DATE: May 10, 2024
TO: Board of Health Members
FROM: Jacquelyn Phillips Carter, MPH, BSN, RN - Secretary
SUBJECT: Agenda for May 14, 2024

City of Middletown Board of Health & Environment will meet in regular session **May 14, 2024** at 7:30AM in Conference Room 2C at the City Building with the following agenda. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please call 513-425-1818.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

ROLL CALL- Motion to excuse absent members

CITIZEN COMMENTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES -April 2024

RECEIVE AND FILE FINANCIAL REPORT -April 2024

EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Health Benefits of Exercise-Dr. Jennewine

NEW BUSINESS

1. Travel Authorizations-None

REPORTS

Health Commissioner
Medical Director
Director of Nursing
Environmental Health Director

BOARD MEMBER OPEN DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

The Next Board of Health Meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2024 at 7:30am

it is the policy of the City of Middletown to make all public hearings and meetings accessible to all persons, in accordance with state and/or federal laws. If you have a disability which requires accommodation in order for you to attend and/or participate in this meeting, please contact us at 425-7851 or 425-7705 (TDD) at least forty-eight hours prior to the time of the meeting to advise the need for accommodation, and reasonable efforts shall be made to provide the same.

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
BOARD OF HEALTH
Minutes
April 9, 2024

The City of Middletown Board of Health met in regular session at 7:30 AM on April 9, 2024.

Members Present
Mayor, Elizabeth Slamka
Jeff Bonnell
Sally Kash, MS, RN
Ruth Lolli
Emily Miller, BSN, RN
Joseph Richmond, MBA
Dr. Scott Zollett, MD
Amy Sibcy

Health Department Staff Present
Jackie Phillips Carter, MPH, BSN, RN
Carla Ealy, BS, REHS
Chandra Corbin, BSN, RN
Dr. Paul Jennewine, MD
Amanda McDonald, Vital Statistics Registrar

Absent and Excused
All board members were present.

ROLL CALL
Motion: Ms. Kash moved, seconded by Mr. Richmond to excuse Mr. Bonnell from the Board of Health meeting.
Roll call vote: Yes-6 (Kash, Lolli, Miller, Richmond, Zollett, Sibcy). No-0. **Motion Passed.**

Mr. Bonnell arrived at 7:31 AM.

CITIZEN COMMENTS
None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 2024
Motion: Ms. Kash moved, seconded by Mr. Richmond to approve the March 2024 minutes.
Roll call vote: Yes-7 (Bonnell, Kash, Lolli, Miller, Richmond, Zollett, Sibcy). No-0. **Motion Passed.**

RECEIVE AND FILE FINANCIAL REPORT-March 2024
Ms. Phillips Carter explained to the board that the new finance system should show all revenue and expenses in real time. Not all revenue has been uploaded into the system at this time. Ms. Phillips Carter stated that there is no concern with the budget, the Health Department appears to be right on track.
Mayor Slamka noted that it appears CMHD has spent approximately half of the planned annual budget for indigent services and inquired what would happen if the annual budget is exceeded.
Ms. Phillips Carter stated that indigent services are covered by the City's budget, the Finance Director would reallocate funds if necessary to cover additional expenses.
Motion: Mr. Richmond moved, seconded by Ms. Kash to approve the March 2024 financial report.
Roll call vote: Yes-7 (Bonnell, Kash, Lolli, Miller, Richmond, Zollett, Sibcy). No-0. **Motion Passed.**

Education Presentation- Parkinson's Disease- Dr. Jennewine

Dr. Jennewine provided the board with an overview on Parkinson's Disease. Parkinson's Disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects dopamine in basal ganglia. While there is no definitive test to diagnose Parkinson's Disease, it is characterized by: tremors, bradykinesia, rigidity and postural instability. The disease affects about 1% of those over age 60. There is no identifiable cause of Parkinson's, but it is believed that genetics and repeated head trauma may play a factor.

Symptoms of the disease include: resting tremor, slowness of movement, rigidity, gait disorder, cognitive impairment and psychosis. The disease has genetic as well as environmental triggers and is more common in older men.

Parkinson's Disease can be diagnosed by gathering a patient's history and conducting a physical. Imaging such as CT and MRI may also be used.

Treatments for Parkinson's Disease include: Levodopa, carbidopa and dopamine agonists which increase dopamine activity in the brain, or by surgery or therapy. There is no way to prevent the onset of Parkinson's Disease.

NEW BUSINESS

Travel Authorizations

Ms. Phillips Carter stated that she and Ms. Ealy would be attending the Ohio Public Health Spring Conference in Columbus, Ohio April 19th-May 1st.

Motion: Dr. Zollet moved, seconded by Mr. Richmond to approve the travel authorization for Ms. Phillips Carter and Ms. Ealy to attend the Ohio Public Health Spring Conference.

Roll call vote: Yes-7 (Bonnell, Kash, Lolli, Miller, Richmond, Zollett, Sibcy). No-0. Motion Passed.

Name, Address, Phone, Health History (NAPH) Form Update

Ms. Phillips Carter informed the board that NAPH forms are completed each year by Board of Health (BOH)members, City Council members, Fire, Police, CMHD staff and Department Heads. BOH members will need to complete NAPH forms and turn them into Director of Nursing, Chandra Corbin, by the May BOH meeting.

1st Quarter Report 2024

The 1st Quarter Report for 2024 was included in the BOH packet. The 1st Quarter Report for 2023 was also included for comparison.

Board Member Topic-Open Discussion

None.

REPORTS

Health Commissioner

Ms. Phillips Carter informed the board that Middletown Connect is continuing to move forward with Data Walks in the Amanda Area. A clean-up is scheduled for April 20th. Ms. Phillips Carter stated that a few small changes make a big difference. Ms. Phillips Carter informed the board that she will be attending a retreat showing other communities how Middletown Connect was formed.

Ms. Phillips Carter informed the board that City Council will be receiving Request for Purchasing (RFP's) at the April 9th Council Meeting in regards to the Senior Citizen Center's operations. Ms. Phillips Carter continues to assist employees at the Senior Citizen Center in the meantime.

Ms. Phillips Carter informed the board that a State of Mental Health Meeting will be held at Miami University-Hamilton, date is still to be announced.

Medical Director

Dr. Jennewine reported the March Communicable Disease cases.

Chlamydia infection	23
COVID-19	74
CPO	2
Gonococcal Infection	4
Hepatitis A	1
Hepatitis B	1
Hepatitis C	6
HIV	1
Influenza-associated hospitalization	25
Lyme Disease	1
Mumps	1
Pertussis	1
Streptococcal-Group A-invasive	1
Syphilis	2

Director of Nursing

Ms. Corbin informed the board that eclipse planning was productive. The next total eclipse viewable from our area will be in 2044.

Ms. Corbin informed the board that Ohio is coming out of a measles outbreak. While Middletown did not have any cases, there was an increase in cases state-wide. Ms. Corbin has been in contact with providers, ensuring the safety of staff and others that are or could be exposed to measles.

Environmental Director

Ms. Ealy informed the board that four new facilities have been approved and licensed: 101 Sports Bar (formally known as Zulu Bar), Brenda's Café, Waffle House and Jerk N Go mobile. Ms. Ealy stated that plans have been received for two mobile food trucks. Ms. Ealy informed the board that there has been an influx in tattoo and mobile plans received as of late.

Ms. Ealy informed the board that all but one facility has paid for and been issued their food license. The one remaining facility that has not paid is currently closed and is unsure that they will be reopening at this time.

Ms. Ealy stated that she is currently working with the City's GIS Administrator on ensuring that the septic map is accurate in preparation for the 2025 septic inspections. Ms. Ealy stated that at this time, there have been 12 additional septic systems identified in the City.

Ms. Ealy stated that she continues to work with Environmental Health Specialists-In-Training, Ms. Barner and Ms. Chaney on completing school inspections. Ms. Chaney has been working on completing plan reviews.

Ms. Ealy informed the board that she has sent City Tavern a notice of violation for smoking complaints.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 AM. The next meeting will be held on May 14, 2024 at 7:30AM in Conference Room 2C.

Jacquelyn D. Phillips Carter, MPH, BSN, RN
Secretary

Elizabeth Slamka, President
City of Middletown Board of Health

City of Middletown Health Department

April 2024 Financial Notes

Vital Statistics

- $8,544.34 Revenue Earned
- 731 Certificates Sold
- 25 Burial permits Processed

Environmental

- $9,706.75 Revenue Earned

Indigent Services

- $12,172 Spent of the $20,000 Budget for Indigent Services for 2024
- 17 Applications approved *(2 waiting for invoices)*
    - 2 OD's *(1 COD Pending)*
    - *Zero dollars in Reimbursements from the Embalmer's Association Program which ended May 2023*

Current Grants

- Workforce Development (WF-23) 7/01/2023-11/30/2027 - $445,000
    - Multi-year project to support the development of current and future public health workforce
        - Award granted to CMHD $435,000
        - $10,000 awarded to all LHD's in Ohio for equity specific training.
            - *$31,076.55 - Deposited to date*

- Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) 7/1/2023-6/30/2024 - $24,361.62
    - Deliverable based pass-through with BCGHD
        - *$2,095 - Deposited to date*

- Allotrac Medicaid Billing (MAC Billing) 1/01/2024-12/31/2024
    - Yearly agreement. Payments approved quarterly
        - *$33,615.99 - Deposited to date*

- Smoking State Reimbursement
    - *$350.00 - Deposited to date*

City of Middletown
Revenue Report

Accounts: 228.000.43310 to 228.000.49385
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 4/30/2024

Include Inactive Accounts: No

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Revenue	YTD Revenue	Uncollected	% Collected
228	HEALTH FUND			Target Percent:	33.33%	
DEPT: 000						
Intergovernmental						
228.000.43310	PHHS GRANT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43320	HIV GRANT (MONT CO)	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43330	STATE HEALTH SUBSIDY	$9,300.00	$0.00	$19,349.93	($10,049.93)	208.06%
228.000.43331	IMMUNIZATION ACTION PLAN GRANT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43332	BUREAU CHILDRENS MEDICAL HANDIC	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43360	PHI GRANT	$14,333.00	$0.00	$0.00	$14,333.00	0.00%
228.000.43362	CHILD/FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES GRA	$14,333.00	$0.00	$0.00	$14,333.00	0.00%
228.000.43363	EARLY START GRANT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43364	CARDIOVASCULAR GRANT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43365	H1N1 GRANT REVENUE	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43366	US HHS STIMULUS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43367	COVID-19 CRISIS RESPONSE GRANT (	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43368	COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING GRANT (	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.43369	HARM REDUCTION GRANT	$14,334.00	$0.00	$0.00	$14,334.00	0.00%
228.000.43370	PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE DEV GR	$123,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$123,000.00	0.00%
	Intergovernmental Totals:	$175,300.00	$0.00	$19,349.93	$155,950.07	11.04%
Charges for Service						
228.000.44197	ADMINISTRATIVE FEES	$56,591.00	$0.00	$0.00	$56,591.00	0.00%
228.000.44210	VITAL STATISTICS	$108,130.00	$0.00	$28,498.23	$79,631.77	26.36%
228.000.44211	VITAL STATISTICS SHIPPING CHARGE	$0.00	$0.00	($23.35)	$23.35	N/A
228.000.44215	PATERNITY AFFIDAVITS	$200.00	$0.00	$0.00	$200.00	0.00%
228.000.44225	IMMUNIZATION CLINICS	$3,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$3,000.00	0.00%
228.000.44280	VENDING LICENSE	$620.00	$0.00	$530.44	$89.56	85.55%
228.000.44281	FSO RESTAURANT LICENSE	$63,000.00	$0.00	$59,859.17	$3,140.83	95.01%
228.000.44282	FOOD ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE	$22,000.00	$0.00	$23,757.25	($1,757.25)	107.99%
228.000.44283	HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE	$3,500.00	$0.00	$3,031.36	$468.64	86.61%
228.000.44284	FOOD SAFETY CLASSES	$90.00	$0.00	$61.00	$29.00	67.78%
228.000.44285	SWIMMING POOL/SPA	$5,700.00	$0.00	$0.00	$5,700.00	0.00%
228.000.44286	TATTOO LICENSE	$1,500.00	$0.00	$1,125.00	$375.00	75.00%
228.000.44287	PARK/CAMPS LICENSE FEES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.000.44288	MAC BILLING	$20,000.00	$0.00	$22,607.25	($2,607.25)	113.04%
228.000.44290	MOBILE HOME PARKS	$215.00	$0.00	$0.00	$215.00	0.00%
228.000.44844	CREDIT CARD FEES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Charges for Service Totals:	$284,546.00	$0.00	$139,446.35	$145,099.65	49.01%
Interest/Contributions/Rentals/Leases/Misc						
228.000.46780	MISCELLANEOUS	$44,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$44,000.00	0.00%

Revenue Report
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 4/30/2024

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Revenue	YTD Revenue	Uncollected	% Collected
	Interest/Contributions/Rentals/Leases/Misc Totals:	$44,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$44,000.00	0.00%
Reimbursements/Transfers						
228.000.49100	REIMBURSEMENTS	$0.00	$0.00	$8,455.04	($8,455.04)	N/A
228.000.49330	FROM INCOME TAX	$200,000.00	$0.00	$40,000.00	$160,000.00	20.00%
228.000.49385	FROM CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Reimbursements/Transfers Totals:	$200,000.00	$0.00	$48,455.04	$151,544.96	24.23%
	DEPT: 000 Totals:	$703,846.00	$0.00	$207,251.32	$496,594.68	29.45%
228 Total:		$703,846.00	$0.00	$207,251.32	$496,594.68	29.45%
Grand Total:		$703,846.00	$0.00	$207,251.32	$496,594.68	29.45%
					Target Percent:	33.33%

City of Middletown
Expense Report

Accounts: 228.450.51110 to 228.450.59200
Account Access Group: N/A
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 5/31/2024

Include Inactive Accounts: Yes
Include Pre-Encumbrances: Yes

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Expense	YTD Expense	UnExp. Balance	Encumbrance	Unenc. Balance	% Used
228	HEALTH FUND					Target Percent:	41.67%	
DEPT: 450								
Personal Services								
228.450.51110	SALARIES & WAGES	$600,840.00	$24,069.10	$204,188.55	$396,651.45	$0.00	$396,651.45	33.98%
228.450.51120	OVERTIME WAGES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.51211	PERS	$84,118.00	$6,891.02	$35,081.37	$49,036.63	($0.02)	$49,036.65	41.70%
228.450.51220	WORKERS COMPENSATIO	$24,034.00	$0.00	$1,754.71	$22,279.29	$22,279.29	$0.00	100.00%
228.450.51230	GROUP HEALTH INSURANC	$103,148.00	$0.00	$23,019.86	$80,128.14	$0.00	$80,128.14	22.32%
228.450.51240	UNEMPLOYMENT COMPEN	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.51270	MEDICARE-CITY SHARE	$8,712.00	$335.80	$2,851.05	$5,860.95	$0.00	$5,860.95	32.73%
228.450.51275	LIFE INSURANCE	$1,941.00	$152.10	$760.50	$1,180.50	$1,180.50	$0.00	100.00%
228.450.51290	EMPLOYEE AWARDS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Personal Services Totals:	$822,793.00	$31,448.02	$267,656.04	$555,136.96	$23,459.77	$531,677.19	35.38%
Contractual Services								
228.450.52110	TRAVEL & TRAINING	$4,000.00	$0.00	$132.00	$3,868.00	$792.00	$3,076.00	23.10%
228.450.52111	MANDATORY TRAINING	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52120	EMPLOYEE MILEAGE REIM	$3,000.00	$394.30	$864.06	$2,135.94	$0.00	$2,135.94	28.80%
228.450.52222	TELEPHONE LINE CHARGE	$5,640.00	$40.88	$1,669.04	$3,970.96	$0.00	$3,970.96	29.59%
228.450.52230	POSTAGE AND POSTAL CH	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52260	HEALTH - DUE STATE GOV	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52310	MUNICIPAL GARAGE CHAR	$3,500.00	$0.00	$384.86	$3,115.14	$0.00	$3,115.14	11.00%
228.450.52340	EQUIPMENT/VEHICLE REN	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52410	LEGAL SERVICES	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52420	MEDICAL SERVICE	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52480	OTHER PROFESSIONAL SE	$41,085.00	$0.00	$4,099.92	$36,985.08	$391.04	$36,594.04	10.93%
228.450.52481	WORKFORCE GRANT CON	$71,840.95	$0.00	$2,450.00	$69,390.95	$13,619.95	$55,771.00	22.37%
228.450.52482	SYRINGE EXCHANGE PRO	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52488	HEALTH DEPT COVID-19 EX	$18,430.00	$0.00	$530.00	$17,900.00	$17,900.00	$0.00	100.00%
228.450.52490	OUTSIDE PRINTING	$2,000.00	$0.00	$440.53	$1,559.47	$0.00	$1,559.47	22.03%
228.450.52510	MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPM	$8,000.00	$0.00	$1,109.00	$6,891.00	$0.00	$6,891.00	13.86%
228.450.52680	MEDICAL LIABILITY INSURA	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52820	LICENSES AND PERMITS	$11,855.00	$0.00	$1,666.50	$10,188.50	$124.00	$10,064.50	15.10%
228.450.52920	MEMBERSHIPS, BOOKS, PE	$1,500.00	$0.00	$254.00	$1,246.00	$20.00	$1,226.00	18.27%
228.450.52930	PHOTO SUPPLIES & PROC	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.52940	INDIGENT BURIALS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Contractual Services Totals:	$170,850.95	$435.18	$13,599.91	$157,251.04	$32,846.99	$124,404.05	27.19%
Commodities								

Expense Report
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 5/31/2024

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Expense	YTD Expense	UnExp. Balance	Encumbrance	Unenc. Balance	% Used
228.450.53100	OFFICE SUPPLIES	$2,500.00	$0.00	$826.20	$1,673.80	$154.49	$1,519.31	39.23%
228.450.53101	SUPPLIES FOR HIV GRANT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.53102	HARM REDUCTION SUPPLI	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.53210	FOOD	$200.00	$0.00	$38.38	$161.62	$0.00	$161.62	19.19%
228.450.53510	SUPPLIES TO MAINTAIN EQ	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.53610	SMALL TOOLS & EQUIPME	$200.00	$0.00	$196.22	$3.78	$0.00	$3.78	98.11%
228.450.53620	MAJOR TOOLS & EQUIP	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.53710	CHEMICALS & LAB SUPPLI	$500.00	$0.00	$384.62	$115.38	$15.50	$99.88	80.02%
	Commodities Totals:	$3,400.00	$0.00	$1,445.42	$1,954.58	$169.99	$1,784.59	47.51%
Capital Outlay								
228.450.54300	COMPUTERS & OTHER PE	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.54310	AUTO & TRUCK DEPRECIA	$4,800.00	$0.00	$872.74	$3,927.26	$0.00	$3,927.26	18.18%
228.450.54320	OFFICE MACHINERY & EQU	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.54360	OTHER EQUIPMENT	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
228.450.54370	COMPUTER SOFTWARE	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Capital Outlay Totals:	$4,800.00	$0.00	$872.74	$3,927.26	$0.00	$3,927.26	18.18%
Refunds								
228.450.59200	MISCELLANEOUS REFUND	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	Refunds Totals:	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	N/A
	DEPT: 450 Totals:	$1,001,843.95	$31,883.20	$283,574.11	$718,269.84	$56,476.75	$661,793.09	33.94%

Expense Report
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 5/31/2024

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Expense	YTD Expense	UnExp. Balance	Encumbrance	Unenc. Balance	% Used
228 Total:		$1,001,843.95	$31,883.20	$283,574.11	$718,269.84	$56,476.75	$661,793.09	33.94%

Expense Report
As Of: 1/1/2024 to 5/31/2024

Account	Description	Budget	MTD Expense	YTD Expense	UnExp. Balance	Encumbrance	Unenc. Balance	% Used
Grand Total:		$1,001,843.95	$31,883.20	$283,574.11	$718,269.84	$56,476.75	$661,793.09	33.94%
						Target Percent:	41.67%	

McDonald, Amanda

From: Phillips Carter, Jackie
Sent: Thursday, May 9, 2024 2:32 PM
To: McDonald, Amanda
Subject: FW: April Revenue

Please place in packet

From: Zimmerman, Samantha <samz@cityofmiddletown.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 9, 2024 1:14 PM
To: Phillips Carter, Jackie <jackiep@cityofmiddletown.org>; Ealy, Carla <carlae@cityofmiddletown.org>
Cc: Cahall, Nathan <nathanc@cityofmiddletown.org>
Subject: April Revenue

Good Afternoon,

I received your voicemail. Amanda was over this morning inquiring about April Revenue for your Health Board meeting. Unfortunately, we are still behind with short staffing and now training new employees during our busy audit season.

April Revenue is being entered currently by Heidi and once I'm able to review, it will be posted the system.
You'll need to use March numbers for your Health Board meeting.

Thanks,
Sam

Samantha Zimmerman | Finance Director
City of Middletown — Finance
1 Donham Plaza
Middletown, Ohio 45042-1932
(513) 425-7872 Office
(513) 425-1830 Fax

Written communications to and from public officials or public employees, including e-mails, are subject to the Ohio Public Records Act, and in most cases must be made available to any person, including the media, upon request. E-mail, which qualifies as a public record, will be released, unless it clearly falls under a specific exemption in the state law.

Butler County Monthly Communicable Disease Surveillance Report

April of 2024

Leah Elliott, MPH
Leah.Elliott@bcohio.gov

Notifiable Communicable Diseases

Summary:

- *Number of Disease Cases Reported in Butler County: 494*
- *Most Frequently Reported: COVID-19, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Influenza-related Hospitalizations, and Hepatitis C.*

Table 1. Comparison of Reported Cases of Confirmed or Probable Notifiable Communicable Diseases, April 2024 (excluding Chlamydia infection and gonorrhea)

	Reported Cases	Rate per 100,000	Rate Ratio	Confidence Interval
State of Ohio (excluding BC)	9,797	86.2	-	-
Butler County	334	85.7	0.994	0.892 – 1.11

Interpretation: The residents of Butler County were 0.6% less likely to be the subject of a notifiable disease report when compared to the rest of Ohio as a whole. These results are not statistically significant. (excluding Chlamydia infection and Gonorrhea)

Table 2.* Communicable Diseases by Jurisdiction (April 2024)

Jurisdiction	Count	Rate per 100,000	Change from Previous Month
Butler County General Health District	312	113.2	↓31.9% from March 2024 (n=458)
Middletown City Health Department	82	160.1	↓42.7% from March 2024 (n=143)
City of Hamilton Health Department	100	158.9	↓30.6% from March 2024 (n=144)
Butler County *(all inclusive)*	**494**	**126.8**	↓33.7% from March 2024 (n=745)

Table 3.* Butler County Reportable Diseases by Subgroups (April 2024)

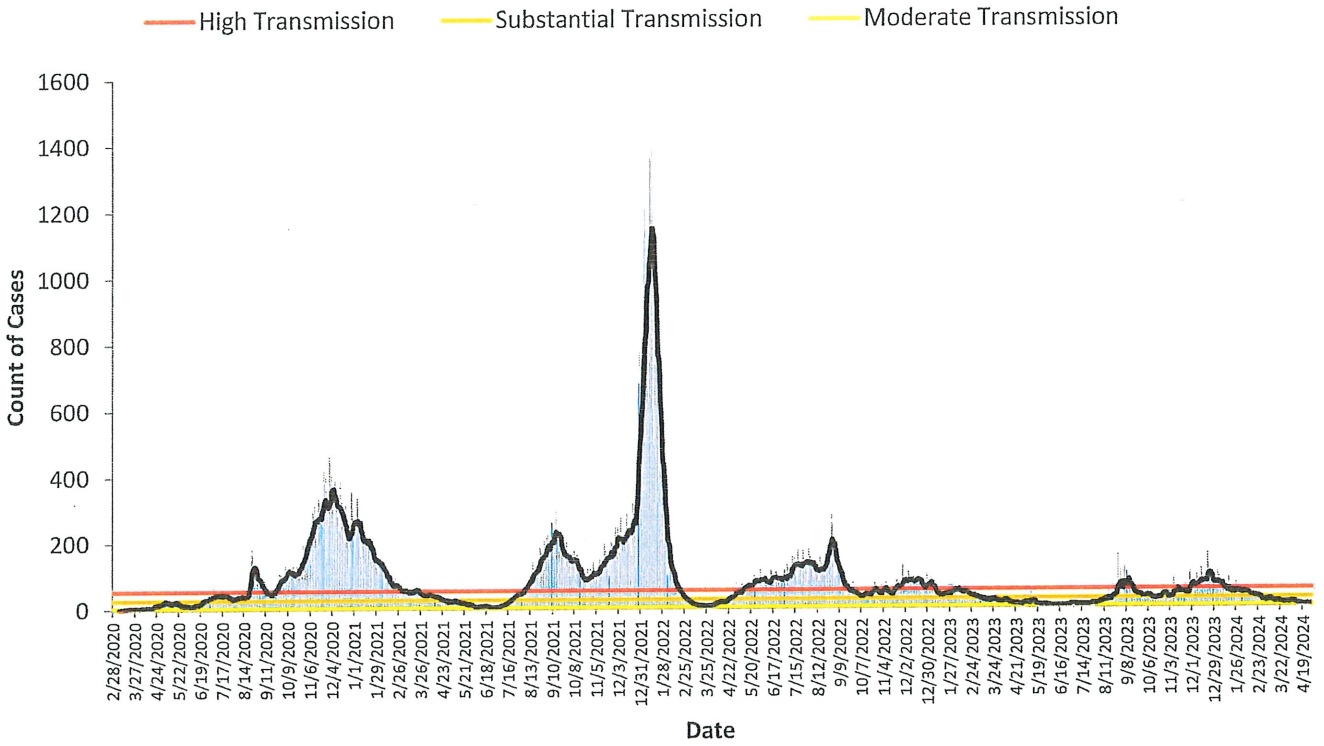
Reportable Disease Subgroup	Count	Trend
Viral Hepatitis (B and C)	35	↑12.9% from March 2024 (n=31)
Sexually-Transmitted Infections (Chlamydia infection, Gonorrhea, Syphilis and HIV)	155	↑ 11.5% from March 2024 (n=139)
Enteric Diseases (Hepatitis A, Amebiasis, Campylobacteriosis, Cryptosporidiosis, Cyclosporiasis, STEC, Giardiasis, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis, Vibriosis and Yersiniosis)	13	↑8.3% from March 2024 (n=12)
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (COVID-19, influenza-associated hospitalizations, *Haemophilus influenzae*, Bacterial meningitis, Mumps, Pertussis, invasive *Streptococcus pneumonia*, Tetanus, and Varicella)	274	↓49.4% from March 2024 (n=542)

*Data is provisional and subject to change – Table 1 does not include Gonorrhea or Chlamydia infection due to the high likelihood of duplicate cases and co-infections. Suspected, probable, & confirmed cases are included in counts for Tables 2-4 except for cases of arboviral encephalitis such as Zika virus disease, of which only probable and confirmed cases are reported and Novel Influenza A of which only confirmed cases are reported.
#COVID-19 cases are sorted by Event Date (the earliest public health knows about the case). All other reportable diseases are sorted by Date Reported to ODH. This is due to the data entry delay that occurred during the fourth wave of COVID-19. Report reflects time period of April 1-30, 2024, unless otherwise noted. Table 6 includes only probable and confirmed cases. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 5/6/2024.

Table 4. *Diseases Reported in Butler County (April 2024)

Jurisdictions	Butler County General Health District	Middletown City Health Department	City of Hamilton Health Department	Butler County *(all inclusive)*
Amebiasis	1	0	0	1
Campylobacteriosis	0	1	1	2
Chlamydia infection	57	24	27	108
COVID-19	168	29	46	243
CPO	3	2	1	6
Cryptosporidiosis	3	0	0	3
E. coli, Shiga Toxin-Producing	1	0	0	1
Gonococcal infection	18	8	13	39
Hepatitis A	1	0	0	1
Hepatitis B	7	3	1	11
Hepatitis C	14	8	2	24
HIV	3	1	1	5
Influenza-associated hospitalization	17	5	3	25
Lyme Disease	3	0	0	3
Meningitis - aseptic/viral	0	0	2	2
Meningococcal disease (Neisseria meningitidis)	1	0	0	1
Pertussis	2	0	0	2
Salmonellosis	4	0	0	4
Shigellosis	1	0	0	1
Streptococcal - Group A -invasive	3	0	0	3
Streptococcus pneumoniae	4	0	1	5
Syphilis	0	1	2	3
Tuberculosis	1	0	0	1
Total	**312**	**82**	**100**	**494**

Figure 1. Reported Cases of COVID-19 by Date of Event 2020-2023*



*Data is provisional and subject to change – Table 1 does not include Gonorrhea or Chlamydia infection due to the high likelihood of duplicate cases and co-infections. Suspected, probable, & confirmed cases are included in counts for Tables 2-4 except for cases of arboviral encephalitis such as Zika virus disease, of which only probable and confirmed cases are reported and Novel Influenza A of which only confirmed cases are reported. #COVID-19 cases are sorted by Event Date (the earliest public health knows about the case). All other reportable diseases are sorted by Date Reported to ODH. This is due to the data entry delay that occurred during the fourth wave of COVID-19. Report reflects time period of April 1-30, 2024, unless otherwise noted. Table 6 includes only probable and confirmed cases. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 5/6/2024.

Butler County Reportable Disease Surveillance

Table 6 outlines Butler County's select, reportable disease counts by year, that were classified as either "probable" or "confirmed" during the years of 2019 through 2024 and provides a 5-year average column for comparison. Graph includes those diseases that represent a consistent threat to public health.

Table 6.* Reported Probable/Confirmed Cases in Butler County (2019–2024)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5 Year Avg.	Up to 4/30/2024
Amebiasis	1	0	1	1	0	<1	0
Botulism- wound	0	0	0	1	0	<1	0
Brucellosis	0	0	2	0	0	<1	0
Candida auris (not reportable prior to 2019)	0	0	1	13	37	10.2	8
Campylobacteriosis	45	30	35	48	49	41.4	9
Chlamydia infection	1,631	1,512	1,406	1,359	1,321	1,445.8	446
COVID-19 (not reportable prior to 2020)	-	26,420	39,521	49,323	12,192	31,864	3,381
CPO (replaces CP-CRE) (not reportable prior to 2019)	4	10	11	12	93	26	17
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease	2	0	1	1	0	<1	0
Cryptosporidiosis	4	6	5	7	7	5.8	4
Cyclosporiasis	2	0	0	1	3	1.2	0
Dengue	1	0	1	1	0	<1	1
E. coli, Shiga-Toxin Producing	11	14	15	17	17	14.8	3
Ehrlichiosis-Ehrlichia chaffeensis	0	1	1	1	0	<1	0
Giardiasis	12	4	14	7	13	10	1
Gonococcal Infection	732	651	480	473	413	549.8	133
Haemophilus influenzae (invasive disease)	10	7	6	11	18	10.4	8
Hemolytic uremic syndrome	0	0	1	0	1	<1	0
Hepatitis A	104	2	1	0	2	21.8	0
Hepatitis B - acute/chronic/perinatal	109	67	85	78	82	84.2	25
Hepatitis C – acute/chronic/perinatal	552	486	434	390	280	428.4	81
HIV	24	17	58	38	35	34.4	16
Hansen's disease	0	0	0	1	0	<1	0
Influenza-associated Hospitalization	325	266	18	306	70	197	297
Legionellosis – Legionnaires' Disease	17	10	10	15	12	12.8	0
Listeriosis	0	0	0	1	2	<1	0
Lyme Disease	3	2	0	2	2	1.8	2
Malaria	2	2	1	3	4	2.4	2
Meningitis – aseptic/viral	25	9	14	10	10	13.6	6
Meningitis – bacterial (not N. meningitidis)	4	3	3	11	10	6.2	5
Meningococcal dz. – Neisseria meningitidis	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
MIS-C associated with COVID-19	-	-	15	7	1	7.7	0
Mpox (not reportable prior to 2022)	-	-	-	4	0	2	0
Mumps	1	0	0	0	0	<1	1
Pertussis	38	13	3	3	5	12.4	13
Salmonellosis	32	20	26	34	54	33.2	14
Salmonella Paratyphi	0	0	0	0	1	<1	0
Salmonella Typhi (Typhoid Fever)	0	0	2	0	1	<1	1
Shigellosis	7	8	3	6	7	6.2	6
Spotted Fever Rickettsiosis (including RMSF)	0	2	0	1	0	<1	0
Streptococcal – Group A – invasive	24	27	24	34	39	29.6	16
Streptococcal – Group B – in newborn	0	1	0	1	1	<1	0
Streptococcus pneumoniae – Invasive	59	31	33	40	43	41.2	20
Syphilis (all stages)	11	17	23	45	66	32.4	17
Tuberculosis (active)	8	6	7	8	7	7.2	5
Varicella	14	1	5	8	19	9.4	9
Vibriosis (not Cholera)	1	0	2	2	3	1.6	0
West Nile Virus Disease	0	0	0	0	1	<1	0
Yersiniosis	1	0	1	2	4	1.6	0

*Data is provisional and subject to change – Table 1 does not include Gonorrhea or Chlamydia infection due to the high likelihood of duplicate cases and co-infections. Suspected, probable, & confirmed cases are included in counts for Tables 2-4 except for cases of arboviral encephalitis such as Zika virus disease, of which only probable and confirmed cases are reported and Novel Influenza A of which only confirmed cases are reported. #COVID-19 cases are sorted by Event Date (the earliest public health knows about the case). All other reportable diseases are sorted by Date Reported to ODH. This is due to the data entry delay that occurred during the fourth wave of COVID-19. Report reflects time period of April 1-30, 2024, unless otherwise noted. Table 6 includes only probable and confirmed cases. Data accessed from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS) on 5/6/2024.

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Butler County
General Health District

Figure 1: Fairfield SSP Site Visitors by Month for 2023 and 2024

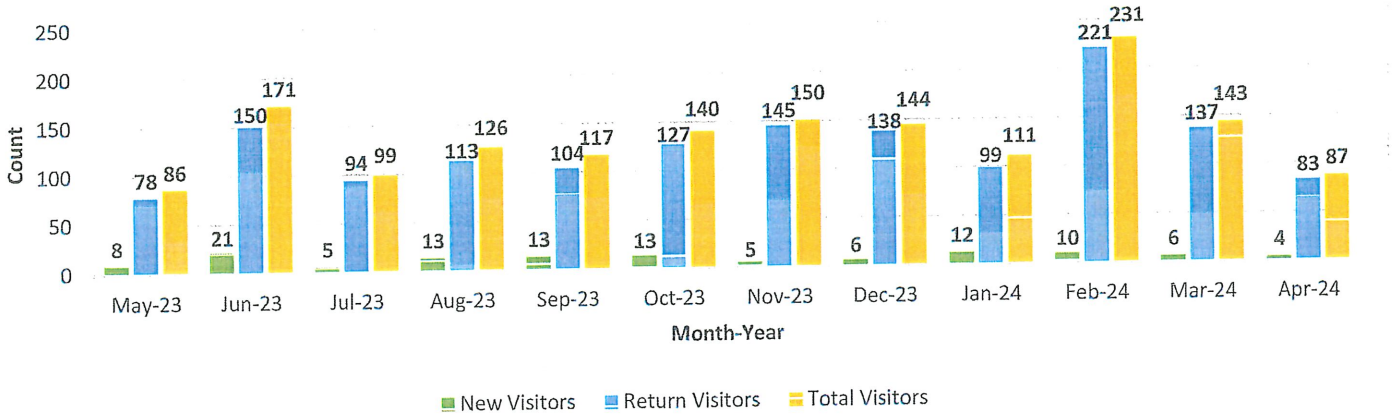


Figure 2: Syringes Returned and Distributed by Month for the Fairfield SSP Site for 2023 and 2024

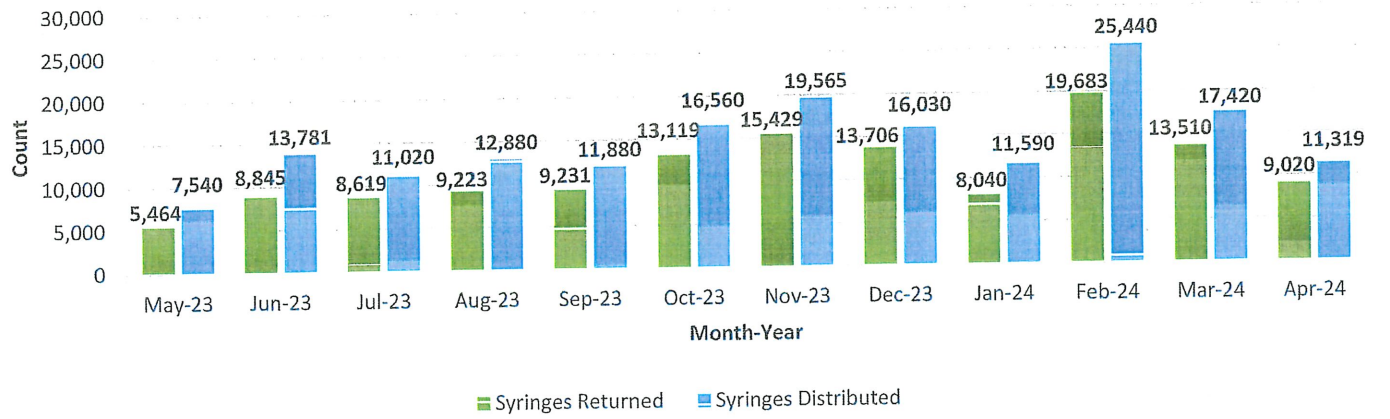


Table 1: Syringes Returned and Distributed by Visitors' Home County of Residence for the Fairfield SSP Site for April 2024

County	Syringes Returned	Syringes Distributed	Percent Returned
Butler County, OH	7,630	9,769	78.10%
Clermont County, OH	0	40	0.00%
Hamilton County, OH	1,000	1,120	89.29%
Montgomery County, OH	130	130	100.00%
Preble County, OH	260	260	100.00%
Total	**9,020**	**11,319**	**79.69%**

Source: Butler County General Health District – Fairfield Syringe Service Program Site, Data obtained April 25, 2024, Data is provisional and subject to change

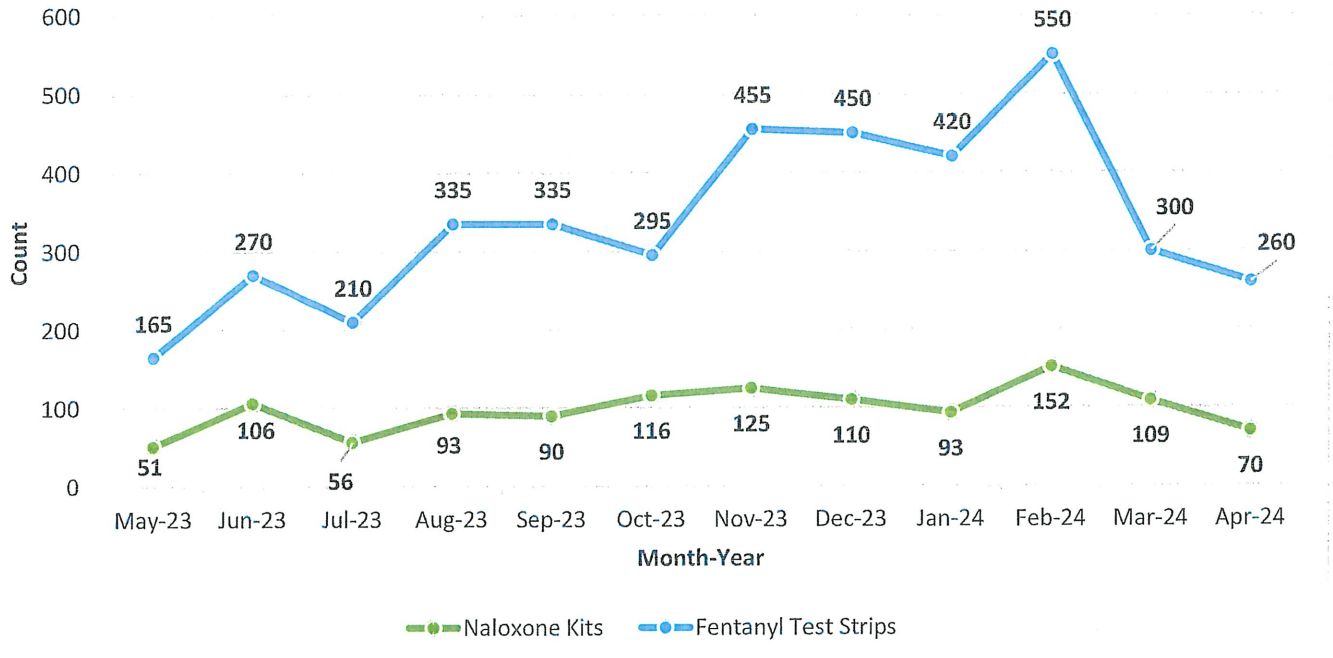
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General Health District

Table 2: Syringes Returned and Distributed by Zip Code - City for the Fairfield SSP Site by Butler County Visitors' Home Residence for April 2024

Zip Code - City	Syringes Returned	Syringes Distributed	Percent Returned
Hamilton			
45011	3,580	4,359	82.13%
45013	2,150	2,900	74.14%
45015	1,195	1,440	82.99%
Hamilton Total	6,925	8,699	79.61%
45014 - Fairfield	430	590	72.88%
45042 - Middletown	0	80	0.00%
45050 - Monroe	120	200	60.00%
45055 - Overpeck	35	40	87.50%
45056 - Oxford	0	40	0.00%
45069 - West Chester	120	120	100.00%
Butler County Total	**7,630**	**9,769**	**78.10%**

Figure 3: Naloxone Kits and Fentanyl Test Strips Distributed by Month for the Fairfield SSP Site for 2023 and 2024



Source: Butler County General Health District – Fairfield Syringe Service Program Site, Data obtained April 25, 2024, Data is provisional and subject to change

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Butler County
General Health District

Figure 1: Oxford SSP Site Visitors by Week for April 2024

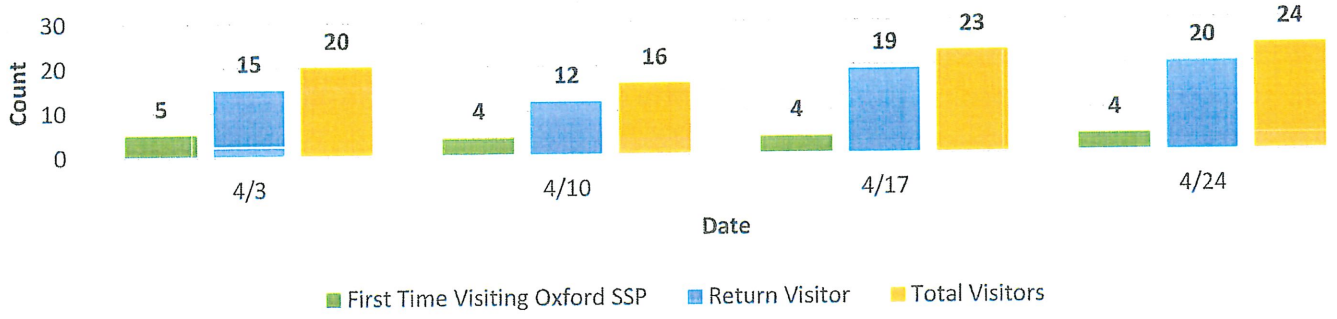


Figure 2: Oxford SSP Site Visitors by Month for 2023 and 2024

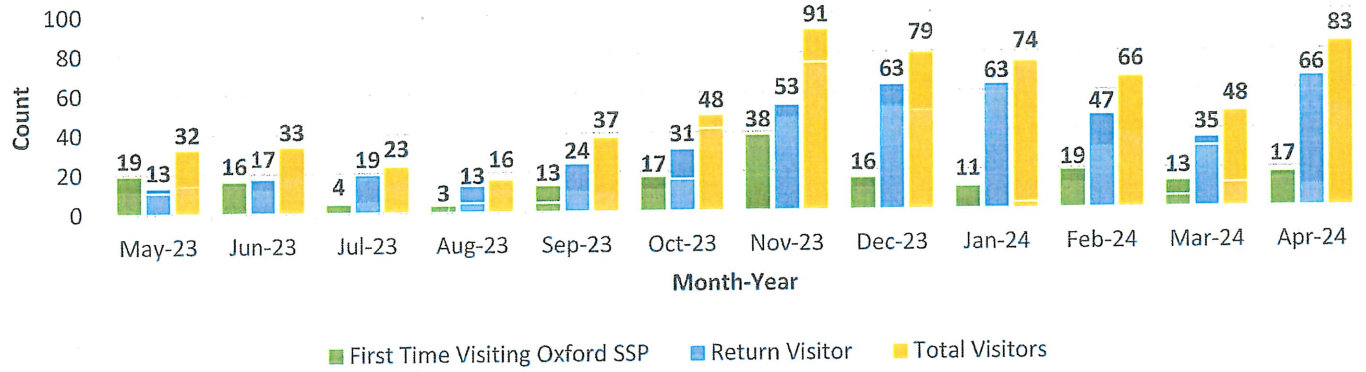
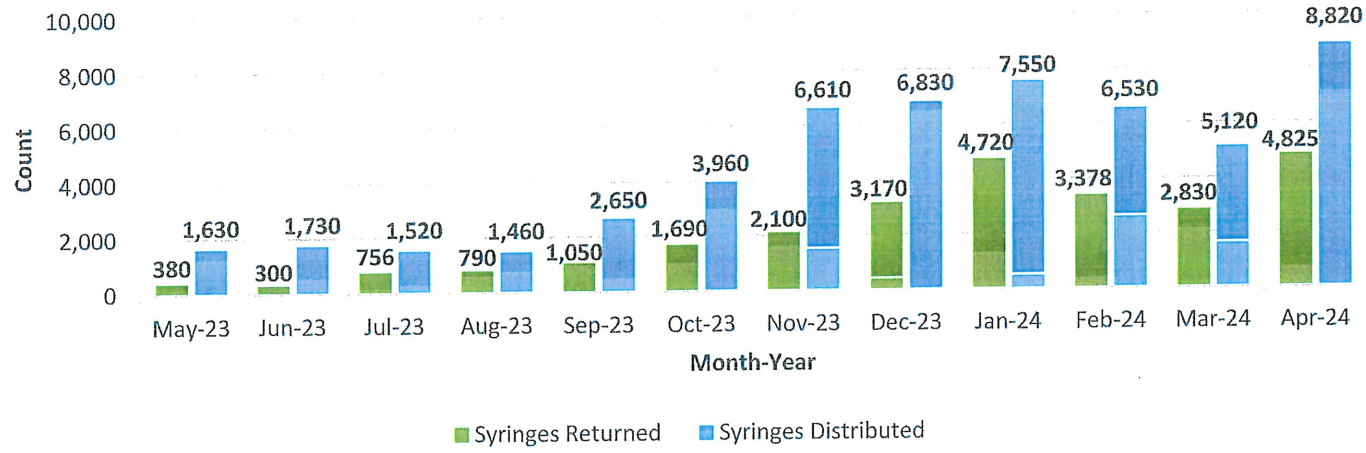


Figure 3: Syringes Returned and Distributed by Month for the Oxford SSP Site for 2023 and 2024



Source: Butler County General Health District – Oxford Syringe Service Program Site, Data obtained April 24, 2024, Data is provisional and subject to change

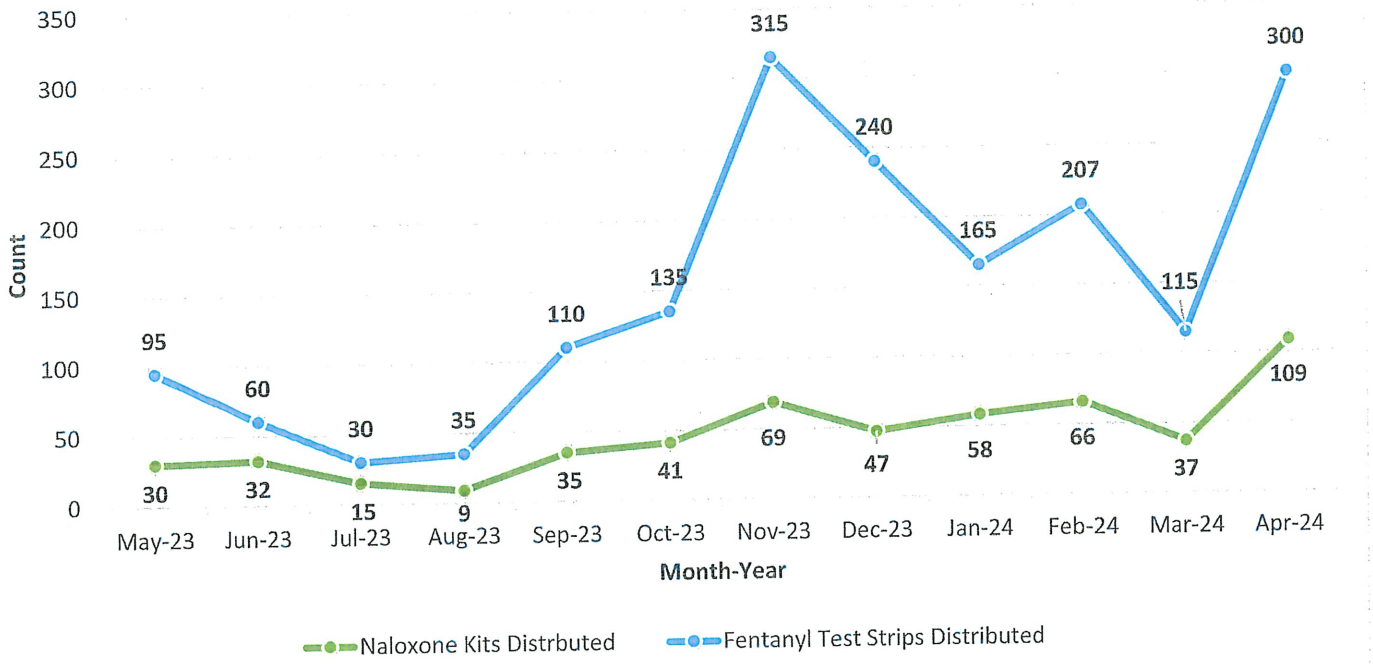
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Butler County
General Health District

Table 1: Syringes Returned and Distributed by Zip Code – City or County for the Oxford SSP Site by Visitors' Reported Home Residence for April 2024

Zip Code - City	Syringes Returned	Syringes Distributed	Percent Returned
Hamilton			
45011	880	2,270	38.77%
45013	1,200	2,000	60.00%
45015	700	700	100.00%
Hamilton Total	2,780	4,970	55.94%
45014 - Fairfield	440	560	78.57%
45044 - Middletown	80	320	25.00%
45056 - Oxford	1,525	2,930	52.05%
45069 - West Chester	0	40	0.00%
Total	**4,825**	**8,820**	**54.71%**

Figure 4: Naloxone Kits and Fentanyl Test Strips Distributed at the Oxford SSP Site for 2023 and 2024



Source: Butler County General Health District – Oxford Syringe Service Program Site, Data obtained April 24, 2024, Data is provisional and subject to change

City of Middletown Health Department
April 2024

Vital Statistics	MONTHLY	YTD
Birth Certificates Filed	58	265
Death Certificates Filed	93	385
Birth Certificates Issued	369	1360
Death Certificates Issued	362	1443
Indigent Cremation Services	5	16

Deaths Filed		
Accidental		
Drug Overdose	6	7
Falls	0	1
Motor Vehicle	0	1
Exposure to Elements	0	0
Choking	0	0
Fire	0	0
Homicide	0	0
Suicide	1	3
COVID-19 Related Deaths	0	4
Could Not Be Determined	0	0
Pending Investigation	0	0

**Totals reflect City of Middletown residents that died inside of city limits only

Environmental Inspections	MONTHLY	YTD
Food Service Operations(FSO)	37	125
Retail Food Establishments(RFE)	29	55
Prelicense/Consultations	2	20
Sewage Inspections	0	1
School Inspections	1	12
Vending Locations	0	1
Temporary FSO/RFE	1	3
Mobile FSO/RFE	8	16
Complaints	2	10
Smoking Complaint Inspections	1	2
Swimming Pools	0	12
Tattoo	0	2
Temp Park/Park Camp	0	0
Jail Inspection	0	0
Site Visit (Septic)	0	0
Well Inspection	0	0

Level 1 Certification Training		
Number of Attendees	0	3

Animal Bite Events		
Dog	7	20
Cat	1	3
Bat	0	0
Raccoon-Animal Exposure	0	0

City of Middletown Health Department
April 2024

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Bat	0	0
Raccoon-Animal Exposure	0	0

Smoking Complaint Spreadsheet

For April 2024

	Business Name	Date	Notice of Report	Dismissed	Notice of Violation (30 Days)	Letter of Warning (15 Days)	Civil Fine Letter	Violation Contested	Notice of Hearing	Additional Comments
1	City Tavern	1/25/2024			X					Sent Notice of Violation letter 3/5/2024
2	City Tavern	3/10, 3/26, 4/3/24		X						
3	One Way Farm	3/21/2024		X						

Notes:
Billy T's owes $1200 in fines, unpaid.
Buster's Bar owes $200 in fines, unpaid. This facility is closed for business and is for sale.

McDonald, Amanda

From: Phillips Carter, Jackie
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 1:35 PM
To: Phillips Carter, Jackie; McDonald, Amanda

Please Print for Board

Thanks,

JpC

From: Caroline Lembright <clembright@interactforhealth.org>
Date: Friday, April 26, 2024 at 3:45 PM
To: DeAnna Shores <deanna@safetycouncilswohio.org>, Julian Collins <jcollins@interactforhealth.org>
Subject: Re: Grantee Spotlight with Interact for Health

Wonderful! Looking forward to working with you in this process ☺

From: DeAnna Shores <deanna@safetycouncilswohio.org>
Date: Friday, April 26, 2024 at 3:36 PM
To: Caroline Lembright <clembright@interactforhealth.org>, Julian Collins <jcollins@interactforhealth.org>
Subject: Re: Grantee Spotlight with Interact for Health

What an honor! Thank you for this opportunity. Count us in. I will share this with the team and will touch base next week to discuss next steps.

Thank you again for all you do to support the amazing projects happening in the Greater Cincinnati area.

DeAnna

From: Caroline Lembright <clembright@interactforhealth.org>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 3:30 PM
To: DeAnna Shores <deanna@safetycouncilswohio.org>; Julian Collins <jcollins@interactforhealth.org>
Subject: Grantee Spotlight with Interact for Health

Good afternoon and happy Friday!

I am reaching out because our program team has identified Middletown Connect as a great fit for our grantee spotlight series. Last year, we worked with Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses and The Urban League to

produce videos about their work. These videos featured interviews with several staff members and footage from those organizations working in the community.

If you're interested in participating in the series, we'd love to have you! We're open to whatever video format would make the most sense for your organization, whether that's a short clip for social media, a mission video, or an interview format similar to the videos above. We will plan to ask a few questions related to your grants with Interact for Health for our team to use as well, but ultimately want your organization's needs to determine the best format! We will be working with the very talented Kailah Ware to film and edit the videos.

If you're interested, please let me know and we will get started on the logistics!

Kind regards,
Caroline

INTERACT FOR HEALTH

Caroline Lembright (she, her, hers) | Director of Communications
8230 Montgomery Road, Suite 300, Cincinnati, OH 45236
513-458-6621 (office)
859-466-4455 (cell)
clembright@interactforhealth.org
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MIDDLETOWN
City of Middletown Health Department

Your opinion matters! Click here to take the City of Middletown Health Department Survey!

Jackie Phillips Carter, MPH, BSN, RN | Commissioner
City of Middletown — Health Department
1 Donham Plaza
Middletown, Ohio 45042-1932
(513) 425-7854 Office
(513) 425-7852 Fax

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Middletown's Holiday Whopla a hit in 2023

Ice skating rink bolsters 'community-building' 2-month festival.



Worker Samuel Marriott scrapes the ice at the Holiday Whopla ice skating rink in downtown Middletown on Dec. 13, 2023. Community partnerships and donations provided free skating sessions.



Corissa Johnson, 5, skates with her mom, Cristina Johnson (right), and aunt Kenisha Johnson at the Middletown Holiday Whopla ice skating rink in downtown Middletown on Wednesday.
NICK GRAHAM PHOTOS / STAFF



Creekview Elementary students skate during a field trip to the Middletown Holiday Whopla ice skating rink in downtown Middletown on Jan. 5.
NICK GRAHAM/STAFF

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

ONLY IN THE JOURNAL-NEWS

Spring flowers are popping up, but Middletown's Holiday Whopla coordinator was thinking of ice when she told city council their collaboration "went well" and is looking bigger and better for the holidays this year.

In August 2023, council approved the purchase of an ice rink for $236,202 and allowed Holiday Whopla, a volunteer organization, to operate the event for at least four years. The money came from the city's American Rescue Plan Act fund.

Holiday Whopla is a two-month winter festival that includes ice skating, interactive light displays, igloos and a Santa House in the downtown.

Last week, Holiday Whopla coordinator Avinne Kiser was before council to break down how the 2023 event went and what is upcoming.

City Manager Paul Lolli, who admitted he was pessimistic about the holiday event at times, said he has come around.

He admitted downtown for the last event "was absolutely beautiful. As beautiful as it has ever been."

"Next year is going to be even better, (we're) going to add more things to the downtown," Lolli said.

Kiser said because of the late approval time last year, a company was hired to run the rink for a set fee of $60,000. She added that fundraising for the total management fee wasn't possible for the 2023 season.

Revenue increases were seen in key areas from the 2022 season to 2023: a 45% increase in general admission sales; 39% increase in group rate sales; 172% increase in Skate with Santa attendance; and 22%

increase in igloo rentals.

At the heart of the Whopla is building partnerships with in-kind donations and tickets for free skating sessions to local nonprofit organizations, she said.

"(It's) more than just a slab of ice in the middle of Middletown; this is a community-building event ... it is making memories," Kiser said.

For the 2023 season, the event's third, all net profits went to pay the rink management company for the management fee, payroll and liability insurance. The remaining $161,383 in operating costs was paid for by fundraising, including grants, corporate sponsorships, citizen donations and in-kind donations.

Kiser said a collaboration with the city, Downtown Middletown Inc. and Light up Middletown birthed A Very Merry Middletown to let people know the holidays in Middletown include more than just an ice rink.

A Very Merry Middletown started in November and ran through the middle of January, featuring ice skating, a drive-thru holiday lights display, a Santa Parade, carriage rides and visits with the Grinch and Santa.

"(A) Very Merry Middletown is now the brand," said Kiser, who added that all the organizations are working together to make the city a destination during the holiday season.

"It is happening; they are finding out about us. It is growing," Kiser said.

Contact this reporter at 513- 543-9227 or email lauren.
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Grant portal for opioid settlement funds opens today

Nonprofit, for-profit, government groups can apply for part of $7.1M tagged for region.



Hamilton Mayor Pat Moeller, chair of OneOhio Region 14, announces the opening of the OneOhio Grant Portal on Monday. The OneOhio Recovery Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization, is tasked with distributing 55% of the funds Ohio will receive from the pharmaceutical industry as a consequence of its role in the national opioid epidemic. Available funds for this cycle total $7.1 million for the region, and Butler County hopes to receive 38% ($2.7 million) from this round of funding. From 2018 to 2022, Butler County had the seventh-highest number of overdose deaths in the state. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

BY MICHAEL D. PITMAN STAFF WRITER

TOP STATE STORY

Communities around the state can begin applying for a share of the opioid settlement money held by OneOhio Recovery Foundation.

Today, the OneOhio Grant Portal opens for funds through the foundation, a private nonprofit at the direction of Ohio's state and local leaders charged with distributing more than half of the funds Ohio will receive from the pharmaceutical industry as a consequence of its role in the national opioid epidemic.

The OneOhio Grant Portal is set to make $7.1 million in opioid recovery funds available for Region 14. There are 19 OneOhio regions, and the 2024 regional grant cycle totals nearly $51.2 million.

Region 14 includes Butler, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Greene, Madison and Warren counties.

"We're all together, we're all working together and we're hoping there will be some very good projects from this group, which has been a really innovative, leading group," said Hamilton Mayor Pat Moeller, the One-Ohio Region 14 chair.

Moeller, along with Butler County commissioner Cindy Carpenter and Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovering Services Board Executive Director Scott Rasmus, announced the opening of the grant portal and encouraged anyone in the region to apply, though they first must register at OneOhioFoundation.org/grants.

"We are in a seven-county region — that's one pot of money for all seven counties," said Carpenter, stressing that applications will be reviewed at local, county and state levels "so we can be assured that these programs are properly serving the local communities."

The grants will be distributed through a request for proposal process. Registration opened March 4, and the application is posted in the OneOhio Grant Portal today. Communities, agencies and organizations have until 11:59 p.m. May 3 to submit applications.

Butler County, the largest county in Region 14, has one of the highest rates of overdose deaths in the state and hopes to garner 38%, or $2.7 million, in funding.

"We want to announce this opportunity to every provider, police department, school board or organization that has had to stretch their budget to battle the epidemic," Moeller said.

"This is an exciting opportunity to have current projects funded or to propose new, innovative projects to OneOhio."

Unintentional overdose deaths have fluctuated in the past few years in Butler County after growing to 260 in 2017, according to the Ohio Department of Health's latest Unintentional Drug Overdose Report. From 2018 to 2022, Butler County had the seventh-highest number of overdose deaths and Clark County had the 15th-highest.

Rasmus said the Butler County coroner's office reported about 130 last year.

"It's hard to identify what the causation was for that," he said, adding there are a number of drug treatment and mental health programs around the county to support the decline. "We would love to get down to zero deaths ... (but) we have quite a bit to go."

Moeller said Region 14 meets monthly, and it's been a slow process to get the grant money in hand, "but then it started speeding up in January. Our job now is to get that timeline out."

Grant applicants may be nonprofit, for-profit or government entities. All programs and services must be evidence-based, forward-looking strategies for the purpose of prevention, treatment, recovery and

abatement of substance use and co-occurring disorders.

Pre-registration is a requirement for all applicants.

The OneOhio Memorandum of Understanding outlines the approved purposes and the state's abatement strategies that guide the programs and services to be funded with the settlement.

The OneOhio Recovery Foundation organized the information into 10 funding priority areas, and entities applying for funds will be asked which priority will be impacted by the funding request.

Priorities include: treatment and health care services; intervention and crisis support; criminal legal system; recovery supports; prevention; harm reduction; services for impacted children and families; public safety and first responders; workforce development; and infrastructure.

Nationwide, there have been more than 1 million drug overdose deaths since 1999, and the lion's share of those involve opioids, whether prescribed by a doctor or acquired illicitly, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Ohio Department of Health reported more than 4,915 unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2022, a 5% decrease in the number of deaths from 2021, Ohio's worst year for unintentional drug overdose deaths (5,174).

Fentanyl was involved in 81% of unintentional drug overdose deaths in 2022.

Cocaine and psychostimulants such as methamphetamine had the largest increases in the percentage of related overdose deaths from 2021 to 2022, according to the state. While deaths involving cocaine increased by 4% from 2021 to 2022, deaths involving psychostimulants increased by 2% over that same timeframe.

OneOhio provides the mechanism to distribute the opioid settlement

funds and outlines that 55% will be put into a statewide foundation that will develop and oversee the funding of short-term and long-term planning local communities need to continue to address this crisis.

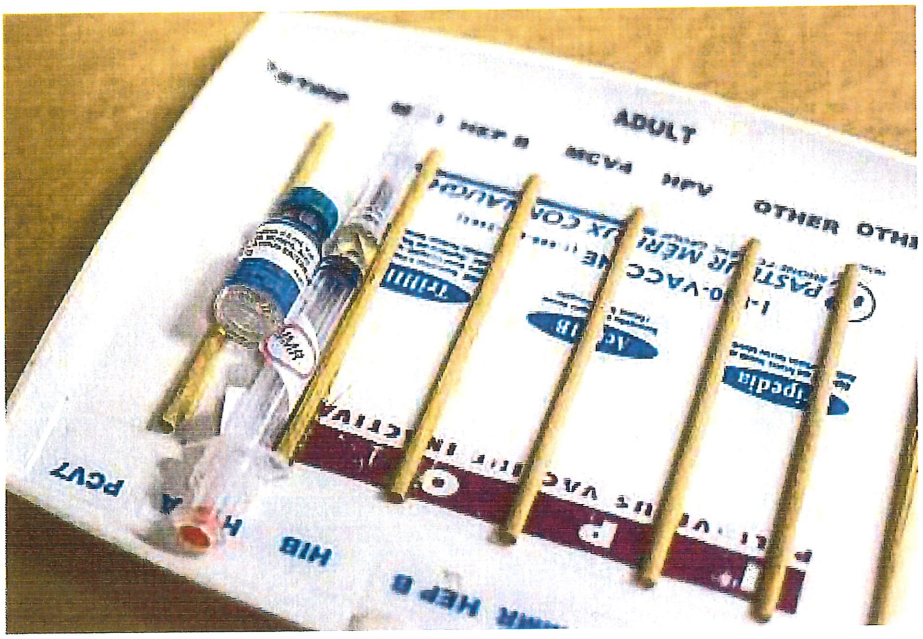
Of the remaining 45%, most (30%) will be set aside for community recovery that will go directly to every township, village, city and county in Ohio — more than 2,000 in all — to address the immediate needs of residents.

The other 15% will go to the state of Ohio to leverage statewide buying power to offer prevention, treatment and recovery support services.

Contact this contributing writer at 513-581-6538 or email Michael.Pitman@coxinc.com.

New dashboard to track infectious diseases across Ohio

4 measles cases have been confirmed in the region this year.



A MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. The U.S. CDC has as of mid-March recorded more measles cases in 2024 than the 58 tallied in all of 2023.
ALISHA JUCEVIC / NYT

BY SAMANTHA WILDOW - STAFF WRITER

TOP STATE STORY

A new dashboard will be tracking infectious diseases across the state.

"We hope that this helps people to better understand disease activity in their community and statewide, both historically and currently," said Dr.

Bruce Vanderhoff, director of the Ohio Department of Health.

The "Summary of Infectious Diseases in Ohio" dashboard will be accessible through the state's DataOhio Portal website at data.ohio.gov, which includes 331 searchable datasets with 106 programs contributing data.

Data is available back to 2001, and it will be updated weekly. The interactive dashboard replaces an annual report on diseases that was not available until about 18 months after the close of a year.

Examples of diseases with data available on the dashboard include measles, legionellosis and Lyme disease, as well as cases of illnesses that can be foodborne, such as salmonella and E. coli infections.

The infectious diseases dashboard does not include information on COVID-19 or influenza, as the Ohio Department of Health maintains separate dashboards for those viruses.

Measles is one of the infectious diseases on the dashboard.

There are four total confirmed cases in the Dayton region: two in Montgomery County and two in Miami County.

Greene County identified a third case of the measles, a Montgomery County resident with ties to Greene County, according to a press release from Greene County Public Health, but only two cases have been officially confirmed in Montgomery County residents.

The Ohio Department of Health is assisting Montgomery County in its investigation of a possible third case to determine if the criteria is met to include the case in Ohio's count, ODH said.

Multiple previous exposure sites have been identified, including the most recent at Round 1 Bowling and Amusement, 2727 Fairfield Commons Blvd., from 4-5 p.m. March 16. Anyone who was at the facility until 7 p.m. — up to two hours after the person left — may have been exposed to

measles.

Individuals who may have been exposed should contact their local health department, said Dan Suffoletto, public information manager at Public Health - Dayton and Montgomery County.

The health department in an individual's county of residence will guide them through steps they should take based on their circumstances, he said.

If you are not sure how to contact your local health department, visit odh.ohio.gov/find-local-health-districts.

Nationwide, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recorded as of mid March more cases in 2024 than the 58 tallied in all of 2023.

A total of 64 measles cases were reported by 17 jurisdictions this year as of March 21. Those places include Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York City, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington.

Contact this reporter at 937- 503-5305 or email samantha.wildow@coxinc.com.

Brenda's Cafe proprietor 'up for the challenge'

Waffle House also opens recently with Starbucks on way.



Brenda Heidtman recently opened Brenda's City Cafe on the second floor of the Middletown City Building. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF



Waffle House celebrated the opening of a new location at 3455 Commerce Drive in Middletown with a ribbon cutting March 18. SUBMITTED

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

MIDDLETOWN

Whether you want a coffee fix or breakfast while shopping at Middletown's East End or running errands downtown, the city has some new offerings and more in the works.

After several months of closure, the city building's go-to spot for employees and those doing business in the building has reopened on the second floor outside municipal court.

Brenda's City Cafe has a new look and a lots of choices from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays.

The previous operator, Mark Mangus, retired after about 15 years of operation, and the space was closed for a few months, according to City

Manager Paul Lolli.

After some "sprucing up" that coordinates with the HVAC system upgrade in neighboring municipal court, new operator Brenda Heidtman opened the doors last week.

Business has been brisk.

"I am glad to be here," Heidtman said. "I have a learning curve I need to figure out, but I am learning every day."

After hearing Mangus was retiring, Heidtman said she gave it a thought and said, "I think I can do that."

She said it was the right time. She wasn't employed and liked to cook for and feed people.

"This is a little bit different than family and friends, but I am up for the challenge," Heidtman said. She noted her husband, Reid, help with the decor.

The menu include breakfast times, including the popular biscuits and gravy (until 10:30 a.m.) as well as sandwiches, daily specials and salads. A variety of drinks and desserts are also available.

Last month, a Waffle House opened in the city on Commerce Drive along Interstate 75 not far from the original restaurant that closed about 2008 and was torn down.

Construction also began last month on the city's first free-standing Starbucks also near the interstate at the intersection on Towne Boulevard and Ohio 122.

The city's Facebook post about the Starbucks being built near the highway drew more than 500 comments and more than 500 shares in the first 24 hours. Some commenters were happy Starbucks will have a freestanding building in Middletown, but others voiced their support for

local coffee shops.

"We're excited to share that Starbucks is currently under construction at the intersection of State Route 122 and Towne Boulevard (6700 Roosevelt Drive)," the city's post said. "We're looking forward to the grand opening this summer!"

Starbucks has a location inside the Kroger store at 3420 Towne Blvd.

Contact this reporter at 513-543-9227 or email lauren.pack@coxinc.com.

Groups spent months prepping for the eclipse

Visitors expected to flood into the area for rare event.



NASA has provided a total solar eclipse path map on its website at https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/.

4/7/2024



Saniah Lewis, 7 (right) helps Kalis Goinas, 8, with an eclipse craft as kids from Booker T. Washington Center and Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton learn about the upcoming total solar eclipse at the Booker T. Washington Community Center in Hamilton . The kids made homemade eclipse viewers and a diorama of the eclipse. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF



Many local businesses are offering eclipse merchandise, such as these custom cookies at Luke's Custom Cakes in Hamilton (left) and shirts at Unsung Salvage Design Company in Hamilton (below).
NICK GRAHAM PHOTOS / STAFF



BY RICK MCCRABB - CONTRIBUTING WRITER

SPECIAL COVERAGE

For the last year, communities throughout Butler County have planned for an event that will last only a few hours.

The solar eclipse is set to begin around 1:53 p.m. Monday and end at 4:35 p.m., and the totality, when the moon is completely blocking the sun, is expected to start at 3:09 p.m. and last about three minutes.

Thousands of visitors are expected to join local residents at numerous solar eclipse watch parties. Hotels are reporting higher-than-normal occupancy rates for Sunday and Monday nights, local businesses are offering special solar memorabilia and drinks, and local police

departments are warning residents not to pull off the side of the road to watch the eclipse.

Area emergency management officials are advising residents to prepare for the potential that cellphones might not work before or after the eclipse because of the number of visitors.

Detective Janee Lambert from the Butler County Sheriff's Office said the road patrol will be "beefed up" and emergency response services will be available from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday.

Monday's weather forecast calls for breaks in the clouds in the afternoon, but it's not known if breaks will come around the time of the totality of the eclipse.

This will be the first total solar eclipse in Ohio since 1806, and the next one is set for 2099. No wonder it's called "a once-in-alifetime" event.

"A unique and special experience" is how Kathryn Rawlinson from Travel Butler County described the eclipse.

The travel organization started planning for the eclipse last year and has promoted countywide events through social media.

She said Travel Butler County purchased 26,000 solar eclipse glasses that were distributed to local communities hosting events.

Carrie O'Neal, a Hamilton artist, illustrated the glasses, Rawlinson said.

At least 35 Butler County businesses are offering special solar eclipse items, ranging from stickers, cupcakes, desserts, beer, cocktails and T-shirts, she said.

The eclipse also is expected to attract tourists to the county.

Shanna Rutherford, front office manager at the Courtyard by Marriott Hamilton, said occupancy rates for Sunday and Monday nights in April typically are 15% to 25%. But this year, due to those in town to view the

eclipse, it's closer to 85%, she said.

Due to the low number of rooms available, the nightly rate has jumped from $159 to $215, she said.

At least one watch party has sold out its allotment of tickets.

Delaney French, marketing manager for Pyramid Hill in Hamilton, said the 600 tickets to its watch party have been sold. She said the park limited the number of tickets because leaders wanted those who attended to have "a great experience."

"We were thrilled with the response," she said about the 500 general watch tickets and 100 retreat tickets that were purchased.

Those who attend will park at First Baptist Church of Hamilton, 1501 Pyramid Hill Blvd., and use an all-day shuttle service between the lot and the park, she said.

Another large solar eclipse watch party will be held in Monroe.

"Party in the Dark: A Solarbration in Monroe" is set from noon-8 p.m. Monday at Community Park, 412 Old St. The city is working with Cincinnati Circus to provide numerous entertainment options, including inflatables, basketball pop-a-shot, football throw, soccer kick and climbing wall.

There will be 13 food trucks and live entertainment will be provided by Cassette Junkies from 4-8 p.m.

Rick Pearce, president of the Chamber serving Middletown, Monroe and Trenton, said he was "excited to see our communities engage their citizenry for this unique event that puts this part of Ohio in the spotlight."

TRAVEL TIPS

- Pre-plan your route.

Know your destination in advance, and where you plan to safely park and view the eclipse.

- Do not pull off the side of the road to view the eclipse as it may impede traffic and is unsafe.

- In the event your GPS does nor work, keep a paper travel map.

- Keep your gas tank full.

SOURCE: Middletown Division of Police

TOTAL ECLIPSE TIME

What to know about today's total solar eclipse



Vera Slampka, owner of Central Pastry in Middletown, shows off a tray of cookies made for the total solar eclipse.
NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

SPECIAL COVERAGE

Ohio will see a total solar eclipse today for the first time since 1806. Here's what to know.

4/8/2024

When will it happen?

Depending on the area, the partial eclipse will begin at about 1:52 p.m., and the totality will begin at about 3:09 p.m. and last between about one minute and four minutes. The eclipse will be over by about 4:24 p.m.

What will crowds, traffic be like?

Officials expect between 100,000 and 500,000 tourists to come to the state, which is one of the few in the path of totality. People are asked to expect long traffic delays, especially on Ohio 4, Interstate 75, U.S. 35.

What's the weather forecast?

The latest forecast calls for rain in the morning and the thickest clouds moving out of the area by late in the morning.

High-level clouds will move in for the afternoon. Even if cloudy, the National Weather Service says the clouds could be at least semi-transparent

For more information, photos and video

Follow Journal-News.com. We'll have reporters and photographers at nearly a dozen sites throughout southwest Ohio today.

National limits on PFAS in drinking water finalized

Officials say rule will curb diseases caused by 'forever chemicals.'



A researcher pours a water sample at the U.S. EPA Center For Environmental Solutions and Emergency Response in Cincinnati.
JOSHUA A. BICKEL / AP

BY MICHAEL PHILLIS - ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOP NATIONAL STORY

The Biden administration on Wednesday finalized strict limits on certain so-called "forever chemicals" in drinking water that will require utilities to reduce them to the lowest level they can be reliably measured. Officials say this will reduce exposure for 100 million people and help prevent thousands of illnesses, including cancers.

The rule is the first national drinking water limit on toxic PFAS, or perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are widespread and long-lasting in the environment.

Health advocates praised the Environmental Protection

Agency for not backing away from tough limits the agency proposed last year. But water utilities took issue with the rule, saying treatment systems are expensive to install and that customers will end up paying more for water.

Water providers are entering a new era with significant additional health standards that the EPA says will make tap water safer for millions of consumers — a Biden administration priority.

The agency has also proposed forcing utilities to remove dangerous lead pipes.

Utility groups warn the rules will cost tens of billions of dollars each and fall hardest on small communities with fewer resources.

Legal challenges are sure to follow.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan says the rule is the most important action the EPA has ever taken on PFAS.

"The result is a comprehensive and life-changing rule, one that will improve the health and vitality of so many communities across our country," said Regan.

PFAS chemicals are hazardous because they don't degrade in the environment and are linked to health issues such as low birth weight and kidney cancer.

They've been used in everyday products including nonstick pans, firefighting foam and waterproof clothing. Although some of the most common types are phased out in the U.S., others remain. Water

providers will now be forced to remove contamination put in the environment by other industries.

"It's that accumulation that's the problem," said Scott Belcher, a North Carolina State University professor who researches PFAS toxicity. "Even tiny, tiny, tiny amounts each time you take a drink of water over your lifetime is going to keep adding up, leading to the health effects."

PFAS is a broad family of chemical substances, and the new rule sets strict limits on two common types — called PFOA and PFOS — at 4 parts per trillion. Three other types that include GenEx Chemicals that are a major problem in North Carolina are limited to 10 parts per trillion. Water providers will have to test for these PFAS chemicals and tell the public when levels are too high.

Combinations of some PFAS types will be limited, too.

Regan announced the rule in Fayetteville, North Carolina, on Wednesday.

Environmental and health advocates praised the rule, but said PFAS manufacturers knew decades ago the substances were dangerous yet hid or downplayed the evidence.

Limits should have come sooner, they argue.

"Reducing PFAS in our drinking water is the most cost effective way to reduce our exposure," said Scott Faber, a food and water expert at Environmental Working Group. "It's much more challenging to reduce other exposures such as PFAS in food or clothing or carpets."

Over the last year, EPA has periodically released batches of utility test results for PFAS in drinking water. Roughly 16% of utilities found at least one of the two strictly limited PFAS chemicals at or above the new limits. These utilities serve tens of millions of people. The Biden administration, however, expects about 6-10% of water systems to exceed the new limits.

Water providers will generally have three years to do testing. If those test exceed the limits, they'll have two more years to install treatment systems, according to EPA officials.

Some funds are available to help utilities. Manufacturer 3M recently agreed to pay more than $10 billion to drinking water providers to settle PFAS litigation. And the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes billions to combat the substance.

But utilities say more will be needed.

For some communities, tests results were a surprise.

Last June, a utility outside Philadelphia that serves nearly 9,000 people learned that one of its wells had a PFOA level of 235 parts per trillion, among the highest results in the country at the time.

"I mean, obviously, it was a shock," said Joseph Hastings, director of the joint public works department for the Collegeville and Trappe boroughs, whose job includes solving problems presented by new regulations.

The well was quickly yanked offline, but Hastings still doesn't know the contamination source. Several other wells were above the EPA's new limits, but lower than those the state of Pennsylvania set earlier.

Now, Hastings says installing treatment systems could be a multi-million dollar endeavor, a major expense for a small customer base.

The new regulation is "going to throw public confidence in drinking water into chaos," said Mike McGill, president of WaterPIO, a water industry communications firm.

The American Water Works Association, an industry group, says it supports the development of PFAS limits in drinking water, but argues the EPA's rule has big problems.

The agency underestimated its high cost, which can't be justified for

communities with low levels of PFAS, and it'll raise customer water bills, the association said.

Plus, there aren't enough experts and workers — and supplies of filtration material are limited.

Work in some places has started. The company Veolia operates utilities serving about 2.3 million people across six eastern states and manages water systems for millions more. Veolia built PFAS treatment for small water systems that serve about 150,000 people.

The company expects, however, that roughly 50 more sites will need treatment — and it's working to scale up efforts to reduce PFAS in larger communities it serves.

Such efforts followed dramatic shifts in EPA's health guidance for PFAS in recent years as more research into its health harms emerged.

Less than a decade ago, EPA issued a health advisory that PFOA and PFOS levels combined shouldn't exceed 70 parts per trillion. Now, the agency says no amount is safe.

Public alarm has increased, too. In Minnesota, for example, Amara's Law aims to stop avoidable PFAS use.

It's been nearly a year since the law's namesake, Amara Strande, died from a rare cancer her family blames on PFAS contamination by 3M near her high school in Oakdale, although a connection between PFAS and her cancer can't be proven. Biden administration officials say communities shouldn't suffer like Oakdale. 3M says it extends its deepest condolences to Amara's friends and family.

Losing Amara pushed the family toward activism.

They've testified multiple times in favor of PFAS restrictions.

"Four parts per trillion, we couldn't ask for a better standard," Amara's

sister Nora said. “It’s a very ambitious goal, but anything higher than that is endangering lives.”

Two people shot in legs in weekend shooting at park

MIDDLETOWN



Two people were shot late Sunday night near the splash pad area at Middletown's Douglass Park, according to Middletown Police Sgt. Earl Nelson. NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

Two people were shot late Sunday night in Middletown's Douglass Park, according to Middletown Police Sgt. Earl Nelson.

The incident happened about 11:30 p.m. near the splash pad portion of the park on Minnesota Street.

According to a release from the city, the Middletown Division of Police and the Middletown Fire Department responded to the 1800 block of Minnesota Street for a call about gunshots in the area.

First responders found two gunshot victims, both struck in the legs. The victims were transported to the Atrium Medical Center for further treatment, the release said.

The victims told officers and detectives they were hanging out at Douglass Park when two other people walked up and demanded money. The two who demanded money began shooting, striking the victims in the leg. After the shooting, the two shooters fled on foot.

Middletown police detectives returned to the scene this morning to continue their investigation.

The investigation is ongoing.

Anyone who has information about this incident, is asked to contact Detective Ken Mynhier at 513-425-7720 or 513-425-7700.

Man dead after road-rage shooting in Middletown

MIDDLETOWN



A man died late Tuesday night following a road rage shooting that reportedly began at Verity Parkway and Manchester Avenue in Middletown. NICK GRAHAM/ STAFF

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

A man is dead after a roadrage shooting in Middletown late Tuesday night, according to officials and police.

Officers were called to the area of Manchester Avenue and Verity Parkway about 11:50 p.m. on a report of gunshots exchanged between

occupants of two vehicles.

The driver of a pickup truck was hit by gunfire as was his vehicle, leading officers to the 100 block of South Clinton Street and First Avenue where the vehicle hit a pole near the Eagles lodge, according to Sgt. Earl Nelson.

The driver suffered a gunshot wound to the neck and died at the scene. The other vehicle involved sped away.

Nelson said detectives have interviewed witnesses and have different accounts about what happened and differing descriptions of the other vehicle involved.

"It is similar, but not exactly the same to say what happened and what led to the actual shooting," Nelson said.

Detectives were waiting for businesses to open to check security cameras.

A preliminary investigation indicates the truck's engine overheated, the radiator exploded and fluid began leaking, which was tracked by police to the crashed truck, Nelson said.

No arrests have been made at this time, and the investigation is ongoing. If you have any information about this incident, contact Detective Ballinger 513-425-7785 or 513-425-7700.

Contact this reporter at 513- 543-9227 or email lauren.pack@coxinc.com.

Bird flu spreading among dairy cows; milk supply safe

IN-DEPTH COVERAGE



Holstein dairy cows eat a grain mixture at Dutch Road Dairy outside of Muleshoe, Texas. A form of avian influenza, or bird flu, has been confirmed in U.S. cattle in eight states, including Ohio, according to the Department of Agriculture. The bird flu in Ohio was detected in a herd in Wood County, according to the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
ALLISON TERRY / NYT

BY SAMANTHA WILDOW - STAFF WRITER

Bird flu has spread among dairy cows in eight states, including Ohio, a previously unseen phenomenon leading agriculture experts to caution biosecurity measures for farmers and emphasize the safety of milk.

The highly pathogenic avian influenza, or bird flu, was detected in a herd in Wood County, according to the Ohio Department of Agriculture. That dairy operation had received cows on March 8 from a Texas dairy operation, which later reported a confirmed detection of bird flu.

"Our milk is still safe to drink," said state veterinarian Dr. Dennis

Summers with the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

Bird flu has not been previously documented in dairy cows, Summers said, so these detections represent a new emerging disease in the U.S.

Cows that come down with bird flu are quarantined and their milk is removed from the supply until they recover. The animals are monitored and evaluated before returning them to normal operations.

Dairy operations are required to send only milk from healthy animals into processing for human consumption. Milk from impacted animals is being diverted from the commercial milk tank or destroyed so that it does not enter the human food supply, the USDA says.

The process of pasteurization is an added layer of protection. Pasteurization is used to kill bacteria in milk by applying heat to it for a certain set amount of time, according to the International Dairy Foods Association.

There is no concern about the safety of commercially pasteurized dairy products, the Ohio Department of Agriculture says.

"The FDA is still very strongly confident that pasteurization is effective.

There are more significant pathogens out there than H5N1 (bird flu), one that is destroyed through pasteurization processes," Summers said.

Raw, unpasteurized milk can be contaminated with pathogenic bacteria such as listeria, Campylobacter, Salmonella, and E. coli, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

The public health risk associated with bird flu among people remains low, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

The CDC confirmed that one person has contracted bird flu during this outbreak after being exposed to dairy cattle in Texas. The patient reported eye redness consistent with conjunctivitis as their only symptom, the CDC said, and is recover-

ing. The patient was told to isolate and is being treated with an antiviral drug.

A previous human case occurred in 2022 in Colorado.

Human infections with bird flu are uncommon but have occurred sporadically worldwide, according to the CDC.

The cows with bird flu seem to be linked to Texas, where multiple herds with bird flu were first detected.

Two detections in Texas were first announced on March 25, and since then, almost a dozen herds have been impacted, the USDA says. The strain appears to have originated from wild birds, the department says.

"It's still a fairly new development, still a lot to learn," said Caden Buschur, Darke County OSU Extension agriculture educator.

The OSU Extension Office is recommending farmers quarantine and test newly purchased cattle, as well as monitor and limit entry to the farm by

outside workers.

Operations should also monitor farm personnel for respiratory symptoms.

Other recommendations from Ohio State include practicing personal hygiene practices; wearing disposable gloves; wearing protective safety glasses or face shields; and wearing clean clothing and footwear that are used for those specific farms and animals. Clothing or footwear that gets used at the farm should be cleaned and disinfected before being used outside of the farm.

"We're trying to figure out how ... is the virus moving from cow to cow," Summers said.

The disease does not seem to be spreading among cattle in the same way it does among poultry, Summers said. Bird flu is highly fatal among poultry, but it's not the same for cattle and other mammals.

'Our milk is still safe to drink.' Dennis Summers with the Ohio Department of Agriculture

"It's largely what we call self-limiting, meaning the cows recover. You don't see high mortality loss as a direct result of the virus," Summers said.

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Plan for Middletown event center progresses

Townhomes, restaurants, retail, medical complex are part of plans for 50-acre project.



The site of the proposed Renaissance Arena event center, south of Ohio 122 in Middletown.
NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

4/22/2024

ONLY IN THE JOURNAL-NEWS

What has been called a "transformational" development at Ohio 122 and Union Road in Middletown's East End continues to move forward with the approval of funding for infrastructure work.

Middletown City Council last week passed an ordinance providing for the issuance of bond anticipation notes, with the maximum principal of $14 million to pay the cost of engineering and multiple infrastructure improvements for the Renaissance Arena project.

The 50.86-acre mixed-use project will include a 3,000- seat multipurpose event center, Class A retail, offices, hotels, restaurants and a variety of residential products, according to developer Todd Duplain from Woodard Development.

In late 2023, council approved legislation to allow City Manager Paul Lolli to enter into a final development agreement with Woodard and the Warren County Port Authority concerning the planned $200 million project.

"The city, in partnership with Woodard development and the Port Authority, is moving toward a timeline to bid things out in the next few weeks," said Assistant City Manager Nathan Cahall last week.

"Before a construction contract can be recommended by staff and ultimately approved by council, we have to certify with the finance department that we have funds on hand, so we have to sell these notes parallel to that ... and start the underwriting process and enter into various agreements."

The infrastructure improvements to the site include water mains, sanitary sewers and storm sewers, public roads and streets, curbs and gutters, grading and landscaping, according to staff reports.

The city has created a tax incrementing financing district for the site

and a new community authority to raise other supplemental revenues over time in support of the project, according to city documents.

The city, under the agreement, also agrees to transfer the project property to both Woodard Development and the Warren County Port Authority.

The port authority has agreed to construct the event center and attached hotel that will act as the anchor for the development.

Woodard Development will be tasked with the development of the remainder of the site in accordance with the approved preliminary development plan.

The project would attract full-service, high-end hotels, premium and fast food restaurants, townhomes that would sell in the $325,000 to $425,000 range and a medical complex that could complement the two East End hospitals, Atrium Medical Center and Kettering Health Middletown, according to Duplain.

Lolli has called the development "a destination location" that will draw visitors seeking entertainment, dining and shopping options off Interstate 75.

Contributing writer Rick McCrabb contributed to this report Contact this reporter at 513- 543-9227 or email lauren. pack@coxinc.com.

$4M grant to address river erosion near Middletown plant

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The Miami Conservancy District announced it has been awarded a $4 million grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program in partnership with the city of Middletown. The project will address the ongoing erosion of Great Miami riverbanks that is creating severe soil and land loss and cutting dangerously close to the Middletown's wastewater treatment plant and the adjacent Miami Conservancy District levee that helps to keep the area safe from floodwaters.
NICK GRAHAM / STAFF

BY LAUREN PACK - STAFF WRITER

A $4 million Ohio EPA grant has been awarded to the Miami Conservancy District in partnership with the city of Middletown to address erosion along the Great Miami River bank that is "cutting dangerously close" to the city's wastewater treatment plant, according to MCD officials.

"Over the last several decades, levees and dams have worked harder because of increased rainfall.

Coupled with the age of the system, the infrastructure could degrade at a faster rate if left unaddressed," said MaryLynn Lodor, general manager of the Miami Conservancy District.

To address priorities, the Miami Conservancy District is seeking numerous state and federal grants in addition to a new assessment and increased rates being applied to updated property values. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program grant is the latest one awarded just last month.

The project is slated to begin this year and run through 2027.

It covers approximately 13 acres along the river, just south of State Route 73 near Trenton. The project area includes both right and left banks, totaling 3,000 linear feet of streambank along the river, according to the Miami Conservancy District.

The wastewater plant is adjacent to a Miami Conservancy District levee that helps to keep the area safe from floodwaters. This section of the river is downstream of a drainage area of approximately 3,190 square miles, making it one of the largest drainage basins in the state, according to MCD officials.

Sarah Hippensteel, MCD manager of communications, said the

wastewater treatment plant has lost "many, many tens of feet of land, and it is moving closer to the infrastructure of the plant all the time. We also have a levee right there ... the improvement work is going to stop that erosion."

Lodor told Middletown City Council at a March meeting the Middletown project "has been on our radar as an issue of risk for several years, and we applied for (the grant) in 2022 and didn't get it."

After modifying the specifications and resubmission in 2023, the grant was awarded, she said.

Lodor said the project is part of "aging infrastructure" throughout the MCD that needs attention.

Key elements of the project design will mitigate erosion and create diverse aquatic habitat, effectively curbing bank undercutting while improving water quality and restoring and bolstering aquatic populations.

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Judge temporarily halts Ohio law to keep Columbus, other cities from regulating tobacco

Judge says state law looks unconstitutional in that it targets cities, not people

Bill Bush
Columbus Dispatch

AD
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A Franklin County judge issued a temporary restraining order late Friday afternoon, stopping a state law from taking effect next week that would prevent Columbus, several Franklin County suburbs, Cincinnati and other Ohio cities from regulating tobacco products.

The ruling means the local cities' bans on the sale of flavored tobacco products will remain in effect for now but indicates that Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Mark Serrott believes the cities' case is likely to succeed.

Serrott scheduled a preliminary injunction hearing in the case for May 17.

Columbus, Cincinnati and several other Ohio cities filed a lawsuit Tuesday challenging the law created by the Republican-controlled Ohio General Assembly, arguing the legislature violated an Ohio constitutional amendment giving cities "home rule" to set their own laws for the good of their residents on certain matters, including on issues of public safety. The cities argue the new Ohio law allowing flavored tobacco sales negatively affects the health of Ohioans, particularly of teens increasingly turning to vaping.

After a 50-minute hearing Friday in downtown Columbus, Serrott left the courtroom for about half an hour before returning with a decision. He explained that the state law effectively pre-empting municipalities from regulating tobacco locally appeared to be missing key elements, such as a comprehensive state regulation scheme, which appears to infringe on cities' rights under the Ohio Constitution.

"Basically all (the state law) does is say 'We are pre-empting the municipalities' ability to regulate," Serrott said, adding that the Ohio Supreme Court has ruled that for "general laws" to be valid, they are supposed to "prescribe conduct by citizens," not by cities, which are granted special regulatory rights under the state constitution.

Serrott also noted that while one state law prohibits municipalities from regulating tobacco, another one requires a plan a to reduce tobacco use by Ohioans. That code emphasizes reducing the use of tobacco by "youth, minority and regional populations, pregnant women, medicaid recipients, and others who may be disproportionately affected by the use of tobacco."

In granting the restraining order, Serrott concluded the cities' challenge to the constitutionality of the state law is likely to ultimately succeed — although he also acknowledged his final ruling will likely be appealed.

Serrott found not granting the restraining order would cause harm because of future health consequences to juveniles targeted by tobacco distributors.

"It's fortunate that he sided with us temporarily," said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein, while leaving the courtroom. "And really this is a win for kids, which is the whole focus of this. How can we get ... flavored tobacco products and vaping... How can we get that out of the hands of children?"



Gov. Mike DeWine twice vetoed the state legislature's efforts to prohibit cities from enacting bans on flavored tobacco products, saying at one point: "When a local community wants to make the decision to ban these flavors to protect their children, we should applaud those decisions."

But lawmakers voted to override his veto, restoring the law. State lawmakers have argued that they, not local governments, should have broad controls to keep the law uniform statewide, such as penalizing merchants selling tobacco products to those under 21, and that the ban also hurts small businesses that rely on such sales

Klein, DeWine and other proponents of the city bans have argued that flavored tobacco and e-cigarettes, or vapes, have led to a sharp rise in nicotine use among teens — wiping out decades of efforts to put anti-smoking laws into place — and that those products have historically targeted minorities and low-income people.

Central Ohio mayors blasted state lawmakers earlier this year when they finally achieved passing the law over DeWine's veto.

"The statehouse arbitrarily decided that, for the first time in Ohio history, local communities shouldn't have the ability to decide what's best for the

health of our communities," said Bexley Mayor Ben Kessler in a written statement to The Dispatch in January. "Local laws around nicotine regulation are not new, and until now local authority has never been questioned in this arena."

Kessler charged that lawmakers were siding with tobacco companies planning "to lure our teenagers and children into addiction."

Dispatch reporter Shahid Meighan contributed to this report.