Health Commissioner Update

As COVID-19 cases dropped early this summer, our staff was able to take a well-deserved break from more than 15 months of non-stop COVID-19 response activities. We continued to offer vaccinations, but we closed the mall mass vaccination site and moved clinics back to our offices. During July we began to see cases trend upward again, and by early August we were back to high COVID-19 community transmission. Our staff continues to promote vaccinations, social distancing, and masking of unvaccinated individuals when distancing is not possible. We are also planning for additional COVID-19 vaccination clinics as 3rd dose boosters are authorized.

Returning to school during a resurging COVID-19 pandemic has proved challenging. With no state-wide mask mandates, school boards are left to adopt their own policies. The Ohio Department of Health recommends requiring masks for unvaccinated students and teachers in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained. The CDC requires masks be worn on buses. If masks are not being worn in the classroom or on the bus, when a student tests positive for COVID-19, any exposed, unvaccinated students or teachers must quarantine for up to 10 days. Resulting in missed school and extracurricular attendance.

As we look toward the fall, FDH staff will continue working to recover from the impacts of the pandemic by focusing on catching up on deferred inspections and developing new programs and services to improve the health of our community. We have hired our first health educator and a full-time epidemiologist after many years with limited staffing to provide these core public health services.

While COVID-19 has dominated much of the past year and a half, FDH continues to provide Environmental Health, Nursing, WIC, and other programs to protect the environment, promote healthy lifestyles, and prevent disease to help Fairfield County’s residents achieve their best possible health.

- R. Joseph (Joe) Ebel RS, MS, MBA
Warming weather and stagnant water have resulted in an increase in the number of mosquitoes present across the county. According to Joe Ebel, Health Commissioner, “Our mosquito trapping and testing program has identified mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus in the county”

To avoid possible infection from mosquito bites:

- Consider avoiding outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you must be outdoors, be sure to wear light-colored clothing, long pants, long-sleeved shirts, shoes and socks to protect against mosquito bites.
- Use U.S. EPA registered insect repellents and follow the label directions.
- Eliminate all areas of standing water from your property such as discarded tires and other water-holding containers like tin cans and unused flower pots.
- Make sure all roof gutters are clean and properly draining.
- Clean and chlorinate pools and hot tubs, even those that are not being used, and drain water from pool covers.
- Change water in bird baths weekly.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors.

FDH now offers mosquito fogging to townships, villages, cities and other entities at $75/mile sprayed

For more information, contact the Fairfield Department of Health at (740) 652-2800.

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**Back to School Breakfast**

In a hurry and need to rush out the door in the morning? Take time for breakfast! Get out your blender and try one of these breakfast shakes for a quick and healthy start.

*Blend 1 cup skim milk, 1 cup strawberries or raspberries, and 1/2 a banana.*

*Blend 8 ounces low fat yogurt, 1 cup peaches or pineapples, and a splash of orange juice.*

*Taken from SmartFood, courtesy of Fairfield County WIC*
Everyone talks about getting the flu, but do you really know how to recognize seasonal flu and what to do about it? In the United States, over 35,000 people die of seasonal flu each year. Seasonal flu outbreaks follow predictable seasonal patterns — usually in winter and early spring. That’s why it’s important to get a flu shot before the peak flu “season”. The flu virus spreads mainly through coughs and sneezes from someone who is infected. People with flu can also pass on the virus by touching things like a doorknob with their hands.

Avoid getting the flu by practicing good cleanliness. Wash your hands and teach your children to wash theirs. Make sure you cover your cough properly, which means coughing into your elbow or sleeve and not in your hands. Stay away from those who are sick if possible. Clean your sinks, countertops, electronic devices and other often used appliances and areas with disinfectant.

Call to make your appointment today: 740-652-2800

Interns

Meaghan Bashaw
Ohio University

Laura Hakim
Ohio University

Rebecca Owusu
Chamberlain University

Staff Promotions

Jamie E. Ehorn, Director of Administrative Services
Mary Smith, WIC Director
Jennifer Valentine REHS, Environmental Supervisor
Community Outreach

FDH staff was happy to be a part of the Lancaster City Fourth of July parade.

On August 2, 2021, Fairfield Department of Health, WIC staff and Fairfield Medical Center Lactation Specialists held a World Breastfeeding Awareness event at Rising Park. Breastfeeding educational activities were provided to five participants and their support person who attended with them.

On August 11, 2021, staff was thrilled to be a part of the Pickerington Schools Health and Wellness Fair. Information on FDH programs as well as fun gifts and health related curriculum was distributed.

Outreach Clinics

- June: St. Peters Lutheran Homeless and Pickerington Library Community Fair
- July: Homeless outreach at Cinci Park, Canal Winchester School vaccine clinic, Lancaster Festival, and YMCA
- August: Magna Factory vaccine clinic and Ohio University vaccine clinic

Regular Events

BOARD MEETING

Next Meeting: September 8, 2021
Second Wednesday of each month beginning at 3:00pm
The Fairfield Department Board of Health Meeting
OSU Extension Office, 831 College Ave
Conferece Room A (West Wing)
Lancaster, Ohio 43130

The public is welcome. Social Distancing will be used. Masks will be required.

Program Spotlight

Sewage Program

This month's program in the spotlight is the Sewage Program! It is not a glamorous program, but our team is doing an excellent job. Despite setbacks from COVID-19 and staff turnover, these ladies have signed off on 262 new sewage treatment installation permits this year, which is an increase of about 50% from both 2020 and 2019. Not to mention, 12 month inspections, alteration permits/nuisance complaints, and lot split applications. We are also on our way to helping 8 people repair or replace their septic systems with WPCLF money.