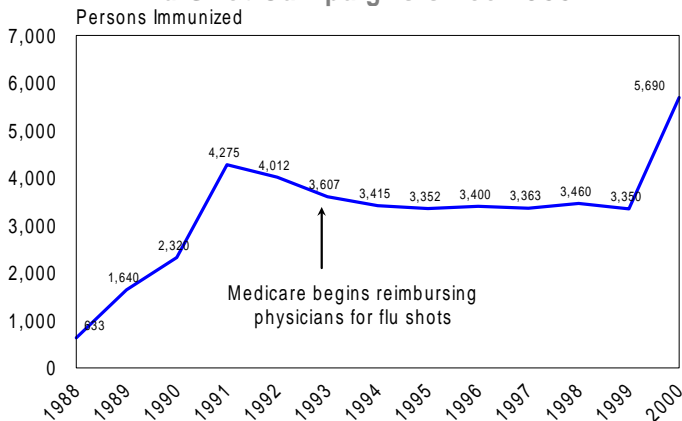
Flu season brought long lines to shot clinics in Mahoning County and throughout the U.S. in 2000. A delay in vaccine production earlier in the year pushed back vaccine delivery dates and raised public concerns about getting the vaccine too late to prevent serious illness for many seniors and chronic disease sufferers.

“Typically, we start our flu clinics in October, but we had only received half of our vaccine by November,” said Linda Ewing, deputy director of nursing for clinical services at the District Board of



Health. The Board of Health didn't receive the other half of its vaccine order until the end of the year, she said. All of the extra vaccine Ewing ordered was put to use. Since many doctors never received their vaccine orders or were very late in receiving their shipments, people looked elsewhere to receive their flu shot. Demand for flu shots at Board of Health flu clinics increased nearly 70 percent over past years as physicians and other agencies referred their patients to the Board of Health. The Board of Health immunized nearly 6,000 seniors and others during the 2000-2001 flu season.

District Board of Health Mahoning County Flu Shot Campaigns since 1988



The District Board of Health advises high-risk persons who are most vulnerable to complications from the flu to get a flu shot. High-risk individuals include the elderly and those with chronic health conditions. Influenza is very contagious, causes serious complications and can be deadly! During a typical flu season 110,000 people in the U.S. will get sick enough from the flu to be hospitalized and nearly 20,000 people will die.

For more information about who should get a flu or pneumonia shot, visit our website at www.mahoning-health.org/advisories.

DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH IS WINNER OF NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Washington — Mahoning County District Board of Health was named the winner of the National Association of County and City Health Officials' (NACCHO's) Award for Excellence in Information Technology at the Association's annual conference in Los Angeles, July 19-22, 2000. The Board of Health's award-winning program was "A Virtual Permit Center for Homebuilders and Child Care Providers."

"The Mahoning County District Board of Health is recognized for its innovative, outstanding information technology approach to address the public health needs of its community," said Thomas L. Milne, executive director of NACCHO. "While there are many health departments throughout the nation doing laudable work in their communities, this sustainable, collaborative program reaches the core of public health," Milne said. Local public health agencies using simple, yet innovative technology solutions were encouraged to apply.

The Board of Health's virtual permit center demonstrates how information technology can be used to disseminate the product of quality improvement efforts of local public health agencies and their partner organizations. It employs an easy-to-use format that explains a complex, interdependent regulatory process involving many individuals and organizations.

According to health commissioner Matthew Stefanak, "The goal of the project is to make it possible for our customers to obtain all the necessary approvals to build a home or offer child day care without ever leaving their homes or offices."

Visit the Virtual Permit Center at www.mahoning-health.org and click on "Building a Home or Business?"

LAB SET TO DO BACTERIA TESTING

State Certification Will Permit Board of Health to Test for Bacterial Pollutants in Well Water

Contamination of well water from faulty septic systems and surface water run-off is a frequent problem in Mahoning County. The District Board of Health is gearing up to test for these bacterial contaminants. Its laboratory has applied for Ohio Environmental Protection Agency approval and should be fully certified for drinking water analysis by the middle of 2001. Mortgage lenders require this EPA certification before



they will accept test results for home sales. With more than 10,000 wells in Mahoning County, the laboratory will meet a growing demand for low-cost, high quality testing. In 2000, 35 percent of wells tested were found to have unsafe levels of bacteria.

The laboratory offers free semi-annual water testing to about 125 homeowners living around active and closed landfills in Mahoning County thanks to a grant from the County's solid waste management district. It also screens waste for hazardous chemicals before the Board of Health allows any waste to be sent to any of the County's five landfills.

Health District Report Card

Mahoning County Townships, Villages, and City of Canfield

1998 birth and death data is currently the latest available from the Ohio Department of Health

1998 BIRTHS			1998 DEATHS	
Live Births	Low Birth weight Births*	Births to School-Age Teens(15-17)	Infant Deaths	Total Deaths
Townships & Villages 1,481	104	35	Townships & Villages 13	1,507
Canfield 69	3	1	Canfield 0	53
Total 1,550	107	36	Total 13	1,560

*less than 2,500 grams or 5.5 pounds

1998 YPLL

Leading causes of death by age group and years of potential life lost (YPLL)

Age of Death	Causes	YPLL
<1 Years Old	perinatal	451
	ill-defined	194
	congenital	194
1-14 Years Old	homicide	57
	heart disease	57
	accidents	57
15-24 Years Old	ill-defined	57
	accidents	180
	congenital	45
25-44 Years Old	stroke	45
	homicide	45
	accidents	450
45-64 Years Old	cancer	330
	heart disease	330
	suicide	150
45-64 Years Old	homicide	120
	AIDS/HIV	120
	cancer	730
45-64 Years Old	heart disease	510
	diabetes	160
	accidents	80
45-64 Years Old	stroke	80

Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) is the number of years a person may have lived if he/she had not died before age 65. For example, if a person dies at age 60, the YPLL is 5. If a person dies at age 65, the YPLL is 0.

Most Popular Names in 1998

BOYS	GIRLS
Nicholas	Emily
Jacob	Taylor
Michael	Alexis
Joseph	Hannah
Anthony	Madison

MATERNAL HEALTH FACTS

Births every day	4
Births in a hospital	99.9%
Saint Elizabeth Health Center	50.5%
Forum Health Northside	33.9%
Youngstown Osteopathic	1.4%
Entered prenatal care during 1st trimester	85.0%
Did not use alcohol during pregnancy	99.4%
Did not smoke during pregnancy	82.9%

1999 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Disease	Number of Cases
Hepatitis A	11
Hepatitis B	4
Salmonellosis	4
Tuberculosis	4
Campylobacteriosis	3
Giardiasis	3
Infectious meningitis	2
Invasive group A streptococcal disease	2
Listeriosis	2
Aseptic meningitis	1
E. coli O157H7	1
Legionnaires' disease	1
Lyme disease	1
Pertussis	1

1998 LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

Causes of Death	Number	Health District Rate*	Ohio Rate*
Heart Disease	515	350.9	310.9
Cancer	354	241.2	232.8
Stroke	123	83.8	70.3
Flu/Pneumonia	80	53.8	35.5
Lung Disease	77	52.5	51.1
Diabetes	53	36.1	33.2
Accidents	38	25.9	30.4
Neurologic Disease	33	22.5	24.4
Atherosclerosis	23	15.7	6.8
Kidney Disease	23	15.7	24.6
Nutritional Deficiency	23	15.7	1.9

*rate per 100,000 population

LOCAL BANKS OFFER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT LOANS

Loans for Sewer Connections as Low as 2.5%

The District Board of Health, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and three local banks have offered reduced interest loans to homeowners and business owners for septic systems repairs and replacements since 1997. The program was the first of its kind in Ohio and has since been introduced in other Ohio counties. A recent decision by the EPA has expanded the program to pay for sewer connections as well as septic system improvements. "The loan program can help hundreds of homeowners to tie into sewer lines and eliminate water pollution from their septic systems," according to Christine McElhaney, chief of waste control programs at the District Board of Health.

In this "linked deposit" loan program, banks conduct their normal credit review of the applicant and if approved, the applicant receives a five-percentage point discount on the negotiated loan rate. Over \$120,000 in septic system improvement loans has been approved since 1997 at rates as low as 2.75 percent. Linked deposit loans are available from the Home Savings and Loan, Farmers National Bank of Canfield, and Sky Bank.

STUDIES LEND SUPPORT TO SEWER PROJECTS IN BEAVER, GOSHEN AND MILTON TOWNSHIPS

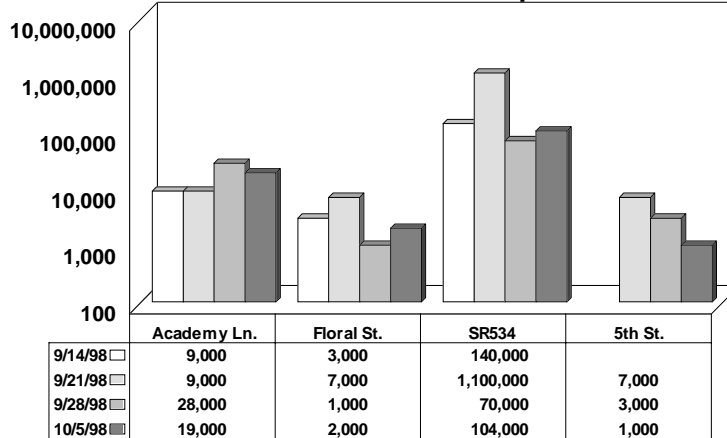
Several areas in Mahoning County will get new sewers thanks in part to studies conducted by the District Board of Health last year. These studies focused on household sewage treatment (septic) systems and their impact on drinking and recreational water quality.

In the most recent study of Milton township, Mahoning Avenue, County Line Road, Ellsworth Road and SE River Road form the boundary of an area declared a public health nuisance by the Board of Health in September 2000. A study of the 258 homes in the area found that 45 percent of septic systems were failing and 36 percent of wells contained coliform bacteria.

The study also noted that Milton township had the highest rate of sewage complaints among the 14 townships in Mahoning County. Water samples from the lake and small tributaries draining into the lake also showed levels of fecal coliform bacteria above levels considered safe by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Coliform bacteria are indicators of sewage pollution.

In Goshen Township, the community of Damascus has been the focus of several studies

Fecal Coliform Bacteria Counts Damascus Stream Samples



conducted by the District Board of Health and Kent State University that have helped to obtain funding for the construction of a sewer system for the area. Based on its survey of septic systems and stream water sampling, the Board of Health passed a resolution in April 1999, declaring that unsanitary conditions exist in Damascus. More

than 60 percent of the septic systems that were tested over the last 10 years were found to be malfunctioning. Almost 50 percent of wells that were tested contained coliform bacteria. Stream water samples contained fecal coliform levels in excess of the EPA standards for secondary contact waters.

In June 1998, the Board of Health passed a resolution declaring unsanitary conditions in an area of Beaver Township bounded on the north by Western Reserve Rd, on the west by Woodworth Road, on the east by Harvard Blvd. and on the south by Forest Ave. The Mahoning County Sanitary Engineering Department has

recently completed extension of sewer lines into the area. The Board of Health has informed homeowners in the area of the requirement that they connect to the sewer system. Environmental health staff anticipates significant improvements in water quality as a result of these sewer improvements.

TURNING TIRES INTO CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Tire Cleanups Yield 273 Tons of Fill for Damascus Sewer Project

Ohio environmental officials began looking for new and innovative ways to recycle solid wastes with the passage of House Bill 592 back in 1988.

“Scrap tires, generated by the millions in Ohio, had always presented special challenges when it came to recycling or disposal,” explained Rick Setty, environmental health director at the District Board of Health. Bury them in landfills, and they eventually “float” to the surface. Burn them, and you get liquid run-off with a thick, acrid smoke. Leave them on the surface of the ground and they hold water in which mosquitoes breed, promoting the spread of mosquito-borne disease. Some found new life as retreads, but not nearly enough to put a dent in the problem. Tires, in general, are so well made that they are practically indestructible, Setty said.

While small cottage industries have turned some tires into doormats or flowerpots, and crumb rubber has been used to pave roads, *shredded tires* are now coming into their own as a construction material. If they aren’t needed for an immediate project, shreds can be stored in specially designated areas called “monocells” or “monofills”, which can be “mined” for future use. What was once considered a waste is now a recyclable resource.

After many years of working on the removal of waste tire piles in Mahoning County, only one major tire pile remained—in Ellsworth Township—in 2000. Why not shred these tires and use them for backfill for new sewer lines to be installed in Damascus? The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency was consulted and gave its blessing to the project.

Health commissioner Matthew Stefanak worked closely with the Mahoning County Recycling Division Sanitary Engineering Department and the Ohio Department of Development to secure funding for the project. A Lisbon company was chosen to remove and shred the Ellsworth pile along with tires from drop-off collections in Goshen and Ellsworth townships. The contractor reduced the tires to 2-4 inch square shreds and staged them on a farm in the Damascus area to await use in the sewer project. About 198 tons of tire shreds were produced from the Ellsworth tire dump and another 75 tons from the community collections.

The shreds will take the place of the pea gravel typically used as backfill and support around sewer lines. This project is the first time in Ohio that waste tires have been used in sewer construction.

MAHONING SAFE COMMUNITIES ASSISTS LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Grant Promotes Motor Vehicle Safety

There’s a deadly epidemic running rampant through our streets, infecting millions of men, women and children each year in communities across our nation. The shocking part is most Americans don’t even think of it as a health problem at all, according to Tracy Styka, community health education specialist at the District Board of Health. The epidemic is motor vehicle injuries. Styka and her partners in the Mahoning Safe Communities Coalition are using the Safe Communities model of injury prevention and control to predict when and where motor vehicle-related injuries are most likely to strike next and take the best course of action to keep them from happening at all. The Coalition is targeting its efforts toward youthful and senior drivers, restraint use and alcohol use (DUI offenders).

With the help of grants from the Mahoning Safe Communities Coalition, area police departments have been able to purchase portable breath testing devices that assist officers who stop someone they suspect of drinking and driving. Law enforcement officials are also beginning to conduct alcohol sales compliance checks. Of businesses that have been checked so far, alcohol sales to underage persons have been made in nearly 30% to 75 % of the attempts. Law enforcement officials believe the checks have been successful in raising awareness and improving cooperation with the liquor permit holders. Area police departments have also pledged to step up enforcement of reckless driving and restraint use laws.

“Mahoning Safe Communities has created collaboration between agencies, law enforcement and schools in an effort to reduce motor vehicle related injuries and fatalities and reduce the burden of the economic cost of a human tragedy due to vehicle crashes,” Styka said.

STATE OFFERS HEALTH INSURANCE FOR UNINSURED FAMILIES

“Healthy families are happy families.” This is the first sentence in the brochure that introduces Healthy Start, Healthy Families - the health insurance plan for Ohio’s pregnant women, children and working families without health insurance. Outreach efforts are underway in Mahoning County to provide information to all who might be eligible for the health plan. The District Board of Health has collaborated with the Mahoning County Job and Family Services (MCJFS) Department and other public and private agencies in Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana counties to raise the level of awareness about *Healthy Start, Healthy Families*. “*Healthy Start, Healthy Families* is a wonderfully comprehensive health coverage program that provides doctor and hospital care, immunizations and prescriptions, vision and dental care and mental health services,” according to Diana Colaianni, director of nursing. “We want to be sure the information about the plan gets to the families who need it,” she said.

Community agencies have carried out a multi-faceted campaign to reach eligible families, including television and radio advertising, health fairs, and presentations to health care providers. School officials have sent home over 40,000 information packets with schoolchildren. A GM/UAW health care workgroup has worked with companies that do not offer health benefits to assist with the *Healthy Start, Healthy Families* application process at their worksites. The District Board of Health has mailed over 4,440 letters with health plan information to families with children born in the last few years. Information about *Healthy Start, Healthy Families* is also included in all *Welcome Home Program* home visit packets. The *Welcome Home Program* provides a home visit by a registered nurse to all first-time and teen parents within two weeks after delivery of the baby. The home visit nurse explains the health coverage program and helps eligible families with the application process.

The District Board of Health estimates that 4,000 Mahoning County children are eligible for the *Healthy Start, Healthy Families* program. Almost 80 percent of uninsured children in Mahoning County could be insured through the program. For more information about *Healthy Start, Healthy Families*, visit the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website at www.state.oh.us/odjfs/ohp



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Adult Day Services

Rita Nolfi, RN

William Michael, Van Driver

Joyce Naymick, Activities

Coordinator

Tuberculosis Elimination Program

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Kathleen Berry, RN, Outreach Nurse

Tuberculosis Control Officer

Robert DeMarco, MD

Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

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Nicholas Cascarelli, MHHS, Outreach

Educator

Misty Koletich, SIT, Sanitarian

Stefano Napolitano, RS, Sanitarian

Jessica Tyree, SIT, Sanitarian

Fran Papa, RN, Pediatric Coordinator

Rosemary Totterdale, Data Entry
Operator

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Michele Olin, Office Manager

Tina Marie Schneider, Secretary

Julie Thompson, Secretary

Linda Zmith, Secretary

2000 Financial Statement

REVENUES

LOCAL REVENUES

Local Taxes: Inside Millage and Tuberculosis Levy	\$905,149
Contracts with Governmental Agencies	812,186
Environmental Health License, Registration, and Permit Fees	592,183
Personal Health Services Patient Fees	84,987
Laboratory Services Fees	79,799
Rental Income	49,760
Sale of Assets	14,330
Miscellaneous Revenues	1,966
SUB-TOTAL LOCAL REVENUES	\$2,540,360

STATE AND FEDERAL REVENUES

Ohio Department of Health Funded Grants/Projects	
State Funded Dollars Include:	\$403,976
Child and Family Health Services Block Grant	
Rabies Prevention Grant	
Rabies Surveillance Contract	
Welcome Home Grant	
Tuberculosis Control Funds	
Tobacco Compliance Check Contract	
Federal Funded Dollars Include:	217,367
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program	
Lead Regional Resource Center Grant	
Preventive Health and Health Services Grant	
WIC Program	
Medicaid/ Medicare Reimbursement for Services	64,520
Other State and Federal Dollars Include:	310,027
Adult Day Care Grant - Area Agency on Aging	
Safe Communities Grant - Ohio Dept. of Public Safety	
Group Homes Contract - Area Agency on Aging	
Passport Program - Area Agency on Aging	
H.U.D. Lead Abatement Grant	
Homestead and Rollback Reduction Funds	
State Subsidy	57,903
SUB-TOTAL STATE AND FEDERAL REVENUES	1,053,793

TOTAL REVENUES

\$3,594,153

EXPENDITURES	FEDERAL/STATE	LOCAL	TOTALS
Personal Health Services	\$790,836	\$495,694	\$1,286,530
Environmental Health Services	210,452	1,016,063	1,226,515
Administrative & Support Services	57,903	411,392	469,295
Laboratory Services	-	289,058	289,058
Health Promotion and Assessment	87,761	78,905	166,666
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,146,952	\$2,291,112	\$3,438,064

THIS IS AN UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

HEALTH ADVOCATES TURN BACK TOBACCO INDUSTRY EFFORTS TO WEAKEN LOCAL TOBACCO CONTROL EFFORTS

Public health advocates are pleased that Governor Taft intervened at the last moment to prevent the passage of House Bill 298 during the 123rd Ohio General Assembly. This local preemption bill, first drafted by tobacco company lobbyists in 1994, would have created obstacles for local boards of health attempting to enact protections against exposure to secondhand smoke. House Bill 298 would have given veto power over smoking restrictions enacted by a board of health to each city or village council and each board of township trustees in a health district.

"The legislation would have seriously impaired our ability to protect children and adolescents against this cancer-causing agent," said health commissioner Matthew Stefanak. More than 30,000 cancer death each year are linked to secondhand smoke exposure. Secondhand smoke has also been implicated in the alarming increase in asthma cases and deaths among children.

The District Board of Health is a public agency that provides public health services to the 156,000 residents of the Mahoning County General Health District. Health districts are political subdivisions created by the Ohio Legislature in 1919. The Mahoning health district comprises the townships and villages of Mahoning County and contracts with the City of Canfield. Board of Health members are appointed by representatives from each of the townships and villages. Ohio law requires the district health commissioner to make a public report on the health of the district each year.

District Board of Health Mahoning County

50 Westchester Drive
Youngstown, Ohio 44515

Health Commissioner
Environmental Health & Plumbing
Health Promotion & Assessment
Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Nursing and Clinics

Solid Waste Program

(330) 270-2855

Adult Day Services

(330) 782-1749

Laboratory Services

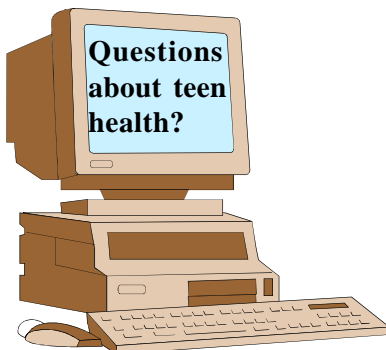
(330) 270-2841

Tuberculosis Clinic

(330) 744-4246

Toll-free in Mahoning County

1-800-873-MCHD



Visit www.teenhealthissues.org for information and local services.

VALLEY SHOWS IMPROVEMENT IN SOME HEALTH MEASURES

Healthy Valley Alliance Tracks Five Priority Areas

Nearly three years after the Healthy Valley Alliance published a community health plan that targeted five priority areas for improvement, Mahoning County is showing some improvement in community health.

The Healthy Valley Alliance is a collaborative effort between the County boards of health, hospitals, physicians, and other community leaders who share concerns about improving community health. The Healthy Valley plan identified exercise, screening for chronic disease, substance abuse among youth, unintended pregnancy, and violent deaths as priorities in its five-year plan.

The Alliance plans to publish a community health "report card" later this year that highlights some of these achievements - and setbacks - of the last two years:

Substance abuse



- School surveys point to a slight drop in tobacco use among 8th graders and local rates for tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use remain below national averages
- Tobacco use during pregnancy dropped below 20 percent for the first time in Mahoning County but remains well above the national goal of 10 percent
- The number of tobacco ads in stores near area schools have increased since 1997

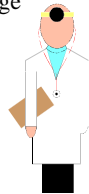
Unintended pregnancy



- Births to school-age teens have dropped by one-third since 1994, but 151 school-age teens in Mahoning County had babies in 1998
- Abortions have declined steadily since 1994 and local rates are 25 percent lower than the national average

Screening for chronic disease

- More cases of breast cancer are being detected by routine screening - 230 new cases of breast cancer were diagnosed in Mahoning County women in 1997



Exercise and nutrition



- Children in Springfield and Youngstown school districts are being monitored for obesity by nursing faculty and students at YSU
- Curriculum time for physical education is being challenged by pressures to improve student performance on proficiency exams

- Water, milk, or pure fruit juices account for only 11 percent of school beverage machine products in Mahoning County schools

Violent deaths



- Homicides in Youngstown dropped from 51 in 1998 to 30 in 2000
- Eight children in Mahoning County lost their lives to homicide or suicide in 1998

Alliance members are hopeful that ongoing efforts to influence these health measures will pay off in the long run. "What gets measured, gets done," according to health commissioner Matthew Stefanak. "Report cards like these are a way to remind ourselves how far we have to go to reach our goals," he said.

For POISON EMERGENCIES

Call 1-800-872-5111

TDD: 1-800-253-7955



LEAD SCREENING GUIDELINES TARGET AT-RISK CHILDREN

Low-Income Children Living in Older Homes Should Be Tested

Childhood lead poisoning is the most common environmental disease of young children, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Childhood lead poisoning causes reduced intelligence, low attention span, reading and learning disabilities, and has been linked to juvenile delinquency, behavioral problems, and many other adverse health effects. Nearly one million children nationally and an estimated 38,500 children in Ohio have excessive levels of lead in their blood. Lead-based paint in housing is the major remaining source of exposure and is responsible for most cases of childhood lead poisoning today.

Mahoning County has 100,761 homes built before 1978. The year of 1978 is significant because the Consumer Product Safety Commission placed a ban on the sale of residential lead-based paint in 1978. Translated, 93 percent of the homes in Mahoning County are at risk for lead-based paint and thus lead and lead dust hazards. Families below the poverty level are especially at risk for having children that are lead poisoned because they tend to live in older homes with chipping and peeling lead paint.

In 2000, 4,293 children between 6 months and six years of age were screened for lead poisoning in Mahoning County. Of those children screened, 21% had elevated blood lead levels.

Lead Screening Guidelines

There are three categories for screening children. All children who are Medicaid recipients should be screened at 12 and 24 months of age. Any Medicaid child between 3 and 6 years of age who has never been screened should be screened at least once. If a child lives in a universal screening zip code, that child should be screened twice between 6 and 36 months with at least 12 months between tests. Any child between 3 and 6 years old residing in a universal screening zip code who has not been previously tested should be tested at least once. An universal screening zip code is defined by an area where either at least 27% of the housing is pre-1950 and at least 15% of children live below poverty or at least 12% children under 36 months old tested had lead a level > 10 ug/dl. All other children not receiving Medicaid or not residing in an universal screening zip code should be assessed for risk using the Risk Assessment Questionnaire (RAQ) twice between 6 and 36 months of age, with at least 12 months between assessments. Any child 3 to 6 years old not receiving Medicaid or not residing in an Universal zip code that has never been assessed using the RAQ should be assessed at least once. A blood test is indicated if the answer to any RAQ question is positive.

Risk Assessment Questionnaire

Does your child...

- Live in or regularly visit a house built before 1950?
- Live in or visit a house that has peeling, chipping, dusting, or chalking paint?
- Live in or visit a house built before 1978 with recent, ongoing, or planned renovation/remodeling?
- Have a sibling or a playmate that has or did have lead poisoning?
- Frequently come in contact with an adult who has a hobby or works with lead?

Call the
Childhood Lead Poisoning
Prevention Program

(330) 270-2855

to find out

if your child should be screened.

STATE MAKES YOUTH POSSESSION OF TOBACCO ILLEGAL

On March 15, 2001, Senate Bill 218 – Ohio's youth tobacco possession law - takes effect. This bill makes it illegal for individuals under 18 to attempt to or to purchase, possess, use, or order cigarettes, other tobacco products or papers used to roll cigarettes. Under the new law, a juvenile court may do either or both of the following if it finds a child guilty of a violation:

- Require the child to attend a youth smoking education program or other smoking treatment program approved by the court if one is available.
- Impose a fine of not more than one hundred dollars.

The child and parent may choose to sign a waiver and pay the \$100.00 fine to avoid a court appearance.

If a child disobeys a juvenile court order issued under this law, the court may do any or all of the following:

- Increase the fine imposed
- Require the child to perform no more than 20 hours of community service
- Suspend for 30 days the temporary instruction permit, probationary permit, or driver's license issued to that child

While Ohio has had a law that prohibits businesses from selling tobacco products to those younger than 18 years of age since 1984, Ohio now joins 42 other states that have criminalized youth tobacco possession.

TEENS ABLE TO BUY CIGARETTES FROM MANY LOCAL STORES

Teens can illegally buy tobacco products from one of every five tobacco vendors in Mahoning County. That's the finding from the compliance checks conducted in 2001 by the District Board of Health.



Ohio law prohibits the sale of tobacco products to children under age 18. The buy rate has vacillated from a low of 19 percent to a high of 60 percent in Mahoning County since the Board of Health began the undercover buys with teen volunteers in 1994. The 21 percent buy rate in Mahoning County equaled Ohio's rate of 21 percent for 2000.

While neither Ohio nor Mahoning County reached their objective of 20 percent, Mahoning County has made some progress since 1994, according to Jane Warga, director of health promotion. Early results from 2001 suggest that the numbers are going back up, however. In February 2001, 29 out of 112 stores sold tobacco to 15 and 16 year-old teen volunteers (26 percent buy rate). "We have a long way to go to reach our objective of less than five percent sales to kids by 2010," Warga said.

The State of Ohio and a growing number of municipalities have made it illegal for youth to buy, use or possess tobacco and several communities are considering tobacco vendor licensing ordinances to discourage youth access.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS CONCERNED ABOUT FOOD-BORNE ILLNESSES

Ohio Enacts New Food Protection Law

Food-borne illnesses are among the most commonly reported diseases in Mahoning County. Surveillance conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that the incidence of some outbreaks has declined in recent years, while others have remained steady or increased. Locally, the number of listeriosis cases has been increasing since 1995.

Salmonellosis continues to lead with 15 confirmed cases in Mahoning County in 1999, followed by seven cases of campylobacteriosis, four cases of listeriosis, and one case of E. coli. These food-borne illnesses can be especially severe in the very young, the elderly and persons with compromised immune systems. The most commonly reported practices that lead to these outbreaks are failure to hold foods at proper temperatures and inadequate cooking of food.

Food-borne disease outbreaks have spurred renewed efforts to prevent disease by bolstering meat and poultry processing plant inspections, increased attention to agricultural practices for eggs and produce, and new requirements for food service operations and retail food establishments. These efforts have also resulted in an increase in food recalls in recent years, which has no doubt helped reduce the incidence of outbreaks. Most of these recalls have involved the potential contamination of various food products by salmonella, listeria, and E. coli. In most cases, these products can be intercepted before causing harm to the consuming public.

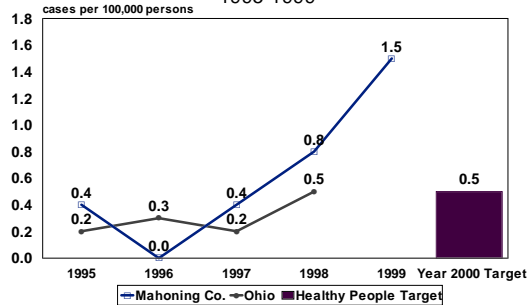
While disease-causing bacteria are still of greatest concern, another emerging area of concern is that of food allergies. Persons who have or may have allergies should look closely at ingredient labels and ask questions when dining in a restaurant. Foods most commonly involved include peanuts, tree nuts like walnuts and pecans, fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, soy and wheat.

In August 1999, the Ohio legislature passed Amended Substitute House Bill 223. This legislation created a new food safety program for the State of Ohio. This program, known as the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code, was modeled on a Food and Drug Administration program that the federal government has encouraged all states to adopt. The legislation's primary goal was to establish one licensing and inspecting agency and one set of uniform sanitation rules for all retail food vendors.

The Uniform Food Safety Code revises and updates many of the current state food rules and adds several protections that did not previously exist. There is renewed emphasis on food cooking, handling and storage requirements. The number of licensing classifications has been expanded which, along with the overall size of the business, determines the cost of each license. Each local health district follows a standard method for determining the cost of each license based on the cost of conducting its inspection program. Each license classification carries with it a mandated minimum number of inspections. Additional inspections can be made if problems are encountered.

Many food vendors will be regulated for the first time under the Uniform Food Safety Code. The Ohio Department of Health and Agriculture will share state oversight over local health district programs. Enforcement of uniform food safety practices at the federal, state, and now, at the local level in Ohio, will help to guarantee a safe food supply and reduce the occurrence of food-borne disease outbreaks.

Foodborne Illnesses Caused by Listeria in Mahoning County 1995-1999



Years ago...excerpts from the records of the District Board of Health

75 years ago

September 7, 1926 – the Board of Health establishes offices in Sebring for its food & milk inspectors and public health nurses

50 years ago

February 20, 1951 – no rabid dogs are reported in 1950 for the first time since a canine rabies outbreak began in 1947- 33 persons were treated for rabies exposure that year

25 years ago

March 3, 1976 – health commissioner Dr. Douglas Walsh recommends that a health education division be established

November 2, 1976 – Board of Health staff and community volunteers administer flu vaccine to 46,000 residents in anticipation of a swine flu epidemic – voters fail to approve a new 0.8 mil public health ballot levy

10 years ago

March 28, 1991 – Board of Health settles a lawsuit against the BFI Poland landfill and agrees to issue a license in return for limits on out-of-state garbage