Local & Tribal Public Health

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Partnerships

Western Wisconsin Public Health Readiness Consortium (WWPHRC)

Special thanks to the local and tribal public health agencies that provided examples and partners that reviewed this informational booklet, which highlights how public health works with state and regional partners.



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American Red Cross

The American Red Cross (ARC) of Wisconsin provides aid and resources for people to prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies. In addition to disaster relief, the ARC offers educational programs that promote health and safety; support and comfort for military members and their families; the collection, processing, and distribution of lifesaving blood; and international relief and development programs.

In emergency preparedness and response, the ARC can help support local and tribal public health in recovery, mental health resources, distribution of emergency supplies, and operations of shelters, family assistance centers, and reception centers.

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Examples of public health and ARC collaboration include:

Outreach

Pierce County partnered with ARC to conduct fire and weather emergency outreach to three manufactured home communities. ARC installed smoke detectors in homes, and Pierce County handed out weather radios, educational materials, and fire extinguishers. - Pierce County Public Health

3 Sheltering

The ARC assisted Douglas County in choosing and running a shelter during the Refinery Explosion in Superior in April 2018.

- Douglas County Public Health

2 Tornado Response

The ARC provided volunteers, assisted with a shelter, and worked closely with the county and Salvation Army to transition the shelter into a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) for those affected by the tornado to eat or ask questions on services and resources. - Barron County Public Health

Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

Polk County Public Health partnered with ARC to open a VRC to organize and support volunteers assisting in tornado debris clean-up.

- Polk County Public Health

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Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

The <u>Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP)</u> mission is to partner with all Wisconsin citizens to grow the economy by promoting quality food, healthy plants and animals, sound use of land and water resources, and a fair marketplace. DATCP delivers efficient and effective programs and services to Wisconsin agriculture, consumers, and businesses to provide market confidence and enhance competitiveness and profitability.

In emergency preparedness and response, DATCP is responsible for monitoring for animal diseases and responding when outbreaks occur. DATCP also operates programs to monitor, prevent, and clean up agricultural chemical spills. Additionally, DATCP is responsible for enforcing food regulations and inspecting food establishments. DATCP can train local sanitarians on or conduct a National Environmental Assessment Reporting System (NEARS) outbreak investigation to capture environmental assessment data from foodborne illness outbreaks.

Examples of public health and DATCP collaboration include:

1 Avian Influenza

Trempealeau and Washburn County Public Health worked with DATCP to respond to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreaks. DATCP held meetings to provide situational updates, information, and guidance to all responding entities. Public Health was then able to follow up as appropriate using communicable disease protocols.

- Trempealeau and Washburn County Public Health

2 Animal Response

Pepin County Public Health has partnered with local law enforcement and DATCP to ensure that animal abuse allegations are investigated. In 2023, nearly 90 dogs and other animals were removed from a property due to neglect and mistreatment. There is also a partnership for follow-up when a domestic animal is bitten by a wild animal, requiring rabies quarantine. - *Pepin County Public Health*

3 Licensing & Animal Bites

Burnett County relies on DATCP for business licensing and regulations, questions on landlord/tenant issues and concerns, and guidance on animal bite and rabies prevention programming. - *Burnett County Public Health*

Exercise

Washburn County Public Health staff attended a food safety tabletop exercise facilitated by DATCP. The exercise discussed operational capabilities associated with a food safety incident's plans, processes, and procedures and the operational coordination to investigate and abate the situation successfully. Staff who attended found great value in participating. - Washburn County Public Health

5 Foodborne Outbreaks

DATCP has worked with Barron County Public Health on a foodborne illness outbreak. DATCP inspected restaurants to determine the root cause of the outbreak, performed a NEARS assessment, and provided guidance on next steps. - Barron County Public Health

DATCP assisted public health in the investigation of a Salmonella outbreak in a community-based residential facility, which led to finding the source of the outbreak that initiated a nationwide recall of a food product. - *Douglas County Public Health*



Consumer Protection Hotline: 800-422-7128
Farm Center Hotline: 800-942-2474
Food Emergency Response: 608-224-4714
Pesticide/Fertilizer Spill: 800-943-0003
Plant Pest Hotline: 866-440-7523
Spongy Moth Hotline: 800-642-6684
State Veterinarian: 608-516-2664
Toxic Response Team: 608-224-4525

Department of Natural Resources

The <u>Department of Natural Resources (DNR)</u> is dedicated to preserving and enhancing Wisconsin's natural resources. In partnership with individuals and organizations, DNR staff manage fish, wildlife, forests, parks, air, and water resources while promoting a healthy, sustainable environment and a full range of outdoor opportunities.

In emergency preparedness and response, the DNR can help support local and tribal public health in responding to and recovering from natural and human-made disasters or emergencies, such as floods, high winds, wildfires, dam outages, and spills. Examples of public health and DNR collaboration include:

Examples of public health and DNR collaboration include:

Injury Prevention

Partnering with the DNR-Conservation Warden and Clark County Forestry and Parks Department, a Clark County public health nurse designed a sign to inform ATV/UTV riders and help prevent injuries and deaths. This sign will be placed in multiple locations along trails.

- Clark County Public Health

3 Mercury Spill

After a large quantity of Mercury was spilled inside a residence, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DNR, emergency management, local police and fire/EMS, Taylor County Humane Society, and the Clark County Health Department worked together to help with evacuation, clean up, air quality monitoring, disposal, and restoration. - Clark County Public Health

5 Soil Contamination

The DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program addresses cleanup and redevelopment issues at hazardous waste sites, superfund sites, underground storage tanks, spills, and brownfield properties. Pepin County has worked with the DNR Spill Coordinator to ensure the appropriate cleanup of a methamphetamine spill/dump and human waste leak with possible contamination to a shared well.

- Pepin County Public Health

2 Disaster Cleanup

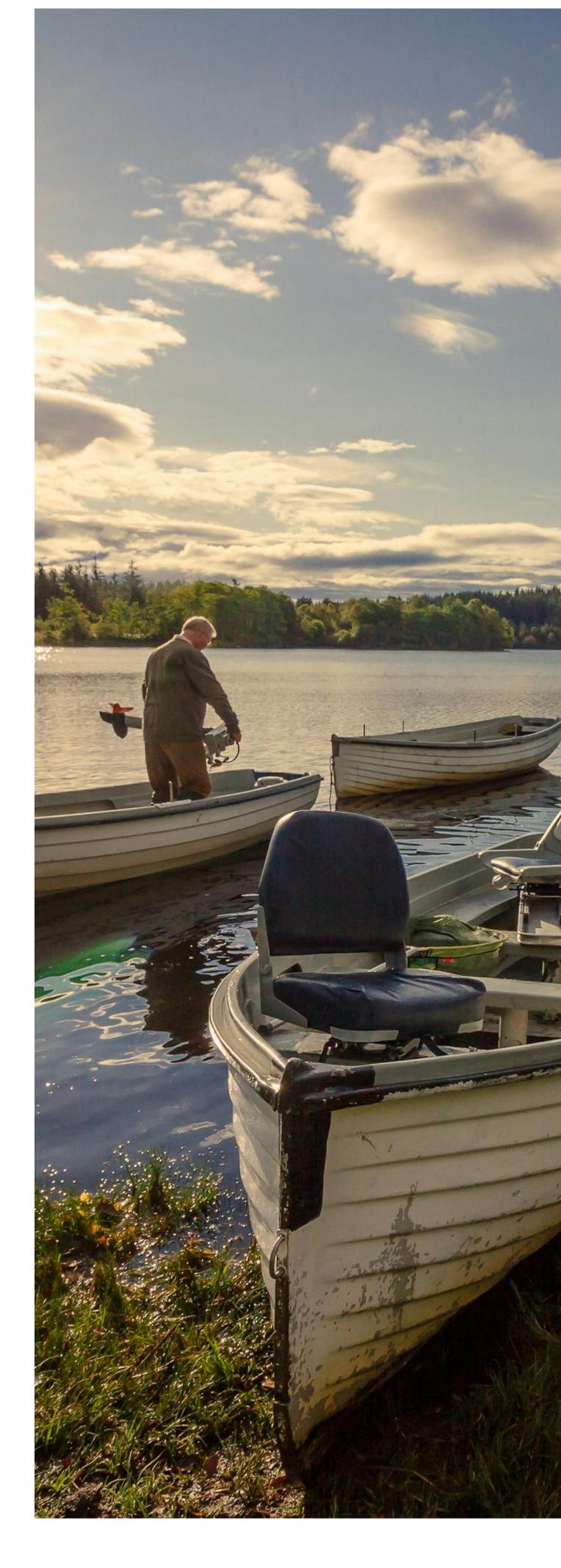
Chippewa County Public Health led the volunteer reception center following the Wheaton tornado and worked with the DNR to coordinate debris clean-up areas and locations, using items brought by volunteers.

- Chippewa County Public Health

Blue/Green Algae Blooms

DNR provided notification and communication for a confirmed blue-green algae bloom in Ashland County. Public health was then able to report it to local municipalities, surrounding counties, and emergency departments, and create social media messaging regarding bloom identification, signs/symptoms, and follow-up care.

- Ashland County Public Health



6 Monitoring

The DNR coordinates Lake Superior beach testing and partners with the Douglas County Health Department Lab to report results to local partners and in the WI Beach Health Database. The DNR has worked with local partners to monitor the shores of Lake Superior for signs of harmful algal blooms. When identified, the Douglas County Health Department provides public education and awareness through social media and posting signs. The DNR was also a key partner in the response following the Refinery Explosion in monitoring air, water, and soil quality.

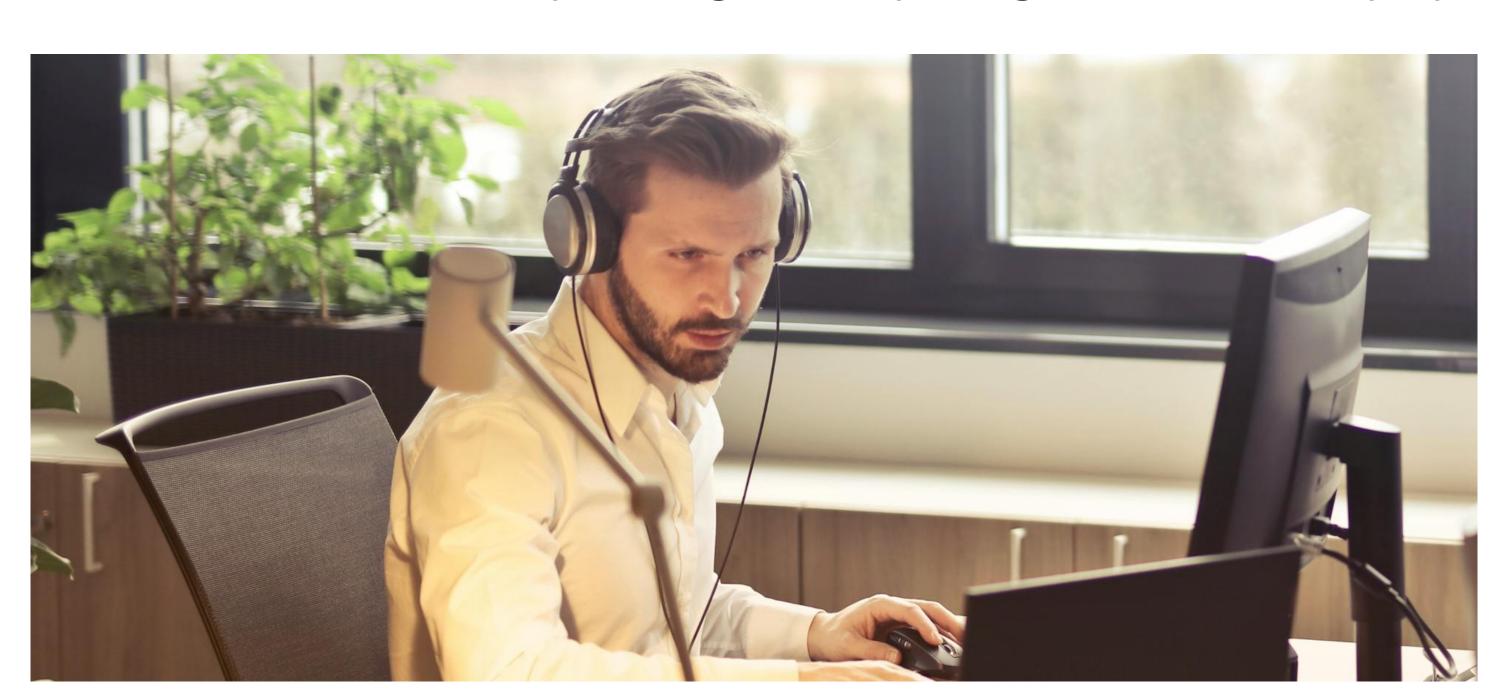
- Douglas County Public Health

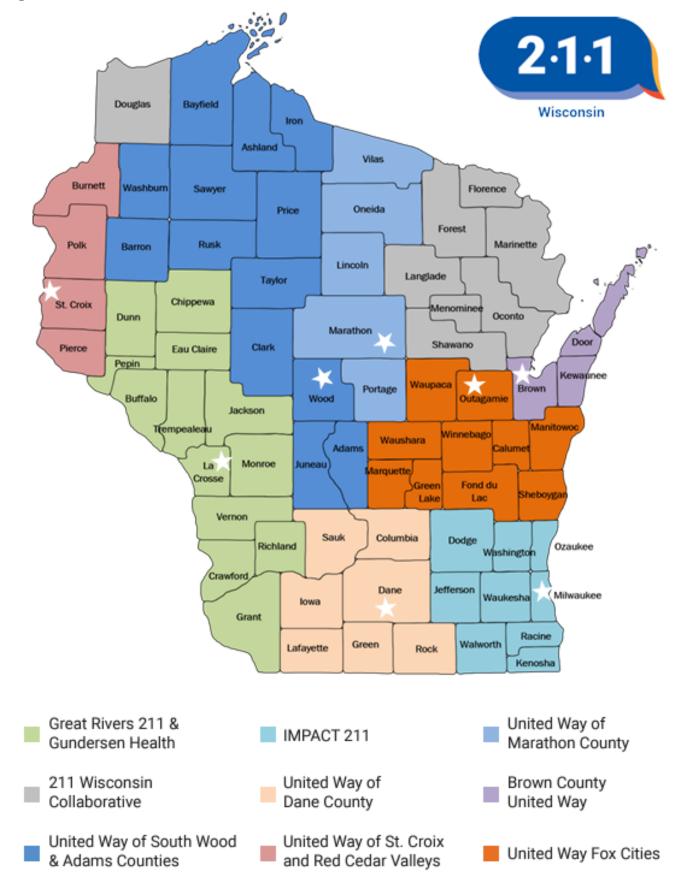
Wisconsin 211

211 is a quick and easy way to find information and get referrals for thousands of programs and services across Wisconsin. Wisconsin 211 provides:

- Personalized assessment and connection to agencies/organizations based on client need and circumstances.
- Crisis intervention for families in need of food, shelter, and natural disaster relief.
- An up-to-date database of community resources.
- Advocacy for clients struggling with language comprehension, anxiety, and other barriers.

In emergency preparedness and response, 211 Wisconsin is a partner in natural and human-made disasters and emergencies. 211 can help local and tribal public health by providing accurate, current information to the public, handling surges of non-emergency calls, sharing community resources, offering long-term recovery services information, and providing basic reporting and incident wrap-up analytics.





Examples of public health and 211 collaboration include:

Promote

During the pandemic, St. Croix County and the State of Wisconsin collaborated with 211 to advertise St. Croix County as a location for receiving COVID-19 vaccinations and testing. 211 then went on to introduce a Pop-Up Clinic Module.

- St. Croix County Public Health

Services

Following a fire at an apartment complex, St. Croix County turned to 211, in partnership with the American Red Cross, to provide essential housing and financial assistance resources for individuals and families affected.

- St. Croix County Public Health

211 Wisconsin Collaborative

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Great Rivers 211 & Gundersen Health

Carla Lundeen - Director

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Reports

Following the Wheaton tornado, 211 provided reports detailing the nature of calls received to Chippewa County Public Health and Emergency Management. These reports were useful as they helped address the needs of affected individuals.

- Chippewa County Public Health

Appointments

In the early days of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, Pierce County partnered with 211 to act as the appointment system for residents who preferred to schedule over the phone. They were instrumental in ensuring older adults had equitable access to vaccine appointments.

- Pierce County Public Health

United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties

Tari Jahns - Director

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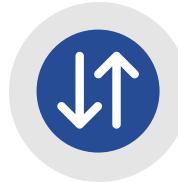
United Way of St. Croix & Red Cedar Valleys

Trica Trowbridge - Director

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Wisconsin Division of Public Health

The <u>Division of Public Health (DPH)</u> protects and promotes health and well-being statewide. Working in partnership with our network of local and tribal public health partners, community-based organizations, schools, businesses, and more, they:



• Use data, evidence, and research to monitor and diagnose health needs of entire populations, and offer solutions to improve health outcomes.



 Convene partners, engage coalitions, and support a wide variety of programs and services that promote healthy communities.



• Develop and advance policies and programs that make good health possible wherever you live, work, or play.





DPH protects and promotes health and well-being statewide with the help of its eight bureaus and offices.

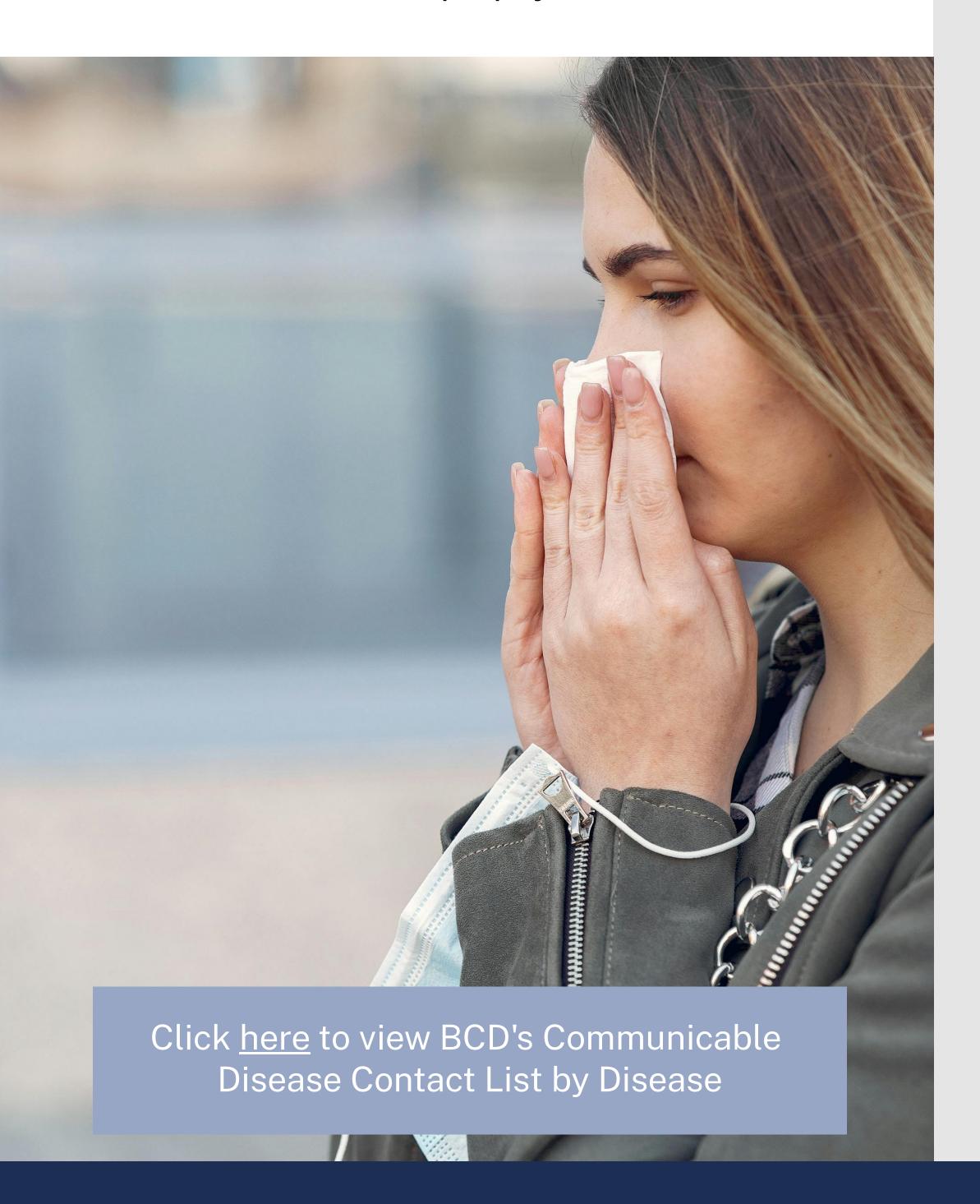
- Bureau Aging and Disability Resources (BADR)
- Bureau of Community Health Promotion
- Office of Health Informatics (OHI)
- Regional Offices
- Bureau of Communicable Disease (BCD)
- Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health (BEOH)
- Office of Policy and Practice Alignment (OPPA)
- Office of Preparedness and Emergency Health Care (OPEHC)

The following four pages will detail how the DPH bureaus and offices in blue collaborate with local and tribal public health agencies in emergency preparedness and response.

Bureau of Communicable Diseases

The Wisconsin DPH, <u>Bureau of Communicable Diseases (BCD)</u>, is responsible for the surveillance, control, and prevention of more than 70 reportable communicable diseases. In addition, BCD staff routinely provides education, outreach, and assistance to local health departments, healthcare providers, and citizens. BCD also maintains the statewide electronic surveillance system and ensures national reporting of cases.

In emergency preparedness and response, BCD can help support local and tribal public health in communicable disease surveillance, investigation, and infection prevention for outbreaks of food, water, vector, zoonotic, respiratory, and emerging diseases. BCD also provides vaccines and technical assistance for immunizations and is responsible for Wisconsin's use of the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile and the conduct of mass immunization/prophylaxis.



Examples of public health and BCD collaboration collaboration include:

1 Surveillance & Outbreak Support (SOS) Team

The BCD's SOS team supported enteric disease surveillance and outbreak response activities by conducting interviews and providing data management for foodborne illness outbreaks.

- Clark and Barron County Public Health

Vector-borne Diseases

The BCD is leaned on for surveillance and guidance on follow-up and public health implications for emerging and increasing illnesses related to mosquitoes (e.g., Jamestown Canyon).

- Burnett and Sawyer County Public Health

Blastomycosis Cluster

In response to a cluster of blastomycosis cases in humans and pets, BCD and DATCP issued alerts to physicians and veterinarians. BCD also coordinated with the CDC to support the investigation.

- St. Croix County Public Health

Campylobacter Outbreak

In 2016, through the school surveillance program, the Durand Arkansaw School District alerted Pepin County Public Health of several students and staff members who became ill after consuming raw milk. BCD assisted with the investigation and follow-up of this outbreak.

- Pepin County Public Health

5 Data Support

BCD provided technical support and considerations for publicly sharing local tick-borne disease data. They also explained the data collection process and follow-up priorities to a new staff nurse.

- Sawyer County Public Health

Infection Prevention

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a small Pierce County long-term care facility struggled to operationalize COVID-19 guidance. A BCD infection prevention specialist visited the facility for a full day to provide supportive guidance to the facility and the local health department to ensure residents' safety and health.

- Pierce County Public Health



Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health

The mission of the <u>Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health (BEOH)</u> is to ensure each person in Wisconsin can live, work, and play in healthy spaces by reducing and removing exposure to health hazards. To this end, BEOH provides tracking of environmental and occupational illness through disease surveillance programs, provides consultation to employers, local health agencies, and the public on many technical issues, and promotes risk reduction through assessment, evaluation, and control of environmental and occupational hazards.



In emergency preparedness and response, BEOH provides access to needed equipment, training resources, and subject matter experts to facilitate the investigation and control of environmental health hazards. BEOH also maintains emergency response capability for nuclear power plant incidents, transportation accidents involving radioactive material, and potential acts of terrorism involving radioactive materials.

Examples of public health and BEOH collaboration include:

Local Support & Testing

BEOH provides resources for the prevention of exposure to hazardous substances, such as staffing support or equipment rental. Pepin County requested assistance when a local resident had concerns about fumes coming from diesel trucks in a nearby gas station. An expert in air quality visited the property and conducted tests to determine if the concern was warranted. - *Pepin County Public Health*

3 Equipment

Buffalo County Public Health borrowed BEOH equipment to conduct indoor air quality surveillance for a community member experiencing respiratory issues. BEOH helped train staff virtually on using the equipment and interpreting the results.

- Buffalo County Public Health

Per- & Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAs)

BEOH provided education and technical assistance to the Health Dunn Right Healthy Environment Action Team after local PFA testing showed detections but no exceedances. BEOH also assisted in research by indicating where to locate information following local concerns about a potential spill and cleanup and highlighted the need to incorporate PFAs into notification processes. - *Dunn County Public Health*

Lead & Air/Water Quality Assistance

BEOH provided assistance in investigating and following up on a lead exposure to workers restoring an old ship with lead paint in 2016. BEOH also provided expertise and guidance for air and water quality following the Refinery Explosion in Superior in 2018. - Douglas County Public Health

Click <u>here</u> to view contact information for BEOH technical experts or quick contact guide.





Office of Policy and Practice Alignment

The Office of Policy and Practice Alignment (OPPA) has a primary responsibility to build partnerships and to provide leadership and support through the development and recommendations of statewide policy related to the Wisconsin Public Health System. OPPA's major functions include the development and implementation of practices and policies related to community health and prevention consistent with state statute. Additional functions include the development of federal grant applications, evaluating existing and proposed legislative proposals, and ensuring that quality primary healthcare and public health programs and services are available for Wisconsin citizens and visitors.

In emergency preparedness and response, OPPA can function as an information pipeline through which the central office and local and tribal public health departments communicate. Regional OPPA staff also provide leadership in the development of health system capacity and the emergency preparedness and response foundational public health capability. OPPA reviews this capability and other local public health requirements via the DHS 140 review or the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

Examples of public health and OPPA collaboration include:

WWPHRC and the Western Regional OPPA Office have a consistent collaborative relationship related to preparedness. With this, much of the outcomes are achieved at a level that benefits WWPHRC members as a whole.

Coordination

OPPA has coordinated calls to discuss communicable disease cases, flooding, and more. For example, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, OPPA called western region local health officers to notify them of where the first case was. - WWPHRC Wide

3 Strategic Planning

During the COVID-19 pandemic, OPPA helped support the drafting of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for shared services (e.g., contact tracing). - WWPHRC Wide

Western Region

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Public Health Nurse Call

OPPA's team coordinates a monthly call for local and tribal health departments. On that call, they share resources, information, and guidance on communicable diseases and other current public health topics. - WWPHRC Wide

4 Virtual Meetings

OPPA engages in virtual WWPHRC meetings to connect the consortium and members to helpful information in response to specific questions or needs when requested. - WWPHRC Wide

Northern Region

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Office of Preparedness and Emergency Health Care



The <u>Office of Preparedness and Emergency Health Care (OPEHC)</u> is responsible for public health and hospital preparedness, classifying Level 3 and Level 4 trauma centers, and licensing emergency medical services in Wisconsin.

In emergency preparedness and response, OPEHC supports and enhances the capacity of the state, local public health departments/tribes, and the health care system to prepare for public health threats and emergencies through planning, exercising, responding, and training. Functions include planning and coordinating for grant management/contract administration, pandemic influenza, the Strategic National Stockpile, risk communication, and partnering and outreach with other agencies, workgroups, and committees. OPEHC also coordinates a statewide bimonthly call for local and tribal preparedness staff, providing a platform to share the state contract, resources, and initiatives, as well as to coordinate presentations from subject matter experts.

Examples of public health and OPEHC collaboration include:

1 Response Data

Taylor County requested emPOWER data from OPEHC when ice storms hit the area. This data was critical in power outage situations.

- Taylor County Public Health

Planning

OPEHC shared and gathered local and tribal health department feedback for the state's Highly Infectious Disease Plan. OPEHC has also provided the state perspective when updating local public health emergency preparedness plans. - WWPHRC Wide

3 EMTrack & FAC Plan

Eau Claire City-County Public Health partnered with OPEHC to support the advancement of local Family Assistance Center (FAC) Plans by working to integrate the EMTrack system as a means to support HIPAA-compliant information sharing, patient tracking, and family reunification capabilities between hospitals and locally supported FAC operations. OPEHC also helped present EMTrack to local response teams to explore its integration into existing plans and future exercises.

- Eau Claire City-County Public Health

4 Hotwash

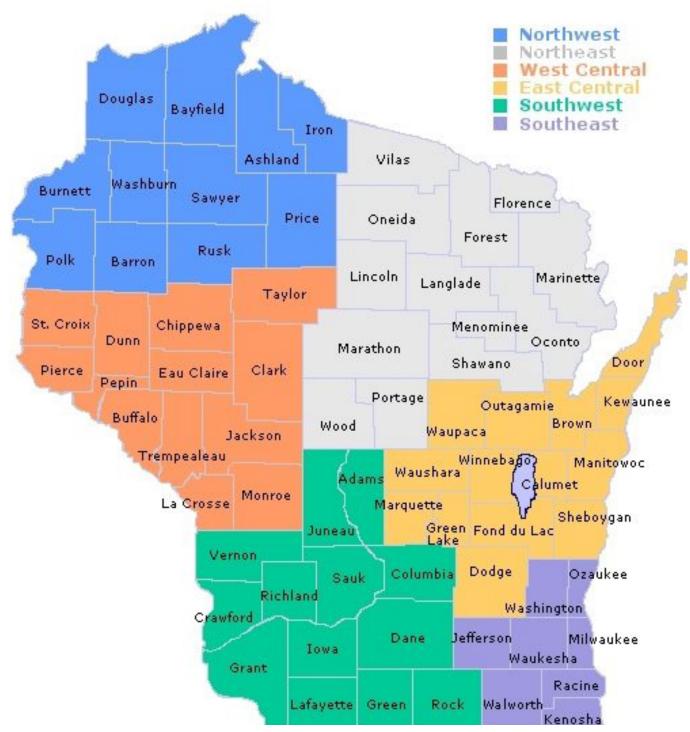
In July 2022, Eau Claire City-County Public Health conducted a hotwash focused on the community-wide ICS Response during COVID-19, which involved over 60 community partners. Prior to this hotwash, OPEHC provided input on ways to combine hotwash findings with other AAR templates and PHEP/FEMA capability crosswalks. WEM helped facilitate the small breakout group discussions that were part of this hotwash.

- Eau Claire City-County Public Health

Wisconsin Emergency Management

<u>Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM)</u> builds capabilities and coordinates resources to support a safe and resilient Wisconsin. WEM coordinates effective disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts in support of local governments.

In emergency preparedness and response, WEM supports local and tribal public health by working together with county and tribal emergency managers. These emergency managers serve their communities by working to improve local resilience by preparing for, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering from disasters by writing emergency response plans, conducting exercises, and providing training on a regular basis to better prepare local governments and responders.



Examples of public health and WEM collaboration include:

Exercises

Jackson County Public Health participates and is involved in exercises coordinated by WEM (e.g., Bright Horizons Exercise and Multi-Agency Reception Center Exercise). - Jackson County Public Health

Plan Assistance

WEM assisted in tough conversations while updating preparedness plans. Jackson County worked with WEM, ARC, and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to discuss special circumstances for sheltering plans (e.g., those on Probation).

- Jackson County Public Health

5 Preparedness and Training

Preparedness & Education

The St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic has worked very closely with their emergency manager on a variety of projects related to preparedness and education.

- St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic

Marming/Cooling Shelters

Partnering with Bayfield County Emergency
Management, DHS Environmental Health Tracking,
municipalities, and a local church, Bayfield County
established a countywide network of 6 warming/
cooling shelters for extreme heat/cold days. Facilities
were also stocked with emergency supplies.

- Bayfield County Public Health

Taylor County Public Health collaborated with the local emergency manager (EM) on various emergency response exercises, hazardous materials training, and sheltering and reunification plans. This collaboration helped refine joint response strategies and improve communication protocols. Taylor County Public Health also participated in many training courses with WEM, HERC, and OPHEC, which enhanced preparedness for various emergencies. Additionally, WEM and local EM have been instrumental in providing resources and support during major emergencies, such as severe weather in 2024. - *Taylor County Public Health*

Click here to view more collaboration examples.



Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene

The <u>Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH)</u> is the state's public, environmental, and occupational health laboratory. Through analytical services, research and development, public health programs, laboratory proficiency testing, and training and education of students and professionals, the WSLH's work is vital to Wisconsin's and the nation's public and environmental health.

In emergency preparedness and response, WSLH is a part of the Laboratory Response Network (LRN) that can respond to both biological (LRN-B) and chemical (LRN-C) threats. WSLH also facilitates the Wisconsin Clinic Laboratory Network (WCLN) of clinical laboratories in the state to ensure a timely and effective response to clinical laboratory and public health needs. The WCLN's purpose encompasses emergency preparedness, disease surveillance, laboratory diagnostics, training and education, and communications. Additionally, WSLH does confirmatory testing for suspected bioterrorism agents and offers an equipment library of air monitoring and other field assessment instrumentation to support public health monitoring.



Examples of public health and WSLH collaboration include:

Testing

During infectious disease outbreaks at Fort McCoy, WSLH coordinated efforts to test for measles, tuberculosis, and other diseases to quickly identify and isolate sick individuals to prevent spread into the local community. WSLH also secured the transportation of specimens with Wisconsin's State Patrol and adjusted their hours of operation to meet the needs of increased testing. - *Monroe County Public Health*

2 WisCon - Respiratory Protection

WisCon is a team of occupational safety and health consultants whose mission is to help Wisconsin's private and public health employers reduce or eliminate workplace hazards by providing strategies and training. WisCon provided respiratory protection training to WWPHRC members and assisted in reviewing respiratory protection policies. - WWPHRC Wide

3 Surveillance & Testing

Taylor County Public Health works with WSLH for disease surveillance and testing during outbreaks. For example, during the COVID-19 outbreak, coordination occurred with WSLH to facilitate rapid testing and data sharing, which was crucial for effectively managing the situation. - *Taylor County Public Health*

4 Training

WSLH offered a packaging and shipping training for materials with potential infectious disease in Sawyer County. The staff who attended the training found it valuable. - *Washburn County Public Health*

Clinical Laboratories: 800-862-1013 Environmental Laboratories: 800-442-4618 Occupational Laboratories: 800-446-0403

WisCon Consultation Program: 800-947-0553 Profiency Testing: 800-462-5261

Chemical Emergency Response: 608-224-6273

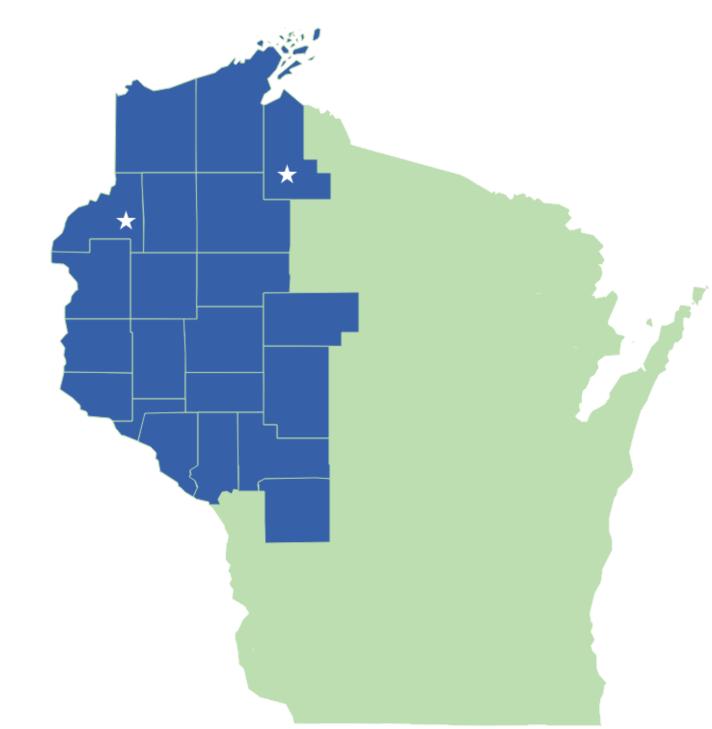


Western Wisconsin Public Health Readiness Consortium

The Western Wisconsin Public Health Readiness Consortium (WWPHRC) is a regional consortium consisting of twenty-one local public health agencies and two tribal health agencies. Its purpose is to help members develop local capacity to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from all types of health emergencies, including bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks, and natural disasters.

WWPHRC work is accomplished through networking, coordinating, standardizing, and centralizing our resources and planning efforts among our members. Key actions include:

- Planning and Exercising
- Coordination and Collaboration
- Communication
- Resource Sharing
- Relationship Building



Examples of public health and WWPHRC collaboration include:

Preparedness plans

WWPHRC updates and shares template preparedness plans for consistency across the region and coordinates yearly exercises to test those plans. Exercises are based on regional top hazards.

Meeting coordination

WWPHRC facilitates meetings, joint planning and response, and preparedness contract requirements to support member collaborative actions (e.g., sharing experiences, subject matter expertise, information sharing).

Joint messaging

WWPHRC coordinates joint messaging between local health departments and healthcare facilities to share information and emergency public health messaging (e.g., COVID-19, measles).

Resources

WWPHRC has resources that are regionally shared for various functions, including message creation, data collection, and respiratory protection. Furthermore, WWPHRC creates educational materials to support workforce development.

Click here to learn more about WWPHRC.

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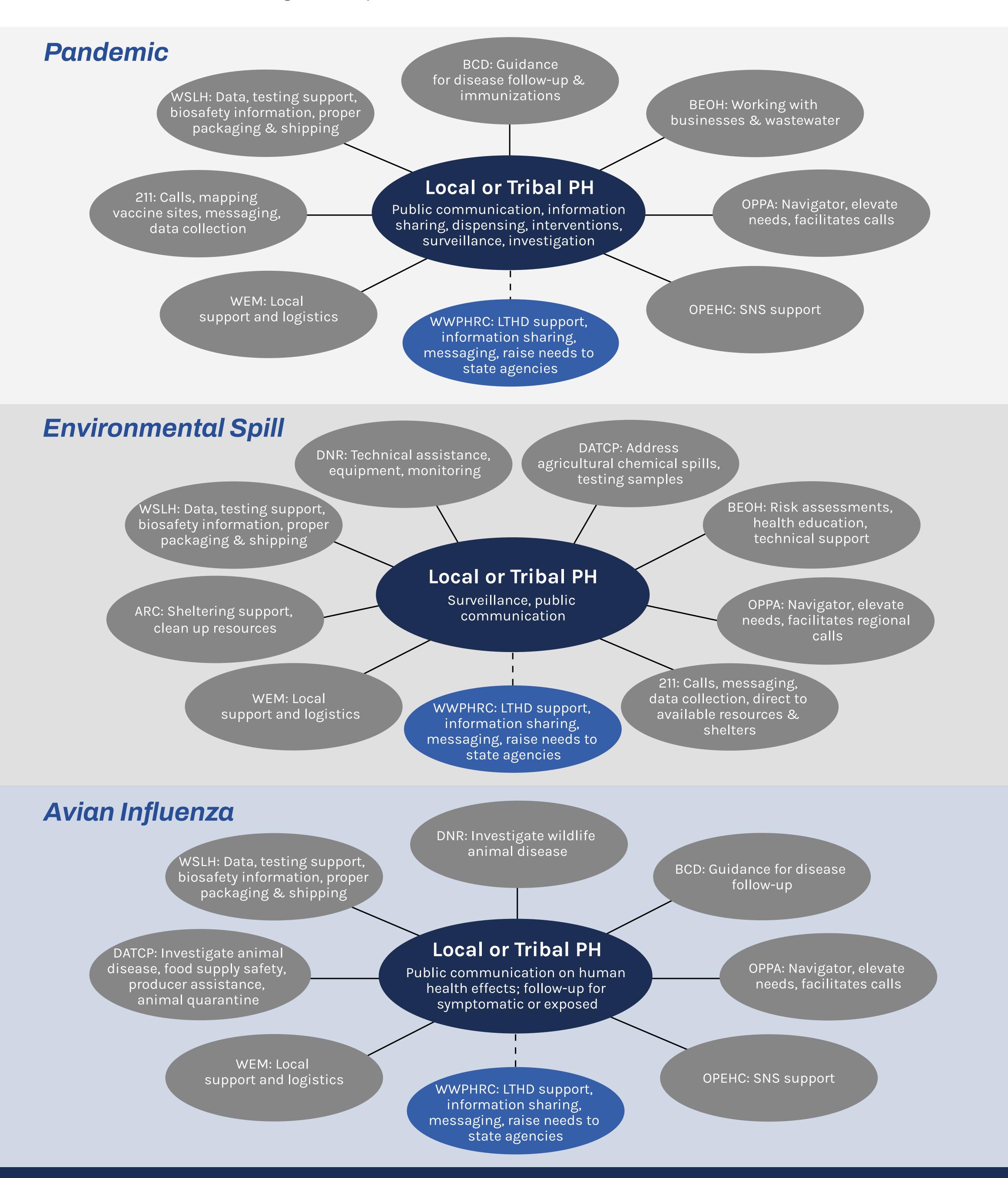
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Response Collaboration Examples

Below are examples of how state agencies and local and tribal public health work together to respond to certain emergency events. *Note: Public health is not the lead for all emergencies listed. These examples are also not inclusive of all work during each response.*



No single organization can respond effectively to a large-scale outbreak or disaster on their own. More people can be reached when communities leverage the strengths of each partner organization, share resources, avoid duplication, and close gaps.

- World Health Organization (WHO)

