

Lake County General Health District **NEWSLETTER**

Featured Highlights:

The Effects of Norovirus
(Food Poisoning) in the U.S.

Resources at the Wickliffe
Family Resource Center

Vaccines for Children
Program Working to Keep
Children Safe and Healthy

New Regulations Put in Place
to Decrease Distracted
Driving Incidences

Learn How to Keep your
Private Water Well Safe

Health Commissioner's
Update

Spring Has Sprung!

The snow has melted, giving way to warmer weather and sunshine. This is the perfect time to enjoy the great outdoors, take in the fresh air, spring clean and freshen your space, and spend time with those you love.

This second issue of 2023 brings you information on Norovirus, also known as food poisoning, and updates on the Vaccines for Children program offered through the Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) and Lake County partners, education and resources on how to keep your private water wells safe, new regulations surrounding distracted driving and keeping our roads safe, resources found at the Wickliffe Family Resource center, a note from our Health Commissioner, and more!

Stay tuned for more partner and event highlights, resources, and informational articles from LCGHD!



**Lake County
General Health District**

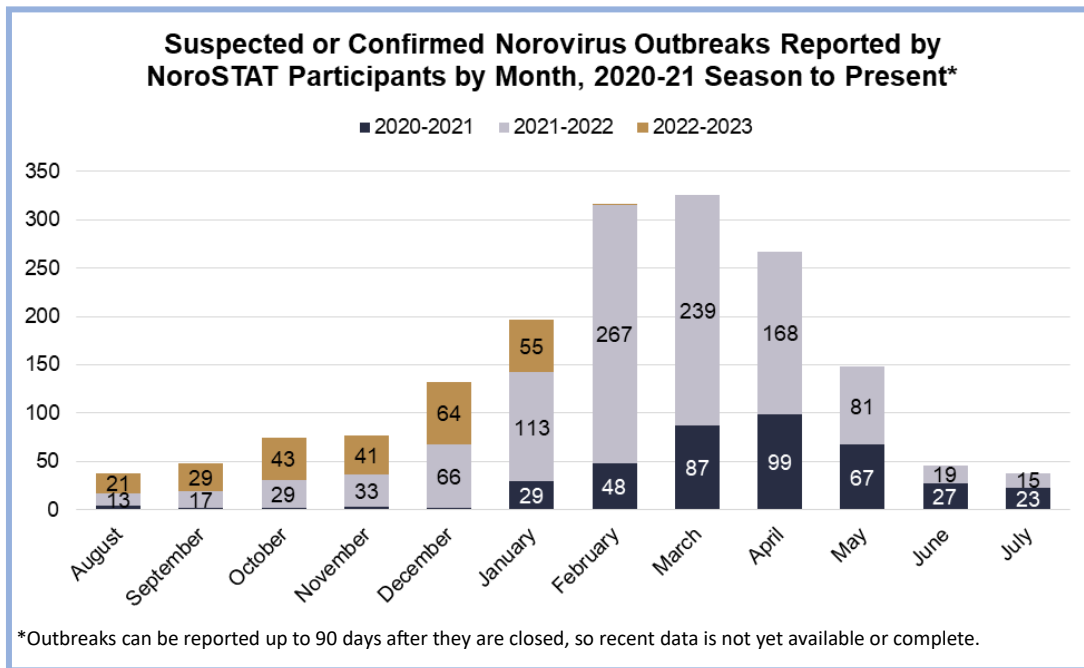
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Health Data Feature

The Effects of Norovirus (Food Poisoning) in the U.S.

Norovirus, a highly contagious viral illness (sometimes called food poisoning or stomach flu), has hit parts of the Midwest hard this season. Norovirus spreads all year-round, but more so during the winter months (November through April). Norovirus illness causes diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. It can spread through direct contact with an infected person, eating foods or drinking liquids that have been contaminated, touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then putting fingers in your mouth, and sharing utensils or cups with people who are infected.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) uses the NoroSTAT system to monitor outbreaks of Norovirus in the U.S. Ohio is one of 14 states that participate in NoroSTAT reporting. The graph below shows current data for the past three seasons. The number of reported outbreaks in fall of the current season have been consistently higher than in years prior.



You can prevent the spread of Norovirus by:

- Always washing hands carefully with soap and water after using the toilet or changing diapers and before eating, preparing, or handling food.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating them and cook seafood to at least 145°F.
- Do not prepare food or care for others when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces, especially after throwing up or having diarrhea.
- Immediately wash clothes or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or stool (feces).

For more information and resources on Norovirus, visit www.lcghd.org/norovirus

Health District Updates

The Wickliffe Family Resource Center

The Wickliffe Family Resource Center (WFRC), located at the Wickliffe High School, acts as a hub for various organizations that provide helpful services all in one location.

Signature Health: Signature Health is a non-profit, Federally Qualified Health Center providing mental health, addiction recovery, primary care and infectious disease services to patients across Northeast Ohio. Signature Health currently offers mental health counseling and pediatric primary care services at the WFRC. Medicaid and Medicare insurance are accepted. For questions about services, or to make an appointment, call Signature Health Inc. at (440) 953-9999.

Crossroads Health: Crossroads Health offers a continuum of recovery and mental health programs and services for all people, at any age or stage of life. As a community-based nonprofit, Crossroads Health is committed to providing trauma-informed, evidence-based services that change lives and impact communities. Crossroads Health accepts Medicaid, Medicare and many private insurances. For more information, call Crossroads Health at (440) 255-1700.

Women, Infants, Children (WIC): WIC is a nutrition education program. WIC provides nutritious foods that promote good health for pregnant women, women who just had a baby, breastfeeding moms, infants, and children up to age five (5). For questions about WIC eligibility or services, please call the Wickliffe WIC Clinic at (440) 833-6007.

WickKloset: WickKloset is a student-led organization dedicated to providing local families with easy access to non-perishable food items, clothing, toiletries, and more. For questions about receiving assistance or donating to WickKloset*, call the WFRC at (440) 943-6113.

**The WickKloset is full and not currently taking donations. Please contact the WFRC for future donation inquiries.*

Outside of these major programs, the WFRC can connect visitors with other important resources. While the WFRC is located in Wickliffe, you do not have to live in Wickliffe to use the services. These services are open to all, including those with or without medical insurance.

For information on resources, services, and special events, please visit
[www.wickliffeschools.org/
FamilyResourceCenter.aspx](http://www.wickliffeschools.org/FamilyResourceCenter.aspx)



Health District Updates

Community Health Services

How to Use the VFC Program:

- Ask your pediatrician if they are part of the VFC program.
- Get children vaccinated through Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) Community Health Services.
- Contact ODH to locate a VFC provider in your area (www.dh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/Immunization/Vaccines-for-Children-VFC).



For information about LCGHD clinics, go to www.lcghd.org/clinics

Disease outbreaks and epidemics are not something new in our country. Some diseases that are easily spread are considered vaccine-preventable diseases, meaning there is a vaccine to reduce the number of people who catch a disease. One of the best ways to prevent getting a vaccine-preventable disease is to become vaccinated against that disease. Vaccination can help interrupt the spread of a disease, prevent you from getting sick, reduce symptoms and severity if you do get sick, and lower medical costs associated with care. Some of the most well-known vaccine-preventable diseases are Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Polio, Whooping Cough, and Chickenpox. In partial response to the United States 1989-1991 measles epidemic that resulted in hundreds of deaths and tens of thousands of cases, Congress created the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program in 1993, with the program becoming operational in 1994.

The VFC Program is a program run by the CDC to increase access to vaccines for children who would otherwise not receive the vaccines due to inability to pay. The CDC collaborates with state health departments to purchase vaccines at a discount and distribute them. From there, the state health departments work with VFC providers around the state on a county level to ensure equitable distribution of vaccine. Only vaccines that are recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) are part of the VFC program. Lake County currently has 12 known VFC providers, spread across the county.

Not all children, however, qualify for vaccines under the VFC program. A child is eligible to receive VFC vaccines if they are under 19 years old and either Medicaid eligible, uninsured, American Indian, Alaskan Native, or in some instances if they are underinsured. Eligibility can be determined by the VFC provider you are taking your children to.

To provide this service to area children, LCGHD hold childhood vaccine clinics on a monthly schedule, with additional days added as needed. Vaccine clinic data and additional information can be found on the LCGHD website.

Health District Updates

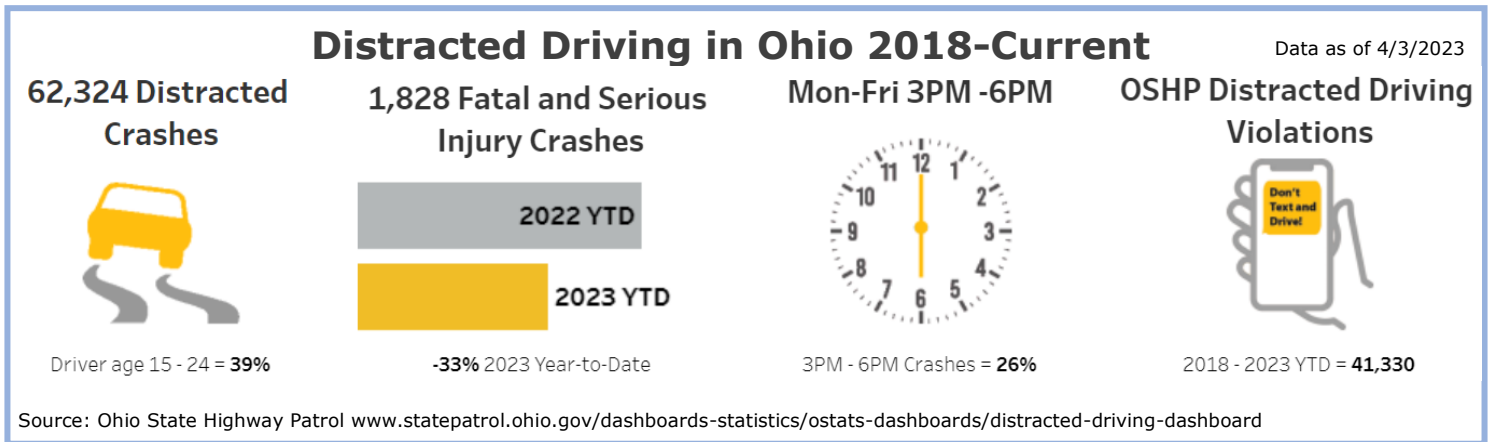
Population Health & Emergency Planning

The Safe Communities Coalition would like to inform residents of Lake County about a new State regulation meant to reduce distracted driving and make our roadways safer.

Keeping people safe on the road is a key factor in the overall wellbeing of both residents of Lake County, and across all of Ohio. In Lake County alone, there were 658 car crashes due to distracted driving between 2019 and 2021 according to the Ohio State Highway Patrol (www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/static/OTSO/DataSheets/Lake.pdf).



Ohio Governor Mike DeWine recently signed Ohio Senate Bill 288, which went into effect April 4th, 2023. This bill focuses on the use of cell phones and other devices by strengthening Ohio distracted driving laws. It will allow law enforcement to issue warnings for six months in the event that someone is seen distracted driving. After the six month warning period, an individual caught distracted driving would face possible penalties of a \$150 fine for a first offense, points taken off of a driver’s license, and new distracted driving safety course requirements. This is just one step forward in ensuring safer roads for the people of Ohio.



The Safe Communities Coalition is made up of members of the LCGHD, local police and fire service, school officials, the Ohio Department of Transportation, as well as other community service organizers, and is committed to improving the safety of our community. The Coalition works to reduce traffic related deaths by promoting the use of seatbelts, sober driving, reducing distracted driving, promoting motorcycle safety, and more!

If you are interested in attending a Safe Communities Coalition meeting or have an event/programming request, please contact **Nikeshia Yarbrough** at 440.350.2844 or nyarbrough@lcghd.org

Health District Updates

Environmental Health

Do you get your water from a private well and wonder how to tell if it is safe to drink? That is where the Private Water Division at the LCGHD can help. They can provide private well water tests for a \$70 fee and check for potentially harmful bacteria and other contaminants.

The Health District recommends that a private well owner get their well water tested each year for contaminants such as total coliform bacteria.

This bacteria is a collection of microorganisms that are not normally harmful to healthy individuals; however, total coliform bacteria are indicator organisms whose presence, at certain levels, indicates the potential presence of other disease-causing organisms, such as E. coli.

The LCGHD also recommends getting your private water well tested more often if homeowners notice changes in water color, odor, and taste.

If you are a homeowner with a private well on your property, it is important to know that the only way to be sure that your water is clean and safe to drink is for you to keep up with routine testing. Test results will help you know if your private well water is safe to drink, or the well needs to be treated for any bacteria or contaminants.



Getting Your Water Tested

If you are interested in having your private well water tested, please visit the LCGHD website at www.lcghd.org/private-water-systems, or contact the Environmental Health Private Water Division at **(440) 350-2543**.

A Note from the Health Commissioner

Dear Friends,

Since our founding in 1920, LCGHD has been committed to helping people secure a healthy future and protect the ones they love. That purpose not only applies to our residents and the services we offer, but also to the impact we have on those who depend on us: our families, our employees, and our communities. This is why we are deeply committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We need to be part of creating a sustainable environment where more people have equitable access to the broadest range of health, education, economic and career opportunities to help them achieve financial security and adequate healthcare.

This vision for a better world begins with creating a culture of inclusion in the workplace, valuing diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. We will begin increasing our work in multiple areas – from offering education on such topics as unconscious bias and culturally competent leadership, to measuring the diversity of our workforce as a key part of our performance and being transparent about our progress, to expanding the diversity of our public workforce to better serve the unique needs of our increasingly diverse population.

Finally, we are committed to fostering greater inclusion among the communities we serve. Whether it's supporting minority rights, devoting our talent and resources to initiatives that seek to end systemic racism, or investing resources into efforts that have a positive social and environmental impact, we understand and embrace our responsibility to use our influence for the greater good and drive meaningful, lasting change.

While we are proud of our progress and accomplishments, we know there is so much more to do. We look forward to continuing this journey and playing an important role in the creation of a world that truly recognizes and values the differences among us.



*Health Commissioner
Ron Graham*

Sincerely,

Ron H. Graham

Get More Information from the Lake County General Health District!

www.lcghd.org



Sign up for alerts at <https://linktr.ee/lcghd>



Important Dates

April

Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Alcohol Awareness Month

May

May 17: Senior Day at the Great Lakes Mall (10a-2p) - 7850 Mentor Ave, Mentor, OH 44060

May 19: Painesville Car Cruise at Veterans Park - Click It or Ticket Kick Off Event (5p-8p) - 1 Liberty Street, Painesville, OH 44077

May 15-Jun. 4: Click It or Ticket Campaign (Seat belt awareness)

Motorcycle Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

June

Jun. 10: Pride Event at the Lake County History Center (11a-5p) - 415 Riverside Drive, Painesville, OH 44077

Jun. 21: Lake County Safe Communities Coalition Meeting at the Lake County General Health District (9a-10:30a) - 5966 Heisley Road, Mentor, OH 44060

National Safety Month



Food Safety Ninja

The Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) is excited to announce a re-launch of the Food Safety Ninja Website!

The new homepage has up-to-date food recall and outbreak alerts, weekly food safety tips and videos, printable resources, handouts, quizzes with printable certificates, food safety links, and an "Ask the Experts" section, where individuals can ask specific food safety questions that will be answered by LCGHD's food staff.

For those who would like to test their food safety knowledge, there is an interactive *That's Just Wrong!* page that has pictures or videos that show a WRONG food safety situation. Viewers may submit a photo showing the RIGHT way to solve the improper food safety situation.

If picked by LCGHD food staff, the viewer's photo and name will be posted on the website, making them an honorary Food Safety Ninja.



www.foodsafetyninja.org

Birth & Death Records

The Office of Vital Statistics offers birth and death records.

Cost: \$21.50 per copy

Walk-In Service is available Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

More details available at www.lcghd.org/birth-and-death-records/

Get our Newsletter Online!
www.lcghd.org/newsletter

