

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

What's New in Public Health?

TORNADO AWARENESS MONTH

During the month of March 2022, a record-breaking 219 tornados struck the United States, more than any other March on record. Kansas had its first tornado of 2022 touch down last Tuesday in Jefferson County. April is Tornado Awareness Month, a month focusing on the importance of preparing for tornados. While peak tornado season in Kansas usually occurs during May and June, tornados can form much earlier in the year. We encourage all residents of Cowley County to start taking steps today to ensure that when a tornado strikes, you will be ready. For ways on how you can prepare, check out [ready.gov/tornados](https://www.ready.gov/tornados) and [weather.gov/safety/tornado](https://www.weather.gov/safety/tornado)



An EF-4 tornado photographed 5 miles west of Marquette, KS during the tornado outbreak of April 13-16, 2012. Picture by Will Campbell

NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

This week, we participated in National Public Health Week, a week focusing on public health issues and the ways your local public health workforce work to create a happier, healthier community. Check out our social media pages for our posts highlighting some of our programs and services available to the community!

INFLUENZA VACCINE CLINICS

In preparation for 2022's influenza season, the Health Department is currently scheduling influenza vaccine clinics throughout the county. If your organization is interested in setting up a flu vaccine clinic, contact the Health Department today!

HEALTH & SAFETY FAIR 2022

The Cowley County Health and Safety Fair returns once again! The event will be held in **Arkansas City at the Agri-Business Building on Saturday, June 4th from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**. If you would like to take part in the Health and Safety Fair this year, email dvildasol@cowleycountyks.gov for more information!

COVID & Illness Data

Month to month new case information

| New Cases | *month to date | |
|-----------|----------------|------|
| Month | 2021 | 2022 |
| January | 828 | 2675 |
| February | 304 | 321 |
| March | 90 | 61 |
| April | 47 | 5 |
| May | 59 | |
| June | 28 | |
| July | 153 | |
| August | 488 | |
| September | 592 | |
| October | 386 | |
| November | 606 | |
| December | 653 | |
| TOTAL | 4159 | 3032 |

COVID-19 remains active in Cowley County, though at a much-reduced pace. The 7-day moving average has been .14 (less than 1 case per day). March ended with a total of 61 reported cases, and, so far, 5 cases have been reported in April. Should you become ill, contact the Health Department to schedule testing. Always wait until you have recovered fully from your illness before engaging in any group activities. All residents are reminded to take the necessary precautions to avoid contracting or spreading any illness.

Comparison of previous year, 2021, with current year to date

| Year Total | 2021 | 2022 |
|-------------|------|------|
| Total Cases | 4159 | 3062 |
| % of cases | 100% | ~74% |

COVID BOOSTERS

Adults aged 50 and older and some immunocompromised people are now eligible to get a second Pfizer or Moderna booster dose at least 4 months after their first booster. If you are eligible and interested in getting another booster, contact the Health Department today!

COVID TESTING AT THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

While case counts and testing requests have declined, the Health Department still offers COVID testing by appointment. As the state response to the pandemic transitions into endemic normalcy, the Health Department will continue to provide updates and prepare for when the situation changes. As always, we encourage everyone to take precautions to prevent the spread of illness.

Health Department Program Highlight

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

To prevent the spread of illness, the Health Department tracks and identifies sources of infection within Cowley County. We conduct risk assessments to determine which groups or individuals are at greater risk of infection. These services, along with providing counsel to school districts and long-term care facilities, allow the Health Department to lower the spread of illness and protect the health of the greater community.

Feeling Sick?

If you do become ill, please do not participate in any group events until after you have fully recovered from your illness. For as long as the pandemic persists Cowley County residents are advised to take all necessary precautions to prevent the contraction and spread of ANY illness.

- Stay home if you feel ill.
- If you develop symptoms of illness, be tested to determine if you are infected.
- Wash your hands frequently and use hand sanitizer.
- Clean high touch surfaces with disinfecting cleaners (doors, counters etc.).
- Wear a mask that properly covers your nose and mouth while in public.
- When ill stay home and isolate from others so you will not spread illness.