

Public Health Activities & Services Inventory

Technical Notes

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

In 2014, decision was made to adopt number of national public health activities and services standardized measures—[Multi-network Practice and Outcome Variation Examination \(MPROVE\) Measures](#)—which would allow Washington State to be compared with other states. These have been bolded and marked with the words (MPROVE) next to the measure.

Food Safety

[Licensing](#)

Permanent Food Services Establishments

- Number of permanent food service establishments permitted (*Data source: LHJ*)
All facilities that serve or sell food to the public such as restaurants, food and espresso carts, coffee shops, delis and retail grocery stores must get an annual food service establishment permit from the LHJ.
- **Number of permanent food service establishments inspected (MPROVE)** (*Data source: LHJ*)
Food service establishments are required to be inspected under state/local law for food safety.
- Number of routine permanent food service establishment inspections (*Data source: LHJ*)
All permitted food service establishments receive one or more unannounced inspections from their local health department. Inspections are snapshots of the food handling at the establishment at the time of inspection.

Temporary Food Services Establishments

- Number of temporary food service establishments permitted (*Data source: LHJ*)
Temporary food service facilities at fairs, farmers markets and other temporary events are required to operate under permit from the LHJ.
- **Number of temporary food service establishments inspected (MPROVE)** (*Data source: LHJ*)
Food service establishments are required to be inspected under state/local law for food safety.
- Number of temporary food service establishment inspections (*Data source: LHJ*)
The purpose of the inspections is to assure that food is being handled properly from preparation through serving. Inspectors observe food handling practices, assure equipment is working properly, take food temperatures, inspect refrigerators and storage areas, assure water temperatures, and correct level and use of sanitizers.

Food Worker Cards

- Number of food worker cards issued (*Data source: LHJ*)
Food workers are required to have food safety training before handling food served to the public. Food workers who take a food safety training class and pass the State of Washington exam on food safety basics are issued a Food Worker Card (also called a Food Handler Permit).

Investigations

- Number of food service establishments complaints investigated (*Data source: LHJ*)
Local health agencies receive reports from people who suspect that they have become ill from or have a complaint about a food service establishment.
- **Number of investigations of reported foodborne/waterborne disease cases (MPROVE)** (*Data source: LHJ*)
- **Number of lab confirmed foodborne illness outbreak investigations (MPROVE)** (*Data source: DOH*)
Foodborne outbreaks occur when multiple people become ill from the same food source. The investigations frequently involve people in more than one jurisdiction. This measure asks about lab confirmed foodborne illness outbreak investigations reported by DOH to CDC.
- Number of cases investigated as part of a lab confirmed foodborne illness outbreaks (*Data source: DOH*)
Foodborne illness complaints frequently involve more than one person, and each of these individuals (cases) are contacted as part of the investigation to prevent additional foodborne illness.
- Number of food product recalls and safety alerts issued by DOH (*Data source: DOH*)
When food is recalled because of risk to public health, the local and state health agencies work with the USDA or the FDA to notify food distributors, grocery stores, restaurants, etc., of the risk to public's health and ask for the product to be removed. Recalled food products affecting Washington State are listed on the DOH website by product name and date of recall.

On-Site Sewage Systems

- Number of on-site sewage system permits issued (*Data source: LHJ*)
To ensure that sewage is treated properly the local health jurisdiction evaluates all onsite sewage system (septic system) applications before issuing a permit to build. This includes evaluating the soils at the site, reviewing and approving permit applications, and checking the installation of systems. The permit process assures that septic systems are designed, installed and operated according to current codes.
- **Number of on-site sewage system complaints investigated (MPROVE)** (*Data source: LHJ*)
Local health agencies receive reports from people who suspect on-site sewage systems failure. Each complaint is recorded and investigated.
- Number of on-site sewage system failures reported (*Data source: LHJ*)

When septic systems fail they can expose people to sewage. Sewage contains pathogens and viruses that can cause disease. Sewage can also contaminate ground and surface water possibly polluting wells, rivers, streams or lakes near your home.

- Number of on-site sewage system repair permits issued (*Data source: LHJ*)
When septic systems fail they can expose people to sewage. Sewage contains pathogens and viruses that can cause disease. LHJs respond to all sewage complaints and issue repair permits.
- Number of on-site sewage system failures with corrective action began within 2 weeks (*Data source: LHJ*)

Drinking Water

- Number of large drinking water system (Group A) surveys (*Data source: DOH*)
A sanitary survey includes an onsite review of the water source, and the facilities, equipment, operation, and maintenance of a public water system. It is meant to identify problems which may affect the safety of the water. Group A are systems that regularly serve 15 or more service connections, or 25 or more people/day for 60 days/year, and must be surveyed every three to five years. (Note local health agencies may choose to survey smaller systems; these are not reflected in the data.)
- Number of samples from large public drinking water systems (Group A) submitted and evaluated for public health protection (*Data source: DOH*)
Public water systems are required to deliver safe and reliable drinking water to their customers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If the water supply becomes contaminated, consumers can become seriously ill. One of the most important steps public water system operators take to ensure safe water is to regularly test for coliform bacteria and other contaminants such as nitrate, arsenic and lead.
- **Number of lab confirmed waterborne illness outbreak investigations (MPROVE)** (*Data source: DOH*)
Waterborne outbreaks occur when multiple people become ill from the same water source. The investigations frequently involve people in more than one jurisdiction. This measure asks about lab confirmed foodborne illness outbreak investigations reported by DOH to CDC.
- Number of drinking water health advisories issued (*Data source: DOH*)
Group A public water systems must notify their customers any time a problem with drinking water poses a health risk. Health agencies provide technical assistance and broader public notification in some cases.
- Number of people affected by drinking water health advisories (*Data source: DOH*)
- **Number of people served by large public drinking water systems (Group A) (MPROVE)** (*Data source: DOH*)
- **Number of these people served by systems with no maximum contamination level violations (MPROVE)** (*Data source: DOH*)

Water Recreational Facilities

- Number of water recreational facilities permitted (*Data source: LHJ*)
Local health agencies regulate and permit the construction and maintenance of recreational water facilities such as swimming pools, spas, water parks, and wading pools at athletic clubs, municipal or park facilities, hotels, apartments and mobile home parks, to reduce the risk of unintentional drowning and to prevent illness.
- Number of water recreational facility inspections (*Data source: LHJ*)
Routine inspections of public swimming pools, spas and hot tubs include checking the levels of chemicals in the pool to prevent harmful bacteria or virus from reaching unsafe levels, checking fences and gates to keep unaccompanied small children from entering the pool area, checking for safety equipment, and a review of records.
- Number of water recreational facility closures (*Data source: LHJ*)
Water recreational facilities closed by the LHJ due to unhealthy conditions.

Solid Waster Facilities

- Number of solid waste facilities permitted (*Data source: LHJ*)
Local health agencies monitor and assure the proper handling and disposal of solid waste in their counties. These activities include: application review for new and expanded solid waste facilities, permit issuance, routine inspections of permitted facilities, investigations of illegal dumping, garbage handling and contamination associated with landfills, and education.

Solid waste is any household waste including household garbage, demolition waste, yard and wood waste, used concrete, and used asphalt. Solid waste facilities include landfills, transfer stations, recycling or composting facilities and drop boxes.
- Number of routine solid waste facility inspections (*Data source: LHJ*)
All permitted solid waste facilities are routinely inspected by the LHJ on a schedule based on the risk of the facility.
- Number of solid waste complaints investigated (*Data source: LHJ*)
Local health agencies receive reports from people who suspect illegal dumping, improper garbage handling and contamination associated with landfills. Each complaint is investigated and recorded.

X-Ray Machines

- Number of facilities using X-ray machines registered with DOH for safety and regulatory compliance
DOH inspects X-ray machines and processes for safety and to prevent human overexposure.
(*Data source: DOH*)
- Number of routine X-ray facility inspections to evaluate for safety
Each inspection evaluates the X-ray facility for safe film processing, machine performance, technologist qualifications, and image quality. (*Data source: DOH*)

Shellfish

- Number of samples collected and analyzed for safe shellfish consumption (*Data source: DOH*)
DOH evaluates commercial shellfish growing areas to determine if shellfish are safe to eat. Clams, mussels, oysters, and other bivalve shellfish are filter feeders. They can accumulate and concentrate disease-causing organisms that are harmful to humans. Shoreline surveys evaluate sources of pollution.
 - Marine Biotoxins
 - Vibrio Parahaemolyticus

Childhood Lead Poisoning

- **Number of cases of elevated blood lead in children ages 0-6 years (MPROVE)** (*Data source: DOH*)
Elevated is defined as a blood lead level ≥ 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$. This is based on the reference value of the 97.5th percentile of the NHANES-generated blood lead level distribution for children 1-5 years old, which currently is 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$.
- **Number of cases of elevated blood lead in children age 0-6 years investigated (MPROVE)** (*Data source: LHJ*)
Elevated is defined as a blood lead level ≥ 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$. This is based on the reference value of the 97.5th percentile of the NHANES-generated blood lead level distribution for children 1-5 years old, which currently is 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$.

Other Environmental Health

Pesticides

- Number of pesticide illness incidents investigated, both agricultural and non-agricultural (*Data source: DOH*)
DOH investigates reports of acute adverse health effects resulting from exposure to pesticides. An investigation involves interviewing symptomatic people and witnesses, reviewing medical records and lab test results, and obtaining pesticide spray records to confirm the pesticide product involved. Violations may be referred to Department of Agriculture or the Department of Labor and Industries.
- Number of cases investigated for possible pesticide exposure (*Data source: DOH*)
DOH investigates reports of acute adverse health effects resulting from exposure to pesticides. An investigation involves interviewing symptomatic people and witnesses, reviewing medical records and lab test results, obtaining pesticide spray records to confirm the pesticide product involved and classifying exposure as definite, probable, or possible.

West Nile Virus

- Number of mosquito samples analyzed for West Nile virus (*Data source: DOH*)
The state and local health agencies monitor for the presence of West Nile virus. They trap, and test mosquitoes that may carry the virus, notify health care providers to look for and report symptoms of West Nile virus in patients, and distribute information on the virus and how to control mosquitoes. These efforts are designed to identify West Nile virus before an outbreak.
- Number of birds tested for West Nile virus (*Data source: DOH*)
The state and local health agencies monitor for the presence of West Nile virus. They track the number of dead bird reports, collect certain dead birds for laboratory testing, notify health care providers to look for and report symptoms of West Nile virus in patients, notify veterinarians to look for and report horse and other animals with signs of West Nile virus, and distribute information on the virus. These efforts are designed to identify West Nile virus before an outbreak.

Other Environmental Samples

- Number of environmental samples tested at the state lab for chemical, radiological, or microbiological analysis (*Data source: DOH*)