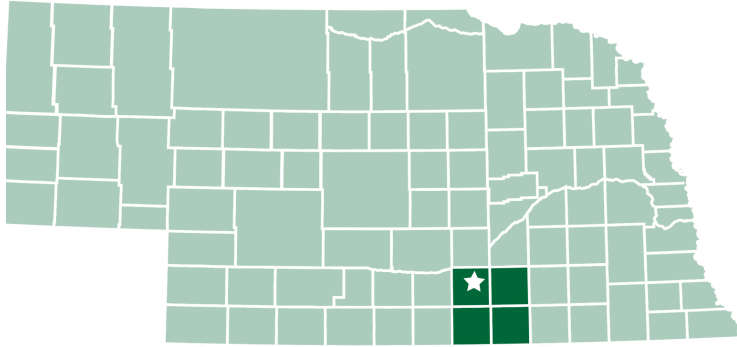


SOUTH
HEARTLAND
DISTRICT



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Serving Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, and Webster Counties



ANNUAL REPORT 2021





SPOTLIGHT: SAFE SCHOOL OPENING

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into the summer of 2020, South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD) looked toward the 2020-2021 school year with the goal of supporting all schools in staying open for in-person education by developing principles for safe reopening. These included promoting the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

SHDHD partnered with nearly 120 local healthcare organizations and providers to emphasize that NPIs—including social distancing, masking, cohorting, and handwashing—would be key to keeping local schools open. We shared this message with superintendents, school boards and parents at Zoom meetings and in letters to school staff and families.

SHDHD met weekly with ESU-9 and parochial superintendents as they developed their reopening plans. At the same time, we increased our own capacity to support schools. We developed recommendations for screening, exclusion, and re-admittance of ill students and staff. We shared instructions for determining exposures/close contacts. We assigned SHDHD staff to each school and developed processes for contact tracing in school settings. We developed a system for securely sharing information between schools and SHDHD. We shared applicable State and Federal guidance. We shared the evolving status of community risk.

MICHELE BEVER PhD, MPH

Health Director
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www.southheartlandhealth.org




CONTINUED SPOTLIGHT: SAFE SCHOOL OPENING

SHDHD emphasized that social distancing, masking, cohorting, handwashing, community spread and other factors would all be considered in determining close contacts and, hence, who would need to quarantine. Schools adopted plans for opening that phased in public health recommendations according to local risk levels. Some schools included options for remote learning. Most found ways to increase distance between students. Some started with masks required. Many schools applied public health recommendations to activities outside of the classroom. As the school year launched, SHDHD and schools worked together closely while navigating outbreaks involving school staff, classrooms, and teams. We also addressed ongoing changes in CDC school guidance. By May 2021, we were able to look back, exhausted, and celebrate the schools' achievement of making it through an entire school year of in-person classes without needing to shut down due to COVID-19!



SOUTH HEARTLAND DISTRICT
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



34,662
Vaccines Distributed


55
Home Radon Kits Completed 




\$84,094
Overtime Pay




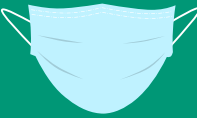
12
New Employees



65
FOBT Kits Distributed



145
Press Releases

PPE Distributed: **473,600** Gloves  **208,678** Masks 



125
QPR Training Participants



73 VetSET Family Fun Day Attendees

28 Elevated Lead Labs Investigated 



152,752
Website Visits

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report includes examples of efforts by this local health department to make the “Good Life” a healthy one in their jurisdiction. The following examples reflect work supported through multiple sources of funding, including monies from the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (HCFA).

Local health departments act as communities’ Chief Health Strategists by assuring that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved. Local health departments do this by working in each of the Three Core Function Areas of Public Health:



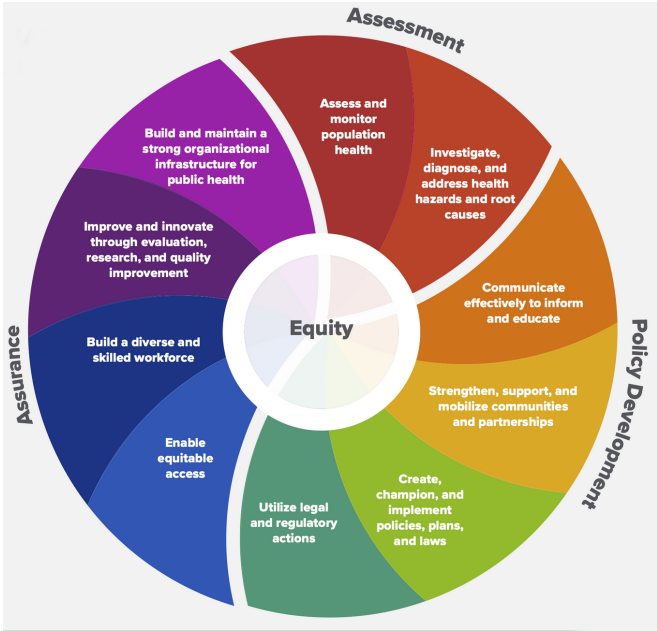
Assessment: Collect and analyze information about health problems in Nebraska communities.



Policy Development: Work with partners to apply data, educate the public, and develop programs and policies—all to address and prevent illness, disease and disability.



Assurance: Promote effective coordination and use of community resources to protect the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans.



Community Health Assessment (CHA) / Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

SHDHD activated five Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) priority steering committees in 2020. Community partners are leading action plan implementation, evaluating progress, and adjusting the plans, as needed. In January 2020, COVID-19 interrupted CHIP activities and in-person meetings. We surveyed committee members for their CHIP progress in April 2020, cancelled fall 2020 meetings due to increased COVID-19 cases, and reconvened committees (via Zoom) in June 2021 to assess progress, revise strategies, and determine next steps for the planned October meetings. SHDHD and our partners continued addressing CHIP priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic through our grants and programs. Our interim Community Health Assessment (CHA) is in progress and is sure to reflect the impact of the pandemic on the district’s overall health and wellbeing.

CHIP PRIORITIES:

Mental Health, Cancer, Substance Misuse, Access to Care, and Obesity and related health conditions.

AREAS OF WORK

ACCESS TO AND LINKAGE TO CLINICAL CARE

Includes coordination of services between medical providers and providers of health-related social needs, oral health/dental services, and behavioral/mental health.

Medical providers played a key role in COVID-19 vaccination, administering 73% of SHDHD's allocated doses. SHDHD worked to identify providers in all four counties, assisting with state approval for each and providing vaccine storage equipment, if needed. We established protocols for managing vaccine distribution, developed a reporting process to track doses given, transported vaccines, provided education, advised on best practices, supported adoption of the State's vaccine registration system, staffed vaccination clinics, and helped schedule and connect residents to vaccination sites in their counties.

CHRONIC DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Includes asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, tobacco control, and worksite wellness.

Participation in an evidence-based Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) can cut the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by more than half and improve overall health. Over two years, participants in SHDHD's CDC-recognized program (Smart Moves) hosted in Hastings and Superior exceeded the 5% weight loss target. Participants lost an average of 7.5% and 5.5% of their overall weight. Due to COVID-19, classes during this reporting period were offered via Zoom for the first time.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Includes communicable disease epidemiology (disease outbreak management/response), tuberculosis (TB), immunizations, sexually transmitted infections, and surveillance (tracking and following up on reports and provider/school reports).

Between July 2020 - June 2021, SHDHD's epidemiology team received 4,595 positive COVID-19 lab reports, conducted investigations, and took action on potential outbreaks. Outbreak responses included working with schools to create policies that would be consistent for exposures across our district and helping businesses apply public health best practices for safe work environments.

Collaboration with schools and childcare, businesses, healthcare facilities and government agencies resulted in lower community spread of COVID-19 and protection for the most vulnerable populations.

AREAS OF WORK

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Includes radon, lead, emergency response, hazardous substances and sites, and Complete Streets initiatives.

In partnership with Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE), SHDHD offered elementary schools and Head Starts opportunities to voluntarily test for lead contamination in drinking water through the Water Infrastructure Improvement (WIIN) Act project (U.S. EPA). The project provided sample kits and laboratory analysis for interested facilities. Five facilities participated, sampling from 20 faucets or drinking fountains. Ten of those sources, impacting over 1,000 children, showed lead levels above average. One tested 10 times above normal. Faucets that are leaching lead must be replaced or shut off to avoid exposing children to lead.

INJURY PREVENTION

Includes motor vehicle injuries, occupational injuries, senior fall prevention, substance abuse, car seat safety, binge drinking, and distracted driving.

Holding community-based fall prevention classes was difficult with the COVID-19 pandemic. However, SHDHD was able to safely coordinate six Tai Chi classes and one Stepping On class. Pre/post assessment of all participants demonstrated balance improvement over seven weeks (Stepping On) or 12 weeks (Tai Chi).

The Stepping On class series included guest presentations on physical therapy, ophthalmology, pharmacy, Life Line, and footwear. Participating older adults increased their self confidence and learned to prevent falls.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Includes Women, Infant, and Children (WIC), family planning, newborn screening, evidence-based home visitation, Early Preventative Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT).

SHDHD worked with nine childcare or school partners to incorporate evidence-based physical activity and nutrition practices, impacting 750 kids with our Healthy Kids initiative. All partners reported the project helped them increase the number of children who met current Federal physical activity guidelines for aerobic/muscle strengthening. Four sites adopted policies supporting an objective to meet the Federal guidelines and all sites believed they would be able to sustain their progress towards this objective over the next five years.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Additional public health activities that South Heartland District Health Department performs to assure that the health and wellbeing of Nebraskans are protected and improved.

Using Trusted Voices to Promote Vaccine Acceptance

Widespread vaccination is the key to ending the large-scale disruptions of COVID-19. To promote vaccination, SHDHD convened a taskforce of community members and SHDHD staff to discuss strategies for promoting COVID-19 vaccine acceptance in the district.

The task force used trusted voices from our four counties to help promote the importance and safety of the vaccine, focusing on local health care providers and nurses, as well as business leaders, farmers, and local “celebrities”.

All voices promoted the same message, using a 45 second script. Launched in May 2021, our first trusted voices campaign included a registered nurse, family care provider, farmer/business owner, local TV news anchor and her husband who is the Hastings College Dean of Admissions, a Director of Tourism and Commerce, an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, and an internist with his high school daughter. Working with a local media company, we were able to get seven recordings on four radio stations for six weeks.

A new script was developed to focus on the importance of vaccination as a result of the delta variant. This time we are using voices of health providers practicing throughout the district. Roll out began in July.

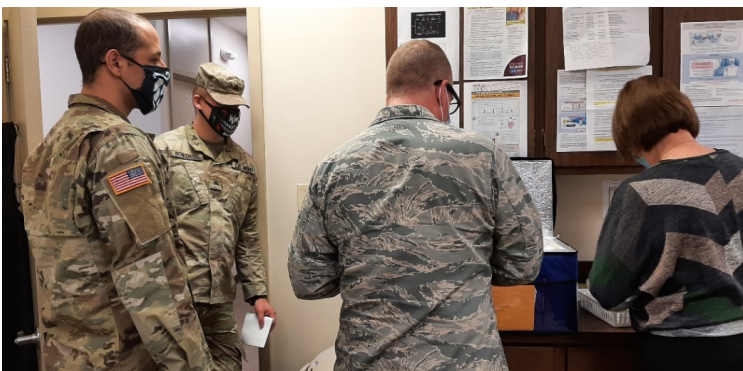
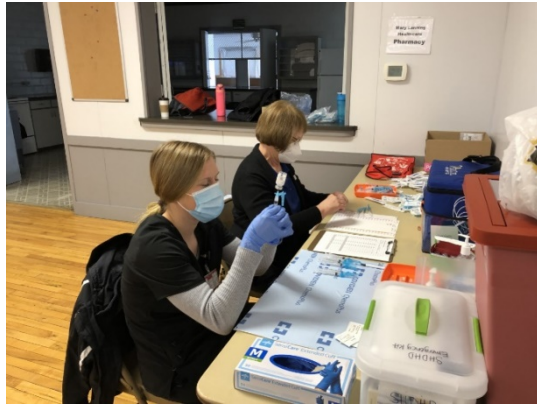
Local Recognition

South Heartland District Health Department was honored at the Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Meeting, receiving the “Max Award” for making a significant and extraordinary contribution to the Hastings Area.

Gaining Knowledge of Public Health Through Internships

SHDHD maintains a strong intern training program allowing students an opportunity to gain a foundation and basic knowledge of public health while assisting with activities and projects throughout the health department, even during a pandemic. This year’s interns take that knowledge back to Johns Hopkins University, George Washington University, Methodist College of Nursing and Hastings College.

*South
Heartland
District
Health
Department
in
Action*



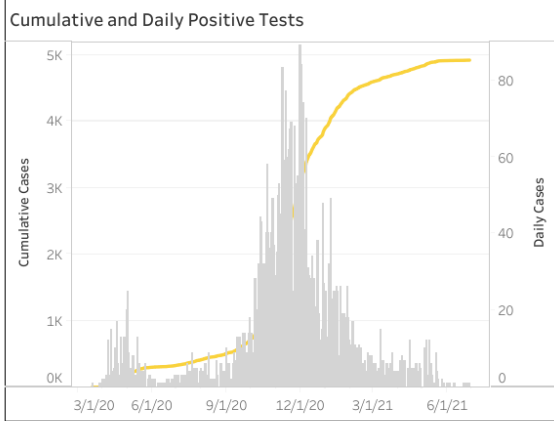


Dashboard Status at Close of FY2021

COVID-19 Dashboard

last updated 06/29/21 6:45 pm CST

Main Dashboard | Hastings Data | Vaccine Data



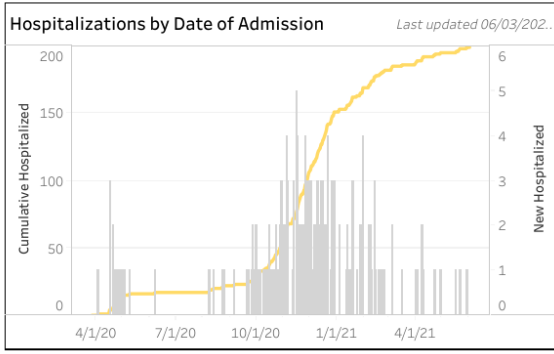
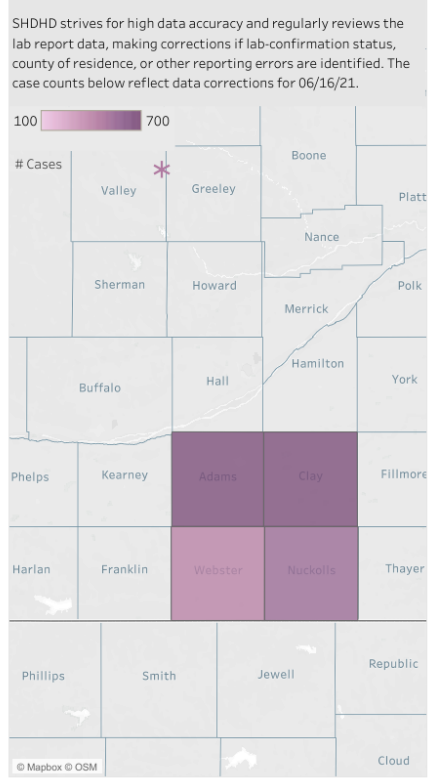
Confirmed Cases

4,926

Deaths in SHD

91 *

Deaths in SHD



CDC Death Count Information

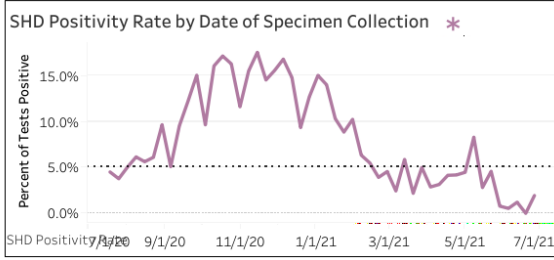
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covi...>

Total Hospitalizations (South Heartland Residents)

196

Hospital Capacity Dashboard

(Courtesy of TriCities Medical Response System)

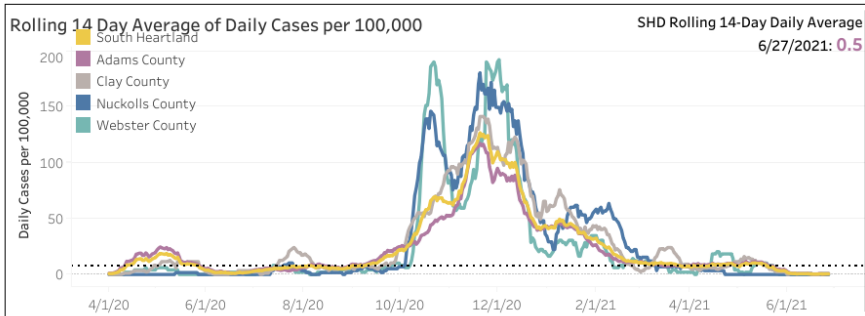
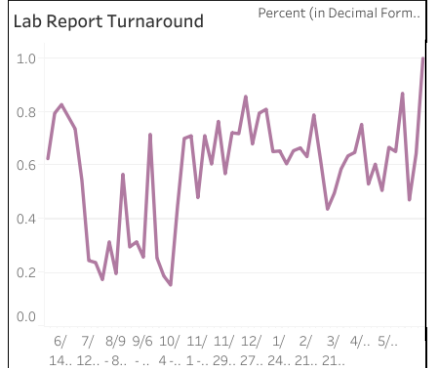
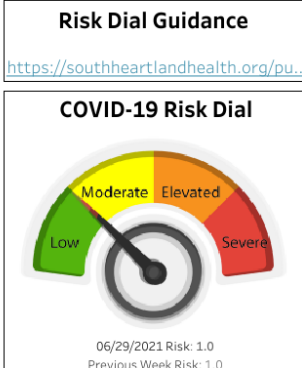
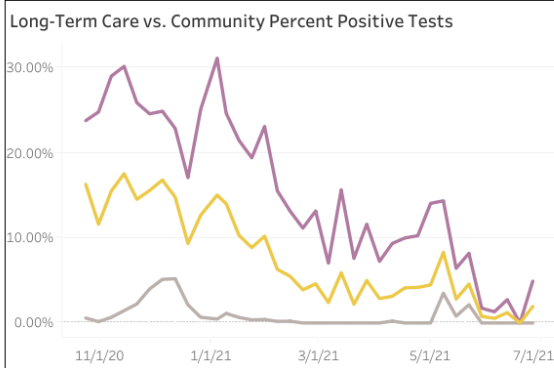
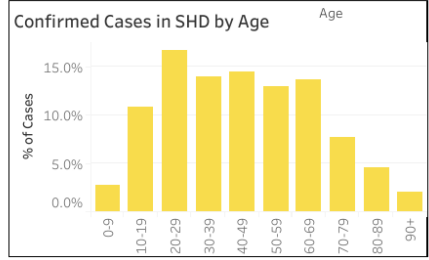


Last updated 6/21/2021 at 12:45 pm CST

Recoveries in SHD

4,668 ±

Recoveries in SHD



Cumulative Cases per 100,000 Population

SHD: 10,812

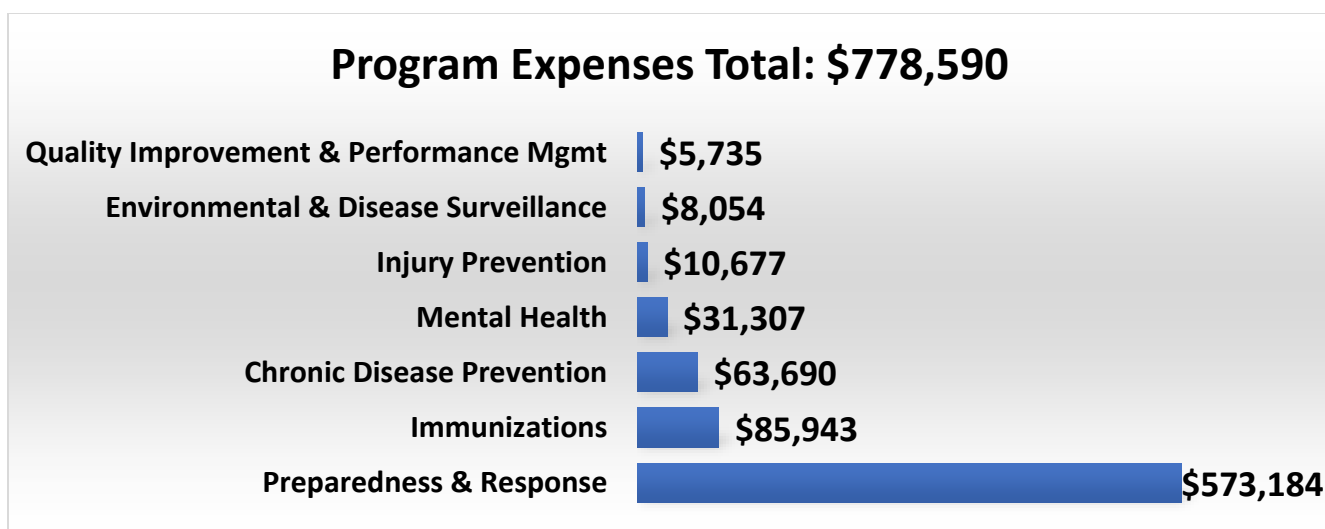
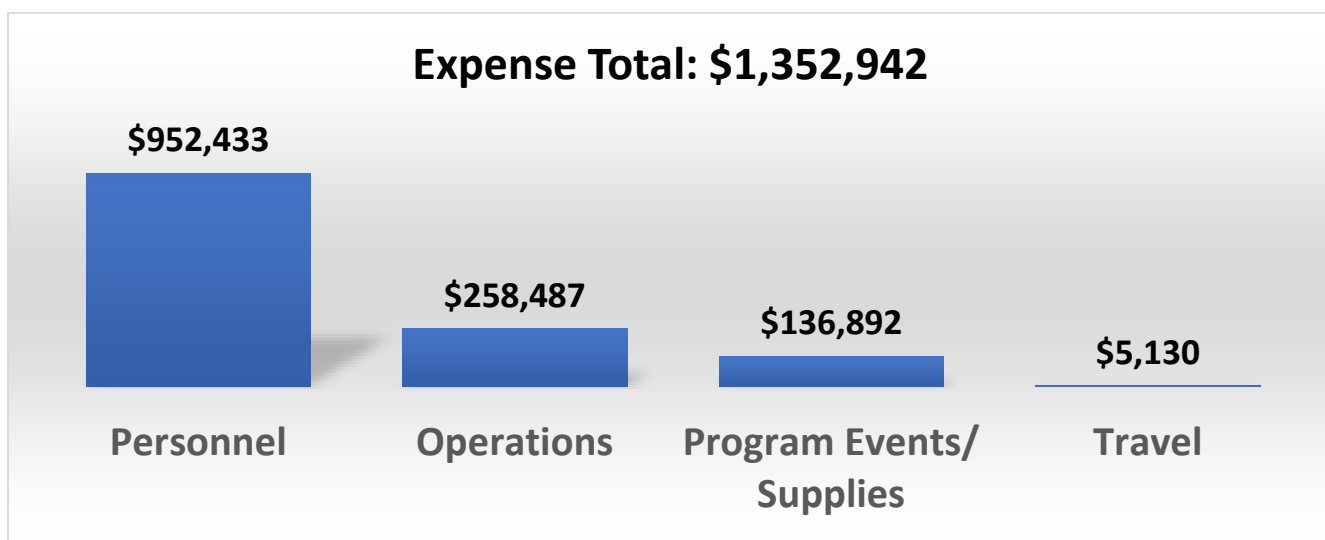
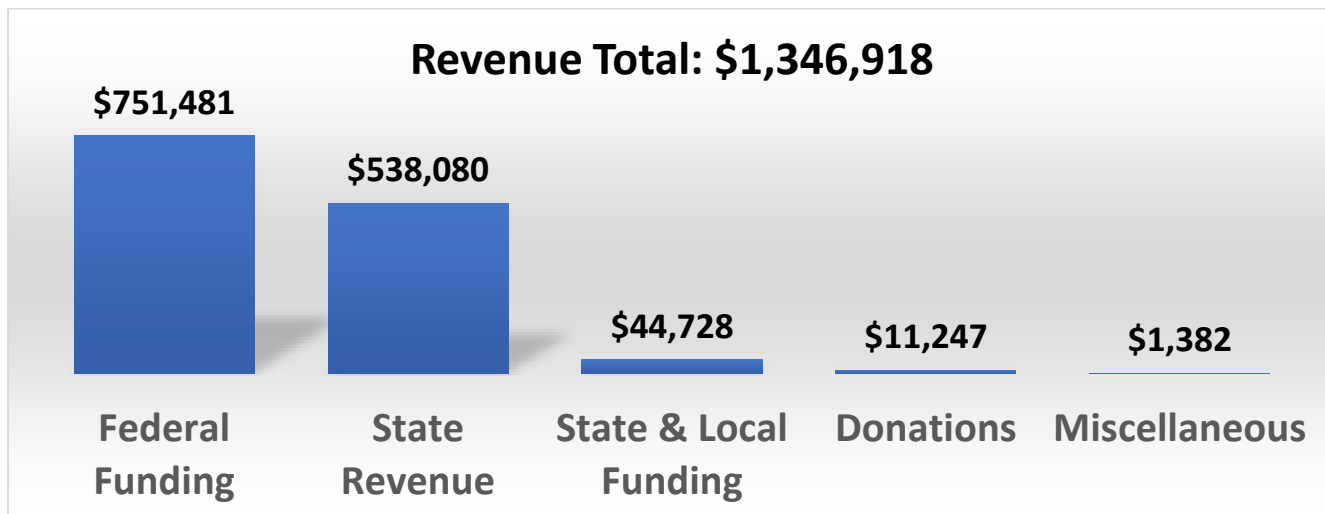
Adams: 10,095

Clay: 12,526

Nuckolls: 13,259

Webster: 11,299

Financial Report July 2020 - June 2021



South Heartland District Health Department

Board of Health

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Adams County</i> | Charles Neumann, Board of Commissioners Barbara Harrington Donna Fegler-Daiss |
| <i>Clay County</i> | Richard Shaw, Board of Supervisors Sandra Nejezchleb Nanette Shackelford |
| <i>Nuckolls County</i> | James Keifer, Board of Commissioners Peggy Meyer Jean Stichka |
| <i>Webster County</i> | T.J. Vance, Board of Commissioners Mirya Hallock Torey Kohmetscher |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Professional Representatives</i> | Medical: | Timothy Blecha, MD |
| | Dental: | Michael Kleppinger, DDS |
| | Veterinary: | Lindsay Waechter-Mead, DVM |

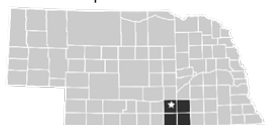
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|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Officers</i> | President: | Nanette Shackelford |
| | Vice President: | Mirya Hallock |
| | Secretary/Treasurer: | Charles Neumann |



Our Vision is...
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Mission
The South Heartland District Health Department is dedicated to preserving and improving the health of residents of Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties. We work with local partners to develop and implement a Community Health Improvement Plan and to provide other public health services mandated by Nebraska State Statutes.

Visit www.southheartlandhealth.org for full Annual Report



Promoting Health
Responding To Emergencies
Cultivating School Wellness
Improving Access To Health Care
Preventing Cancer
Investigating Diseases
Reducing Obesity
Improving Mental Health
Reducing Substance Misuse
Helping Kids Get A Healthy Start
Conducting Community Assessments
Creating Walkable Communities
Protecting Our Most Vulnerable
Connecting Veterans
Preventing Diabetes
Reducing Radon Exposures
Measuring Our Performance
Preventing Falls

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Tel (402) 462-6211 1-877-238-7595 FAX (402) 472-6219

WWW.SOUTHHEARTLANDHEALTH.ORG

PROUDLY SERVING ADAMS, CLAY,
NUCKOLLS, AND WEBSTER COUNTIES

