

TriCounty Health Department  
Annual Report  
2025

Public Health as  
an investment

Public health works best when it's invisible — preventing outbreaks, injuries, and chronic disease before they occur.

*Photo Credit: Bruce McKee*

# Message from the Director

Public health is the work that keeps people healthy before they ever need a doctor. It's the clean water you drink, the food safety standards that prevent outbreaks, the vaccinations that protect families, and the early warnings that stop small health problems from becoming community-wide crises. While much of public health happens behind the scenes, its impact shows up every day — in longer lives, healthier neighborhoods, and safer places to live, learn, and work.

TriCounty Health Department focuses on prevention, protection, and preparedness. We track and respond to infectious diseases, reduce chronic illness, support mental health, promote healthy environments, and ensure rapid response to emergencies. We work with schools, businesses, healthcare providers, and community organizations to address the root causes of illness — because health is shaped not just by medical care, but by housing, education, nutrition, and the environment around us.

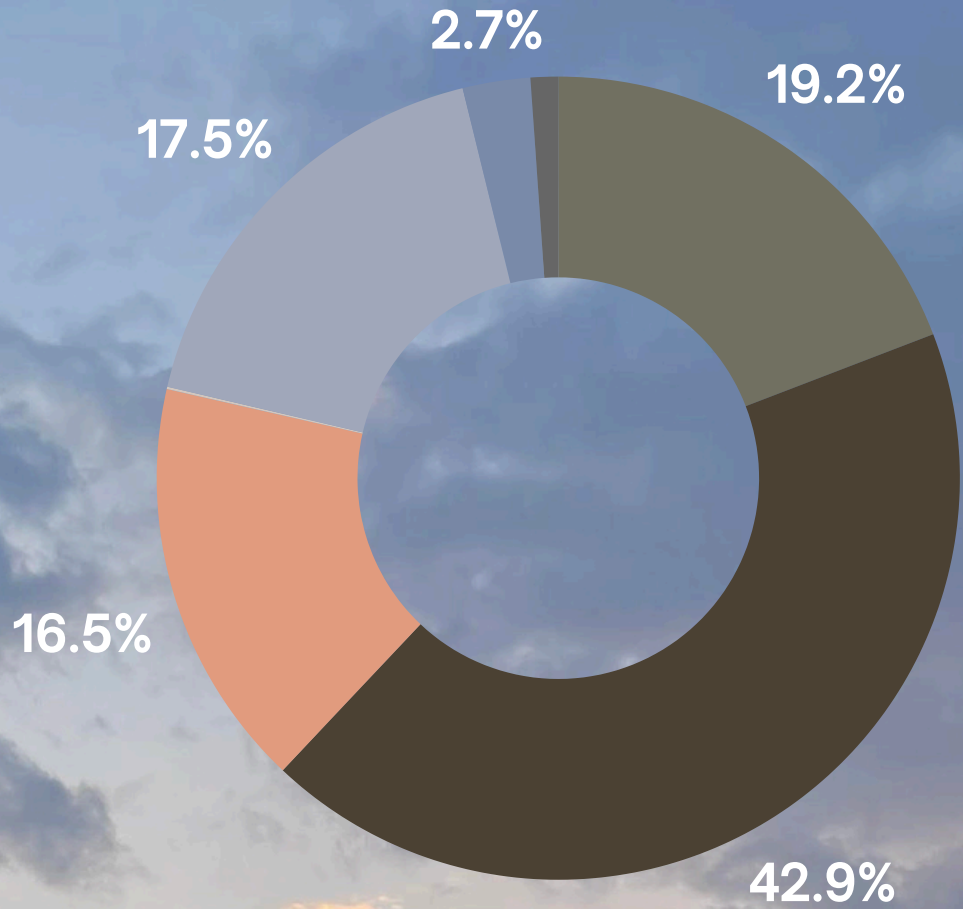
Investing in public health is not only the right thing to do — it's the smart thing to do. Preventing disease and injury costs far less than treating them after they occur. Every dollar invested in public health helps reduce future spending on emergency care, hospitalizations, and long-term medical and social services. Strong public health systems mean fewer preventable illnesses, a more productive workforce, and lower strain on healthcare and social support systems over time.

Public health is a shared responsibility and a shared benefit. When we invest in prevention today, we save lives, reduce costs, and build a healthier, more resilient community for tomorrow.

**Kirk Bengé, Health Officer**

\$5,016,333.42

Revenue



*Every dollar invested in public health prevents illness, protects productivity, and strengthens the local economy.*

*Federal Grant Revenue*

*State Grant Revenue*

*Charges for Services (Fees)*

*Interest Earnings*

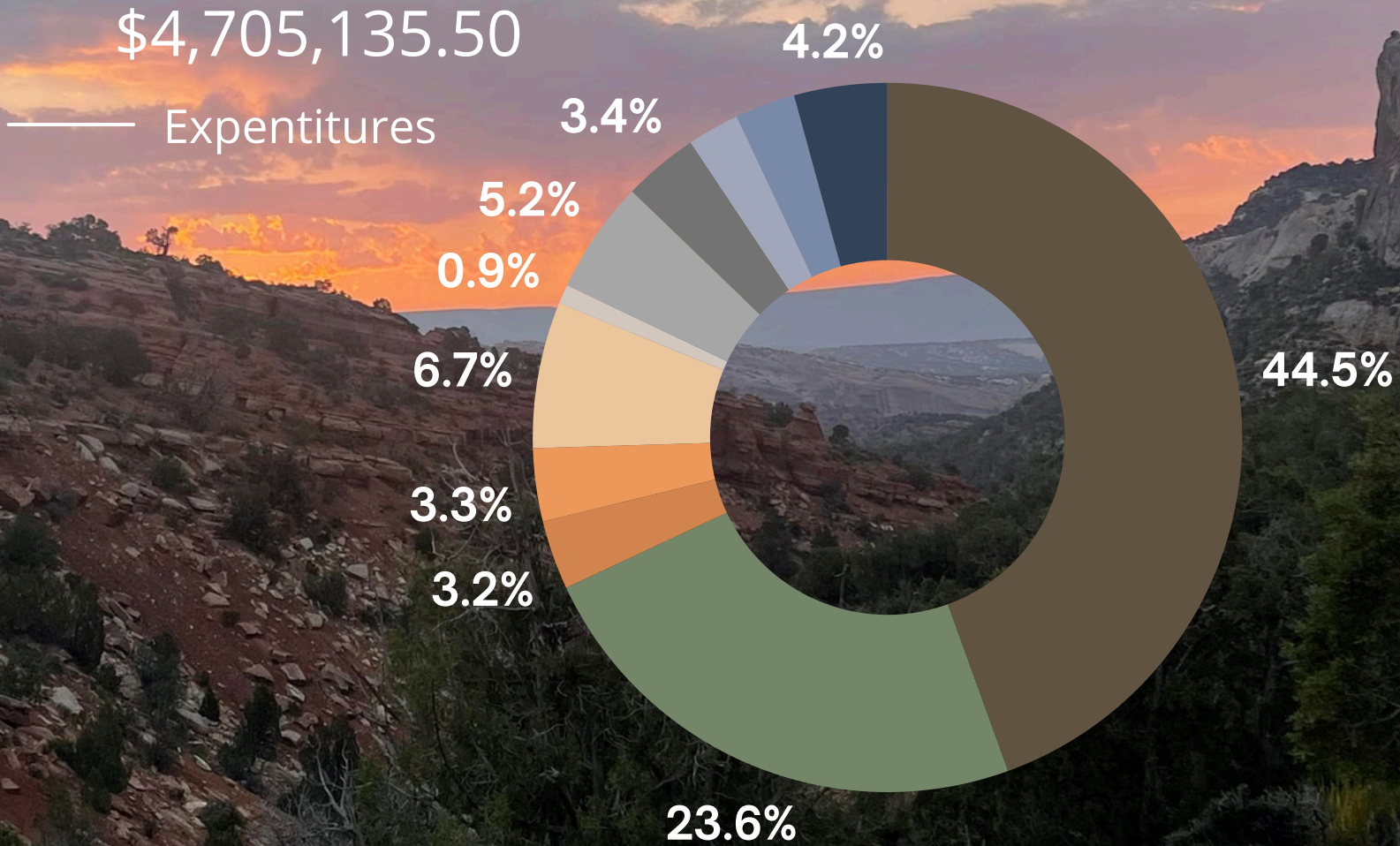
*County Tax Contributions*

*Miscellaneous*

*Other Grant Revenue*

\$4,705,135.50

Expenditures



*Sustained public health funding is essential to building systems that serve everyone, especially those most at risk.*

Salaries and Wages

Offices Expenses

Benefits

Medical Supplies and Vaccines

Travel

Software and Subscriptions

Pass through

Professional and Technical

Other Grant Revenue

Other Expenditures

Capital Outlay

*Photo Credit: Kirk Bengt*



Looking Back on 2025

# TriCounty Population Health Overview

Understanding the leading causes of death in our community is essential to improving and protecting the health of every resident.

While chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes remain leading contributors to mortality nationwide, local data provides the insight necessary to tailor interventions specifically for the TriCounty region. By closely monitoring these trends, we are able to collaborate with healthcare providers, community organizations, schools, and policymakers to implement targeted initiatives that address root causes and reduce preventable deaths.

Through ongoing analysis of vital records, hospital data, and state and national benchmarks, our epidemiology team examines patterns in mortality to better understand the conditions most affecting our community.

This data-driven approach allows us to:

- Detect changes in health trends early
- Identify disparities among different populations
- Inform prevention strategies and policy decisions
- Allocate funding and services effectively

# Top 3 Causes of Death by Age Group

*0-20 yrs*



Suicide



Overdose



Accidents

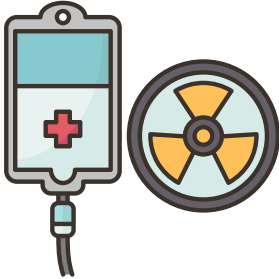
*21-40 yrs*



Substance Abuse



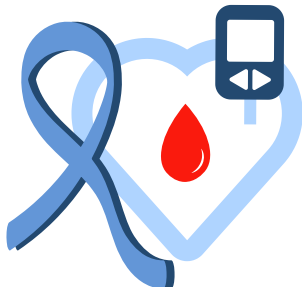
Accidents



Cancer

# Top 3 Causes of Death by Age Group

*41-60 yrs*



Chronic Disease

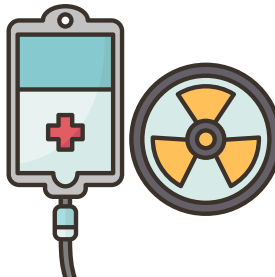


Substance Abuse

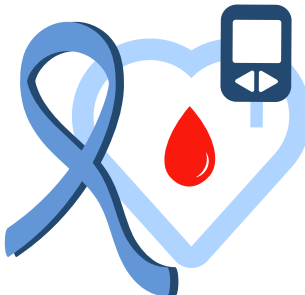


Accidents

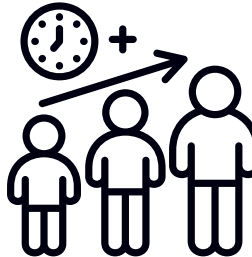
*60 yrs+*



Cancer



Chronic Disease



Natural Causes

Ensuring faster recovery when emergencies occur.

# Emergency Preparedness



*Photo Credit: Holli Jackson*

The Emergency Preparedness Division makes sure the community is ready for anything that could affect public health. It prepares in advance, coordinates during crises, supports response operations, and helps the community recover. Its work ensures that when an emergency happens, the health department — and the community — can respond quickly, effectively, and safely.

**Public Health Emergency Preparedness** - Connecting emergency management, EMS, fire, law enforcement, and public schools to prepare, train, and exercise partners for effective emergency response and recovery.

**Uintah Basin Healthcare Coalition** - Partnering with health-focused public entities to plan for healthcare, EMS, and hospital surge capacity during emergencies.

**Medical Reserve Corp** - Organizing and deploying a community-based unit of medical and non-medical volunteers to support public health, emergency response, and year-round health promotion.

# Protection With a Purpose

*Research indicates that for every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation, communities can save between \$6 in direct disaster costs and up to \$13 in broader economic, damages, and cleanup costs.*

The Emergency Preparedness Division works continuously to maintain and update emergency plans for a variety of scenarios. Last year, **25 emergency plans** were reviewed and revised to ensure public safety in the event of a crisis.

## 11 PHEP plans updated

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) programs focus on strengthening the ability of state and local health departments to prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies such as disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and bioterrorism events.

These programs support planning, training, surveillance, communication, and coordination to ensure communities can respond quickly and effectively when emergencies occur.

Updated plans include:

- Infectious Disease Plan
- Security Plan
- Zika Plan
- Rabies Plan
- West Nile Plan
- Hazardous Communication Plan

## 14 HPP plans updated

Hospital Preparedness Programs (HPP) are designed to enhance the readiness of hospitals and healthcare systems to manage large-scale emergencies and surges in patient volume.

They promote collaboration among hospitals, healthcare coalitions, emergency management, and public health partners to ensure continuity of care, resource sharing, and coordinated response during crises.

Updated plans include:

- Hazard Vulnerability Assessment
- Resource Management Plan
- Medical Surge Support Plan
- Pediatric Surge Plan
- Chemical Surge Plan
- Burn Surge Plan

Creating conditions where individuals, families, and businesses can thrive.

# Health Promotion



The Health Promotion Division helps keep communities healthy by preventing illness and encouraging positive health behaviors. It provides public education on topics like nutrition, physical activity, mental health, substance misuse, and chronic disease prevention; develops community programs and outreach campaigns; and partners with schools, workplaces, and local organizations to make healthy choices easier. The division also supports policies that promote health, tracks community health trends to guide its work, and educates the public on staying safe during emergencies.

**Healthy Living** - Developing community programs, providing education and resources that make healthy choices easier and more accessible for everyone.

**Teen Programs** - Providing education, mentorship, and skill-building opportunities that empower young people to make informed choices, build resilience, and establish lifelong healthy habits.

**Injury Prevention** - Using data, education, and community partnerships to reduce risk factors, promote safety practices, and prevent avoidable injuries across all ages.

**Tobacco Prevention & Cessation** - Providing education, promoting smoke-free policies, connecting individuals to quitting resources, and partnering with local organizations to reduce tobacco use and prevent nicotine addiction.

# "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

*Health promotion programs provide significant financial returns, often delivering approximately \$6 in savings for every \$1 invested through reduced healthcare costs.*

## Healthy Living

Health Promotion works to reduce the risk of chronic diseases through the following programs:

- Diabetes prevention & management education
- Tai Chi exercise classes
- Blood pressure monitor cuffs for check out

## Injury Prevention

Car seats distributed - **88**

Car seats Inspected - **19**

Narcan trainings - **519**

Narcan boxes given - **536**

Suicide prevention - **100+ people trained**

## Tobacco Cessation

In addition to tobacco prevention efforts, we provide tobacco cessation resources. Quitting can be hard, but tobacco cessation is a beneficial for the person using tobacco, and the community.

Quitline Referrals - **112**

## Teen Programs

The Health Promotion division offers two programs with different focuses for teens throughout the Uintah Basin.

- Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) - youth substance prevention
- Real World Ready - skills to thrive in adolescence and adulthood

— Protecting community health through regulations.

# Environmental Health



Environmental Health is a part of public Health that looks at how our surroundings — like the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the places we live — can affect our health. We work to keep people safe by protecting the environment. This includes making sure our air, water, food, and soil are clean and safe. We also team up with local communities, the government, and other groups to teach people and help stop or fix problems that could harm our health.

**Inspections** - Performing inspections of food, water, and environmental systems to prevent health risks and promote safe conditions.

**Permits** - Managing permits that verify compliance with environmental and public health standards, helping prevent health risks before they occur.

**Plan Reviews** - Reviewing plans to ensure proposed projects meet environmental and public health standards before construction or operation.

# Healthier environments for a more resilient future.

*Proactive environmental health measures, such as cleaner air initiatives (e.g., Clean Air Act), result in fewer premature deaths and illnesses, reducing medical expenses and absenteeism.*

## Inspections Conducted

- Restaurants - 330
- Food Trucks - 84
- Temporary Food - 200
- Mass Gathering - 4
- Onsite Wastewater - 106
- Public Pools - 26
- Camps - 1
- Schools - 31
- Cosmetology - 67
- Body Art - 24
- Tanning - 16
- Public Lodging - 48
- General Tobacco Retailers - 59
- Specialty Tobacco Retailers - 4

**1000 total**

## Permits Issued

- Restaurants - 330
- Food Trucks - 60
- Temporary Food - 200
- Mass Gathering - 4
- Onsite Wastewater - 106
- Public Pools - 26
- Camps - 1
- Schools - 31
- Cosmetology - 63
- Body Art - 26
- Tanning - 8
- General Tobacco Retailers - 1
- Specialty Tobacco Retailers - 4

**860 total**

## 21 Plan Reviews

By catching issues early, plan reviews save money on repairs, liability, and emergency responses while protecting community health and infrastructure.

## 23 Complaints Investigated

Timely action reduces the risk of disease outbreaks, property damage, and business disruptions, ultimately saving healthcare costs .

— Promoting health at every level.

# Nursing



The Nursing division is a vital part of TriCounty Health Department, responsible for protecting and improving the health of individuals, families, and communities through direct nursing services, health education, disease prevention, and community health initiatives. The Nursing division serves as the bridge between clinical care and community health, ensuring that preventive and population-based health services reach those who need them most.

**Individual Health** - Supporting individual health through immunizations, STI testing, women's heart health and cancer prevention, and access to vital records.

**Family Health** - Strengthening family health through WIC nutrition support, peer-to-peer breastfeeding counseling, women's preventive care, and targeted case management.

**Community Health** - Protecting community health through disease surveillance, immunizations, STI testing, preventive care, and population-based health monitoring.

# The true value of public health is measured in lives protected.

*The Women, Infants, Children (WIC) program saves taxpayers \$1.77–\$3.13 in Medicaid costs for every dollar spent by reducing premature births.*

## Maternal, Child & Family Health

WIC Appointments - **1339**

Breastfeeding support appointments - **185**

Children with Special Healthcare Needs clients - **134**

Targeted Case Management Appointments - **425**

These services prevent costly complications, reduce preterm births and hospitalizations, and support healthy development from the start. By emphasizing early care, education, and intervention, these services lower long-term healthcare expenses, decrease reliance on emergency and specialty care, and contribute to a healthier, more productive community.

## Epidemiology

### Top 10 Reportable Diseases:

- Influenza Hospitalizations
- COVID-19 Hospitalizations
- Chlamydia
- Hepatitis C (Chronic)
- Campylobacteriosis
- Gonorrhea
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Giardia
- Pertussis
- Syphilis

Epidemiology identifies and tracks disease trends early, enabling targeted interventions that prevent costly outbreaks, reduce hospitalizations, and optimize resource allocation. By guiding efficient public health actions, epidemiology helps save money for both the healthcare system and the community while protecting overall population health.

# The true value of public health is measured in lives protected.

*Immunization programs offer a high return on investment, with every \$1 spent on vaccines generating up to \$11 in direct savings and up to \$44 in broader societal benefits*

## **Immunizations**

Private Immunizations given - **1530**

Flu vaccines administered - **665**

Covid vaccines administered - **34**

Vaccines for Children (VFC) - **959**

Vaccines are essential to protecting community health by preventing the spread of serious diseases, reducing hospitalizations, and saving lives. Beyond the health benefits, vaccination also provides strong financial returns by lowering healthcare costs, minimizing lost productivity from illness, preventing costly outbreaks, and reducing long-term public health and emergency response expenses.

The VFC Program is vital to individual and community health because it ensures that all children — regardless of their family's ability to pay — have access to lifesaving immunizations.

By increasing childhood vaccination rates, the program protects individual children from serious diseases and strengthens community immunity, helping prevent outbreaks and reducing healthcare costs for families and communities alike.

## Looking Ahead ...

we remain committed to advancing community health through innovation, collaboration, and evidence-based programs, while continuing to strengthen our services, prevent disease, and improve quality of life for all residents in the year to come.

# Contact Us

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*Photo Credit: Aislynn Bird*