Our work includes everything from analyzing health statistics, to preventing the spread of communicable disease.

We monitor local air quality, inspect local restaurants, run classes and work one-on-one with individuals to provide health information and support. Our work creates healthier lives and healthier communities.

Everyone deserves a chance to lead a healthy life. At Garfield County, we are focused on attaining the highest level of health for all people. We call this health equity, and it drives our policies and decisions.

The health department’s strategic plan is focused on developing and sustaining programs that align with our mission of promoting health and preventing disease. The department is also focused on communicating both internally and externally, to enhance information sharing and developing relationships that facilitate long term change.
Consumer Protection

Routine unannounced inspections to local food establishments each year.

40 (approximate) new food establishments open each year in Garfield County.

Grew the team to 3 certified inspectors.

Temporary Event Inspections

- The team reviewed 45 event plans and approved 96 temporary food vendors for events that ranged from 70 – 35,000 people.

Safety Training for Food Workers

- 200 restaurant workers attended one of the 22 Food Code Transition Sessions hosted by Consumer Protection.
- Garfield County had such a high attendance success rate that the State and other counties are replicating the County’s efforts.

Childcare, Schools and Day Camps

- 56 childcares and day camps and all K-12 schools in Garfield County receive consumer protection inspections.

Over 70% of all vendors received at least one on-site inspection.

70% of Garfield County food trucks and 60% of restaurants sent representatives.

School inspections take from 3-5 hours.
Garfield County Healthy Communities Coalition

- **4,037** pounds of produce was gleaned and delivered to low income residents and seniors throughout the county.
- Installed bike lanes and traffic calming devices on Main Street in New Castle, impacting **10,000+** people.
- Increased double-up-food-buck participation by **37%**.
- Awarded **$73,790** in mini grants.
- Offered **6** Mental Health First Aid courses in English and Spanish, training **127** people and certifying **2** bilingual instructors.
- Assisted with a successful **$204k** grant submission to support the Apple Tree community in New Castle as they work to build an intergenerational playground to serve **2,600** community members.

“The one thing that participants were the most upset about was that the program ended. People are already interested in bringing back the class next fall.”

- Food, Fitness and Fun en Español grant recipient
This was the first year of a 3-year, $1.5 million Great Outdoors Colorado grant providing free programs, nature experiences, paid internships and project support. The program is created to protect, connect, and inspire people to explore and take care of our great outdoors.

**2018 Projects included building:**
- An outdoor classroom at Bea Underwood Elementary School.
- The Grand Valley Middle School nature trail.
- A grow dome at Grand Valley Middle School.
Community Health

Reach out and Read: distributed over 1,593 children’s books.

“Over the past 10 years, more parents are telling us that they routinely read to their children starting at birth.”
– Barb Kelly, Public Health Nurse

Childcare Nurse Consultation: Served over 200 children in 5 local preschool programs, teaching classes, reviewing health and immunization records and tracking vaccination rates for the State.

HCP (Healthcare Program for Children with Special Needs): When a child is diagnosed with a special medical need, families can become overwhelmed. Healthy Communities provides care coordination and family support.

Healthy Communities: helps clients apply and use the benefits of Medicaid and CHP+ insurances. HCP provides access to medical care, food, shelter, transportation and other community services.

Car Seat Checks: 95% of car seats are installed incorrectly. Free car seat inspections ensure children are using the right seat, the right way.
The Smiles for Students (SFS) school dental program provides services to 21 elementary and middle schools in Garfield, Eagle and Pitkin Counties.

- Sealants on permanent molars reduce the risk of cavities by \(80\%\).
- Total net savings per child receiving sealants are estimated at $632.

1/2 of the students had not visited a dentist in the past year.
Crystal McFarland started smoking at age 15 and continued smoking for 10 years before quitting with support of the Baby and Me Tobacco Free program. “The information provided during my visits was an extremely great support. I had accountability. I knew even if I messed up, they were there to help me succeed.”

$1750 in diaper vouchers were given to 20 Baby and Me Tobacco Free clients.

Garfield, Pitkin and Eagle Counties partner to address tobacco prevention and control through the West Mountain Regional Tobacco Program.

Though cigarette smoking in Garfield County is down 24% (2015-2017), youth vaping rates are increasing.

Colorado ranks #1 in US for youth vaping.

Colorado rates are 2x US average.

Of HS students Aspen- Parachute 53% had tried vaping, 2017.

The Town of Carbondale becomes the 3rd Colorado municipality to raise the legal purchase age to 21.
Public Health plays a critical role in emergency preparedness and preparing for emergencies takes planning.

Emergency Preparedness

Public Health serves on the Northwest Region Healthcare Coalition and leads the County health and medical emergency support group. This year, emergency preparedness staff participated in 3 hypothetical response scenarios, practicing what to do in the event of a...

The department also focuses on improving workplace safety by implementing drills, holding exercises and reviewing emergency plans for Garfield County.

In Garfield County, the greatest natural threat to residents is wildland fire.

Emergency preparedness staff provided support during the July 2018 Lake Christine Fire. The fire caused the evacuation of 500 homes and burned 12,588 acres in neighboring Eagle County. Staff offered support to the Eagle County emergency operations team and posted about air quality conditions for Garfield County residents.
Preventing child fatalities is critical and difficult work.

- Public Health leads the Garfield County Child Fatality Review and Prevention Team that reviews all accidental child deaths that occur in the county. The group works to identify prevention strategies and local interventions.
- Public Health staff also sit on the State Prevention Team, informing policy and advocating for efforts in rural areas of Colorado.

Public health works in the area of suicide prevention, participating on the non-profit Suicide Prevention Coalition of Garfield County.

- 2018 was the highest year for suicide deaths, with 19 in the county.

“The Coalition will train any group, anytime, anywhere, to teach more people how they can prevent a suicide.”

– Mason Hohstadt, SPC Coordinator

Trained over 50 people in suicide prevention in both English and Spanish.

**SUICIDE PREVENTION PROJECT SPOTLIGHT:**

Just as people are trained in CPR, people can be trained to recognize the warning signs of suicide. If you recognize someone in a crisis, take the following 3 steps.

- **ASK** the person if they are having suicidal thoughts. Listen and ask questions without judgement.
- **PERSUADE** them to get help. Accept the reality of the person's pain, but offer hope.
- **CONNECT** them to behavioral health care. 1-800-SUICIDE provides 24-7 support.
Every 5 years a Public Health improvement Plan (PHIP) is created to direct Public Health work towards pressing community needs.

Garfield, Eagle and Pitkin Counties often work together, sharing resources to strengthen the collective impact.

Residents travel throughout the three counties often living in one county and recreating or working in another.

To tackle these issues the regional group held a Safe and Responsible Reporting on Suicide training for health and human services professionals and the local media. The team also created a Mental Health Service Provider Map that will be maintained by the Aspen Strong organization. The map lists all mental health services provided in the region.

In 2019, regional efforts will increase focus on housing needs and interpreting the results of the 2018 community-wide housing survey.
Environmental Health

Environmental Health provides services to help ensure a safe, clean and healthy environment in order to improve human health.

- **30** trainings to students, community members, and elected officials on indoor and outdoor air.
- Reviewed **20** land-use permit applications.
- Collected over **440** volatile organic compound samples, including **30** samples around natural gas development in the community of Battlement Mesa.
- Working with researchers at Colorado State University on a **$75,000** study to determine the sources of volatile organic compounds in Garfield County.

“Confirming elevated levels of radon in your home is concerning enough, yet many families and homeowners struggle to pay for the mitigation to keep their homes safe. Thankfully there are funds allocated to help ease the burden.”

– Morgan Hill, Radon Program Manager

- Providing **290** radon test kits to the community.
- **47%** of homes tested in Garfield County showed elevated radon levels.

Low Income Radon Mitigation Assistance

Through a grant from the State Health Department, one Garfield County home qualified and was mitigated for radon through the Low Income Radon Mitigation Assistance program.
Immunizations

Since 2017, in Garfield County there has been an increase of:

- 15.4% in people served
- 12.5% in vaccines given
- 22% in flu vaccinations

- The Vaccines for Children program served 1000 kids.
- 385 under and uninsured adults were provided federally subsidized vaccines.
- 2,508 adults and kids served through the privately funded immunization program.
- Provided 169 travel consultations.

“Vaccination programs are one of the most successful achievements of the last 100 years, and provide enormous benefits to community health.”
Communicable Disease Surveillance

Over 80 diseases or conditions require that Garfield County Public Health be notified. Some examples of these include Hepatitis A, B, & C, flu hospitalizations, measles, salmonella and other food borne illnesses.

Public Health staff follow up on cases providing surveillance and control measures.

- Public Health staff assisted with 209 cases of reportable conditions.
- Public Health continues to test for and manage cases of tuberculosis.
- Provide HIV and Hepatitis C screening and education.

Reporting cases of communicable disease is important in the planning and evaluation of disease prevention and control to deter further spread.

Collaborating with valuable partners to keep our community healthy and safe.
Nutrition Programs

WIC Women Infant and Children
• Connecting low income families to resources.
• Providing vouchers for healthy foods at grocery stores and farmers markets.
• Nutrition counseling and breastfeeding support.
• Served over 1050 clients.

1x Now offering WIC clinics in Carbondale and Parachute once per month.

Cooking Matters
• Teaching families how to shop and cook healthy meals on a budget.
• Work with Garfield County Senior Nutrition Program and Grand River Health on Cooking Matters Train the Trainer partnerships.

Water First Campaign
• Each branch of the Garfield County Library received a new water bottle filling system, increasing access to water and reducing plastic bottle waste.

Americans consume almost 50 gallons of sugary drinks per year. That equals 38lbs of sugar!

Local Farm and Food Assessments
• Community Food Assessment revealed barriers that prevent local families from being able to access healthy food.
• Local Food Production report collected data from interview with local food producers, identifying barriers to local food production.