It is truly exciting to be in the public health field during these changing times in our nation's history. Over the last year, we have begun developing a new health department that includes programming related to Environmental Health, Health and Wellness, Occupational Safety, Public Health Emergency Response and Bioterrorism, Rabies, and West Nile Virus. We currently have four staff on board and moved into a larger office space a couple of doors down from our previous location in Crete.

As we continue to address emerging public health issues, we are fortunate that our Nebraska decision makers wisely have used the LB 692 Tobacco Settlement dollars to build our public health infrastructure. This newly evolving system of district health departments has made our state much better equipped to deal with a continually changing world, especially in rural communities.

My sincerest thank you to all of the community members, businesses and organizations who have been our partners in protecting and promoting the health and safety of the residents of Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline and Thayer counties.

Best wishes,

Tiffany Sutter

Tiffany Sutter, M.Ed.
Health Director
PHS staff and board of directors

Public Health Solutions Staff

Tiffany Sutter, Health Director
Shannon Vogler, Emergency Response Project Director
Kim Whitley, Epidemiology/Surveillance Coordinator
Pam Busboom, Administrative Assistant

Public Health Solutions Board of Directors and Titles

Linda Ament - Public Spirited Person - Gage County
Larry Cerny - County Supervisor - Fillmore County
Amy Fish - President - Public Spirited Person - Saline County
Gordon Fleming - County Commissioner - Thayer County
Shirley Gronewold - County Supervisor - Gage County
Debra Hellbusch - Vice President - Public Spirited Person - Jefferson County
Dr. L.W. Kennel - Dentist - Fillmore County
Kate Lange - Treasurer - Public Spirited Person - Thayer County
Tony Likens - County Commissioner - Jefferson County
Beth Mares - Secretary - County Commissioner - Saline County
Dr. Robert Quick - Physician - Saline County
Eric Williams - Public Spirited Person - Fillmore County

Our mission is to prevent disease and injury, promote wellness, and protect the personal, community, and environmental health of all people in Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline, and Thayer counties in southeast Nebraska.
Public Health Solutions
District Health Department
Core Functions and Ten Essential Services

Core Function – Assessment

Assessment involves the collection, analysis, and sharing of information to identify health conditions, risks, and resources in a community. The assessment function is needed to identify trends in illness, injury, death, and the factors that may cause these events.

Essential Services

- Monitor health status to identify community health problems.
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.

Core Function – Policy Development

Policy Development focuses on building coalitions that can develop local and state policies based on the high priority health care needs.

Essential Services

- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
- Develop policies and rules that support individual and community health efforts.

Core Function – Assurance

Assurance makes local and state health agencies responsible for assuring that programs and services are available to meet the high priority needs of the population. These programs and services can be provided directly or by encouraging other public or private agencies to provide them.

Essential Services

- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and the environment, and ensure safety.
- Link people to needed medical and mental health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
- Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.
PHS District Health Department serves a five-county area: Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline, and Thayer, encompassing 3,159 square miles.

The 2002-2003 annual budget comprised of $372,935.

PHS implemented six new programs and information sources:

- West Nile Virus Surveillance
- Bioterrorism Education
- Radon Education
- Child Safety Seat Program
- Public Health Emergency Response
- General Wellness Information

PHS has many community partners:

- Clinics
- Community Action Agencies
- Emergency Management
- Family Resource Centers
- Hospitals
- Law Enforcement
- Schools

PHS has four staff members serving 57,858 residents.
## Assets

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash</strong></td>
<td>$11,624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments- Public Agency Investment Trust</td>
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<td>Prepaid Insurance</td>
<td>2,437</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other receivables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fixed assets</td>
<td>16,212</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Less accumulated depreciation</strong></td>
<td>(1,605)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$372,935</td>
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## Liabilities and Fund Balances

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accounts payable</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accured wages</td>
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<td>3,790</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accured compensated absences</td>
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<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investments in general fixed assets</strong></td>
<td>14,607</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fund balances</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total fund balances</strong></td>
<td>357,759</td>
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</table>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES** $372,935
Essential Services

1) Monitor health status to identify community health problems

Our West Nile Bird Surveillance Program received 87 calls and collected 18 birds. We also received 7 Rabies calls. Letters addressing both West Nile Virus and Rabies were sent to veterinarians, law enforcement, and county extension offices in our district. Several press releases were issued to keep the public up-to-date.

The Public Health Emergency Response Program worked with a core team of law enforcement, emergency management, hospital and medical community and city/county officials in each county to gather community resource and hazardous assessment data.

2) Diagnose and investigate health problems and hazards in the community

PHS received 7 calls to investigate health problems and hazards.

On-going technical assistance was provided to the following communities:

Gage and Thayer counties – Received complaint calls on old tires and appliances on personal property and abandoned buildings. PHS is working with the village boards on waste reduction and recycling. We are using NDEQ for technical assistance

Fillmore – Received a complaint call from a parent about a child that was bitten by a dog. The child required sutures and received treatment for rabies. We contacted the County Attorney and County Sheriff about quarantining an animal and issuing a dangerous dog citation. The dog bit another child and was immediately euthanized.

Saline and Geneva counties – Received complaint calls about mold problems within the home. We instructed families on mold reduction and mitigation. We used the Health and Human Services (HHS) Environmental Health Department and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for technical assistance.
Essential Services continued

3) Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues

Child Safety Car Seats Program – PHS issued $600 to each county to purchase child car safety seats (approximately 10/co.). Funds were released to organizations that had a licensed technician on staff. Jefferson County did not have a licensed person on staff and used the money to send a person to become certified through the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety’s program.

PHS provided 15 educational presentations on Public Health, Emergency Preparedness, Radon, West Nile Virus, Monkey Pox, Health and wellness to several community groups, including Saline County Kiwanis, Gage and Saline County Rotary Clubs, Thayer County High School, and Fillmore County Home Builders Show, and other church and community groups.

PHS conducted 8 radio interviews with stations in Gage and Jefferson counties and three newspaper interviews in Gage, Jefferson and Saline counties.

PHS submitted 11 press releases on a range of public health topics, including Small Pox, Bio-terrorism/Emergency Response, West Nile Virus, Rabies, Monkey Pox, 3-D Prevention Month, and Child Safety Seats.

PHS submitted a Public Health Human Services (PHHS) grant to address tobacco prevention/cessation issues among high school students.
core function - policy development

Essential Services

4) Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems

PHS facilitated the development of the Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Consortium to begin addressing the maternal and child health needs of our district. The Consortium consists of five other agencies, including Beatrice Family Resource Center, Blue Valley Community Action, Family Health Services, Inc., and Good Beginnings of Fillmore and Thayer counties.

The Public Health Emergency Response Program mobilized community partnerships by establishing Bioterrorism/Emergency Response Core Teams in all five counties. Members include law enforcement, emergency management, hospital and medical community and city/county officials. These Core Teams were responsible for generating mass immunization clinic plans, which were added to each county's Local Emergency Operation Plan (LEOP).

PHS also participates in several coalitions and partnerships to address health concerns, including Asthma State Team, Crossroads Consortium, Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition, and Gage County PATCH (Planned Approach to Community Health).

5) Develop policies and rules that support individual and community health efforts

We are working with two communities on updating their local ordinances to better address health and safety issues.
Essential Services

6) Enforce laws, rules, and regulations that protect public health and the environment and ensure safety

Indoor air inspections – PHS received a contract with HHS to conduct 125 indoor air inspections by December 31, 2003. Inspections are to enforce the new indoor air regulations that went into effect January 2003. Training sessions educating restaurant owners and restaurant inspections may be conducted next fiscal year.

7) Link people to needed medical and mental health services and assure the provisions of health care when not otherwise available

PHS partnered with Affiliates, a local mental health provider, on a grant to the University of Nebraska Lincoln Public Policy Center’s NEBHANDS program to increase access to mental health services for older adults. The grant was not funded.

We secured a $20,000 PHHS grant to fund a Hispanic Health Education Outreach Program in Saline County, which has a higher Hispanic population than the state.

8) Assure a competent workforce within the health care industry and public health departments

PHS hired four department staff: Health Director (1.0 FTE), Administrative Assistant (1.0 FTE), Emergency Public Health Response Director (.75 FTE), Surveillance/Epidemiologist (.725 FTE).

Both the Health Director and Emergency Response Director attended the American Public Health Association Annual Conference in Philadelphia and the Health Director attended the National Rural Health Association meeting in Salt Lake City and the National Association of County Health Officials Conference in Phoenix.

Essential Services continued

Other meetings staff attended: Nebraska Association of County Officials, National Rural Health Association’s Leadership Training, Nebraska Rural Health Association, Public Health Association of Nebraska, Nebraska Minority Public Health Association

Health Director’s planning committees: Asthma State Team, Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition, Partnership of Local Health Directors, Crossroads Consortium of Early Childhood Development, Interagency meetings for Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline and Thayer counties

Emergency Response Director’s planning committees: Emergency Management/Public Health quarterly planning meetings, Weapons of Mass Destruction Mental Health Planning Committee and Nebraska Emergency Response Planning Team

9) Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility and quality of services within the health care industry and public health departments

We received a $50,000 Cash Fund Grant to conduct a formal needs assessment (adult telephone survey) of our five-county district. We conducted the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), and local focus groups in each county to better understand the health status of our service population. These assessments will be used to drive programming priorities.

10) Research to gain new insights and innovative solutions to health problems

Utilized the following sources for program development:

- Morbidity and Mortality Report
- American Journal of Public Health
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- National Institute of Health
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Heath Education Quarterly
- Journal of American Medical Associations
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