

Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services



Community Health Improvement Plan Annual Report to the Community for Calendar Year 2018

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Introduction

Background Information

The Anoka County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) describes goals and objectives to help community members live better, healthier lives. Guided by staff from Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services (PHES), the CHIP also allows the monitoring of progress towards achieving goals and objectives in coordination with community partners. The CHIP resulted from a comprehensive assessment of the community's health status and themes regarding health needs in the community. This Community Health Assessment (CHA) incorporated the perceptions and opinions of the community at large through a survey. PHES also gathered information from partners and stakeholders through key informant interviews.

Anoka County's Community Health Advisory Committee (CHAC) represents a variety of community organizations and leaders and serves an oversight function for major PHES activities. After thorough review of the information gathered through the community health assessment, the CHAC identified the ten most important health issues for Anoka County residents. Taking into account those priority issues, the initial CHIP was completed in October 2014 to be implemented in the five-year period of 2015 through 2019. The CHIP is intended to be used by the community as a guide for addressing some of the most important health priorities facing the community. Five of the top health priorities are included in the CHIP. They are as follows:

1. **Mental Health:** promote healthy communities by promoting mental health prevention, education, and access to services in Anoka County.
2. **Violence and Safety:** assure coordination and education of violence prevention programs and activities for Anoka County residents and community members.
3. **Obesity:** participate in sustainable changes that contribute to the reduction of the number of individuals in Anoka County who are considered overweight and/or obese.
4. **Affordable Housing:** participate in county-based efforts to address homelessness and shortage of affordable housing.
5. **Water Quality:** maintain partnerships that lead to sources of safe drinking water for Anoka County residents.

Each of the above goals contain specific objectives and strategies supporting the goal. These are monitored over time to inform progress in achieving the goal. Some strategies apply to multiple objectives. Each strategy contains performance measures: specific pieces of information that can be tracked over time to show progress towards a particular goal.

Process for Monitoring and Revision

PHES revises the CHIP on an annual basis. Revisions in 2018 were made to account for changes in feasibility and updates for progress made. Revisions were limited to objectives and

strategies. All goals have remained the same. Specific details about these changes are noted in the “Next Steps” section of each priority area.

Revisions were made during a series of strategic planning meetings by PHEs leadership. The PHEs Management Team utilized input from CHIP partners to make revision decisions based on feasibility and progress toward stated goals and objectives. Partners take part in the process for monitoring and revising the CHIP by providing data and narrative around progress or barriers encountered, as well as proposing and/or reviewing suggested revisions. These partners include PHEs internal staff, staff from other Anoka County agencies, and organizations in the community. The CHAC committee will review the 2018 revisions at the May 1st, 2019 meeting. PHEs staff regularly monitor CHIP objectives and communicate progress through meetings with stakeholders, newsletters, and utilizing PHEs networks. PHEs reviews all major plans, including the CHIP, each year to allow for any revisions to take place in the following year. This process is currently being revised and formalized in a plan that will be used in 2019.

Community Context

Over the past several years, some major personnel changes in PHEs has left a gap in knowledge regarding the original CHIP development and planning process. Guided by a new wave of leadership, PHEs is committed to working toward the priorities identified in the CHIP. These priorities have remained fairly stable since the original CHIP was published. However, several revisions to objectives, strategies and measures are necessary considering key changes. For example, some limited-term grants supported actions within strategies of the CHIP. The priorities addressed within those strategies are still relevant, but strategies and objectives are often updated to describe current activities within those priority areas. Additionally, changes in the feasibility of achieving certain targets were considered based on community context. Finally, several revisions for clarity allow better direction for partners involved in the CHIP, as well as more streamlined monitoring of progress made.

Progress on CHIP Priority Areas

Mental Health

About this Priority

“Mental health is a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with challenges. Mental health is essential to personal well-being, family and interpersonal relationships, and the ability to contribute to community or society” (Healthy People 2020). A priority concern for Anoka County youth and adult residents is mental health. According to the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey, 8.4% of Anoka County students surveyed (8th, 9th, and 11th graders) reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless most or all the time in the last two weeks. Additionally, 12% of surveyed students reported that they have seriously considered suicide, and 4.2% reported that they have attempted suicide. The 2013 Anoka

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County Community Health Survey found that 10% of adult respondents had at least ten days of poor mental health during the past 30 days.

Goal: Promote healthy communities by promoting mental health prevention, education, and access to services in Anoka County.

Objective I: Anoka County staff and community partners starting in 2015 will collaborate to coordinate and support the increased availability of mental health services for at risk individuals and families through increased access to early intervention services.

- **Strategy A:** Assure the coordination and implementation of Anoka County Children and Family Council (ACCFC) grant.
- **Strategy C:** Early age / early access: improve early identification and intervention to increase access to mental health services.
- **Strategy E** (revised in 2018): Jail mental health: develop a tool that will measure inmate chief complaints upon admission to the Jail and establish a baseline for mental health issues.

Objective II: Contribute to community-based prevention strategies to help reduce stigma in mental health.

- **Strategy B:** Contribute to community-based mental wellness committees and projects.
- **Strategy D:** Crisis intervention training for staff in the Anoka County Sheriff's Office.

Progress

Strategy A is focused on the implementation of a specific grant aimed at improving mental health for youth in the community. The grant was for the Student and Family Engagement (SAFE) program, which obtained funds from the Anoka County Children and Family Council (ACCFC). The 2017-2018 grant continued to build on the previous grant, with partner Highland Elementary in Columbia Heights, on education and clinical consultation on trauma-informed strategies, addressing barriers for families to receive services and provided resources for those who worked with children and families who experienced trauma in their lives. The grant also expanded to work with the Anoka County juvenile corrections population and their families. This expansion developed education, awareness, addressed barriers as well as increased family engagement with children and families who have experienced trauma in their lives and are involved in the juvenile justice system. Through this grant, mental health services were provided to 26 students/families over the school year and into the summer. Additionally, 84 family members were provided trauma informed services at home and at school. This has resulted in a reduction in student removals from classrooms, an increase in attendance, a reduction of disruptive behaviors during class and improved parent engagement. There was also an increase of 25 families from the previous year who participated in family events at the Anoka County Juvenile Center. This grant ended in 2018 and therefore the strategy has been completed successfully.

Strategy B concerns mental health trainings and the Annual Walk for Mental Health. In 2018, the Mental Wellness Campaign had 6 people trained as trainers in "Happy Hour Trainings", which is a positive psychology workshop that teaches self-care and prevention skills. The group

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was hoping to lead 4 trainings per year but did not have any in 2018. The group is planning on doing a free event in 2019 to market the training. The Mental Wellness Campaign also plans the annual Walk for Mental Health, which was held on May 12th, 2018 and had 150 participants. The goal was to increase the number of participants which was not achieved in 2018. In 2019, the date of the walk will be switched to the first weekend in June and changed to a new location to increase visibility and it will be focused on promoting youth.

Strategy C seeks to help young children and parents access mental health services through Public Health Nurse Family Home Visiting and Child and Teen Checkup screenings. The first performance measure was to maintain or increase the depression screening rate for post-partum mothers, and this measure was successful for 2018 given the 92% screening rate (compared to 95% in 2017, 93% in 2016 and 89% in 2015). Of those who participated in the screening, 21 had a positive result. 22 women accepted a referral for mental health resources and 17 were already receiving mental health services. More women were offered a referral than the number that screened positive for possible depression as resources are offered when there are concerns, even if the screening is negative. The second performance measure: Increase the number of healthcare provider informational contacts related to mental health (face-to-face, newsletter, etc.) was also successful. Child and Teen Checkup staff had an increase in health care provider informational contacts related to mental health (83 vs. 80 in 2017) which consisted of mailings and face-to-face visits. Through these contacts, providers have come to recognize CTC as a great reference. 4,358 total contacts were made which was up from 3,904 in 2017. This increase is potentially due to a larger CTC eligible population for children with Medical Assistance in Anoka County.

Strategy D relates to Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for Law Enforcement and Correctional staff that teaches officers how to deal with people with mental health issues and how to de-escalate situations. CIT is continuing to be used in Correctional facilities. The Jail has switched to Verbal Defense and Influence Training which is the same concept but helps identify and manage any conflict, not just crisis intervention. This makes it more relatable and understandable for participants. This training is required on an annual basis for all Correctional staff. The performance measure is to maintain 100% of full-time Correctional staff trained which was achieved in 2018. Trainings are led by trained staff (train the trainer model).

Strategy E: has been revised to developing a tool that will identify patient chief complaints upon admission to the Jail. This early intervention will help to analyze the severity of the presenting problem and provide us with data to determine services and resources that may be needed during their stay. Collection of chief complaint data will also be useful in identifying and addressing the prevalence of disease in the jail population.

Next Steps

Strategy A has been completed with the end of the ACCFC grant funding. Strategy E had previously been related to a Jail Diversion Program. Unfortunately, we were unable to generate reliable data to support this strategy and track progress. Because of this we have developed a new strategy that is both measurable and relevant. All other strategies remain unchanged and we will continue tracking progress.

Violence and Safety

About this Priority

Violence across all ages continues to be a concern in Anoka County. In 2017, Anoka County Child Protection Intake screened 3,890 reports and 1,496 child maltreatment reports were investigated. In 2017, there were 1,800 cases of alleged abuse of seniors and adults who are vulnerable. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being. Research suggests that adults who experienced multiple ACEs have increased risk for poor mental and physical health outcomes such as obesity, alcoholism, depression, diabetes, and heart disease. It is estimated that over a third of Anoka County children have at least one ACE.

Goal: assure coordination and education of violence prevention programs and activities for Anoka County residents and community partners.

Objective 1: PHES staff will work with community partners to educate school and healthcare professionals, county staff, and the public on ACEs and resiliency in children by 2020.

- **Strategy A:** Promote education on ACEs and strategies for resiliency in children.

Objective 2: PHES staff and community partners will provide educational support of the Bystander principals and/or Green Dot program overview in 3 Anoka County schools and 2 Anoka County faith/community organizations by 2020.

- **Strategy B:** Provide outreach to schools and community partners to inform of bystander principle training opportunities.

Objective 3 (revised in 2018): PHES staff in collaboration with partners in Fridley, will promote, via website, methods for implementing the Coaching for Change learning course through 2019.

- **Strategy C:** Promote interactive online learning courses for coaches.

Progress

Strategy A relates to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), activities to inform about ACEs, and reduce ACEs in Anoka County youth. An online ACEs course was developed by PHES staff and made available for all Anoka County staff to take through the county's internal training software. An Information Technology training database at Anoka County will track the number of people taking the ACEs training, which will be required of all PHES staff. In 2017, 37 Anoka County staff completed the course and in 2018, 49 Anoka county staff completed the course. The goal is to increase this number in 2019. New hires in PHES have been required to take the course, but there will be a push to have more existing staff take the course in 2019. Through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), Anoka County has provided 8 ACEs trainings to partners in 2018. The pre and post tests showed a significant increase in knowledge about ACEs and their impact. Each training and the resources that were provided were modified for the target audience and the population they serve. After the training, Anoka County Libraries are exploring ways to educate the community, the faith community is reviewing a "Creating a trauma-informed congregation" curriculum that was provided and RISE

is exploring grants to do further training on ACEs with a goal to become a trauma-informed service provider.

Strategy B utilized a violence prevention approach called Green Dot Bystander Intervention, which provides training to help bystanders prevent power-based personal violence. The objective of providing bystander training through the Green Dot program was met in 2016. Three schools and two faith-based organizations were trained on the program, which allows for continuous training by those originally trained.

Strategy C was revised, and now focuses on promoting the success of the Fridley Coaching for Change course via the website with existing marketing material instead of creating a program implementation user guide to send to community athletic associations and community education departments. The Fridley press release which outlines their “Power of the Permit” approach will be posted on the Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services website along with other informational material. The “Power of the Permit” requires all youth sports programs that use fields and facilities in Fridley to implement Coaching for Change, an online training and screening process to ensure that all youth coaches are equipped to provide a safe and positive sporting experience. Coaching for Change, a game plan to prevent violence, offers tools to equip coaches and their athletes with tools to support the healthy development of young men and women and prevent sexual and relationships violence.

Next Steps

One objective changed under this goal during in the 2018 CHIP review process. Objective 3 was modified by the PHES Planning Team to be more feasible. The prior objective of creating a user guide was replaced with a focus of sharing information online. After further discussing the process and policies implemented with our partners in Fridley and Minnesota Youth Athletic Services (MYAS), it was determined that creating a user guide that would fit the needs of all the different communities in Anoka County would not be possible. Fridley and MYAS have shared a press release and several marketing materials to be posted on the Anoka County website. The other objectives and strategies remain unchanged.

Obesity

About this Priority

Being overweight or obese is associated with numerous chronic diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. These conditions cause over half of all deaths among Minnesotans and create a huge financial burden. A 2017 community health survey found that 32% of Anoka County adults are obese (BMI of 30 or greater), and 36% are overweight (BMI between 25 and 30). On average, Minnesotans are overweight at a comparable rate (37%) and obese at a lower rate (28%) compared to Anoka County, according to the 2017 State of Obesity report. Achieving higher rates of normal weight would have positive impacts on health and economic factors.

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Goal: participate in sustainable changes that contribute to the reduction of the number of individuals in Anoka County who are considered overweight and/or obese.

Objective 1 (revised in 2018): Support community partners to implement at least 610 policy, system and environmental changes to increase physical activity and/or increase access to fruits and vegetables for Anoka County residents by 2020.

- **Strategy A:** Anoka County SHIP Workplace Partners will utilize evidence-based activities to improve healthy eating, increase physical activity, and provide breastfeeding support through policy, system, and environmental changes.
- **Strategy B:** Anoka County SHIP School Partner sites will implement evidence-based activities around Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Schools through policy, system, and environmental changes.
- **Strategy C:** Anoka County SHIP Community Partner sites will increase availability of healthier food options through policy, system, and environmental changes, coupled with the knowledge needed to make an informed choice, especially for those who have the greatest barriers to accessing healthy and safe food.
- **Strategy D:** Anoka County SHIP Healthcare Partner sites will increase Clinic-Community Linkages that are equitable through policy, system, and environmental changes that support access to evidence-based prevention resources in the community.

Objective 2 (revised in 2018): Support WIC families with children whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is greater than or equal to 95th percentile by maintaining at least 85% of follow-up visits provided by a Registered Dietitian by 2020.

- **Strategy E** (revised in 2018): Anoka County PHES WIC program will prioritize Registered Dietician staff availability to meet with families of children with a BMI greater than or equal to 95th percentile by maintaining at least 85% of follow-up visits provided by a Registered Dietitian by 2020.

Progress

The first objective in this priority area aligns with Anoka County SHIP work, with each strategy representing one of the four settings.

Strategy A relates to worksites, which saw 40 Policy, System, and/or Environment (PSE) changes in 2018. Anoka County SHIP partnered with 9 worksites throughout the county to start or grow their employee wellness programs. Workplaces could choose to focus on physical activity, healthy eating, support for breastfeeding mothers, and/or tobacco cessation. They also had the opportunity to participate in quarterly networking meetings with other employers across the county, as well as access to funding to support the purchase of equipment and supplies to support their programs. Six worksites from the cohort participated in pre- and post-intervention surveys measuring employee beliefs about wellness support in their workplace. Looking specifically at responses to “Strongly Agreeing” to various workplace wellness indicators, there was an increase for all topic areas.

Strategy B: schools, saw 75 PSE changes in 2018. Anoka County SHIP and Anoka Hennepin School District Community Education collaborated to expand after school intramural activities

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for middle school students. Students and coordinators identified three new activity options, launched in 2018: table tennis (winter), ultimate Frisbee (spring) and flag football (fall). Results from participant surveys show improvement of students' health behaviors, both inside and outside of the intramural program. The program was implemented at 6 middle school sites and had 162 student participants. Forest Lake Area Schools implemented the Move Mindfully program which integrates physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This integrated approach to wellness uses yoga-based movement, breathing techniques, and social/emotional skill development to improve children's focus, physical health, behavioral skills, and emotional stability. Over 200 school staff from all seven elementary schools were trained or participated in Move Mindfully strategies and over 700 students were reached by Move Mindfully strategies.

Strategy C: the community setting, had 54 PSE changes in 2018. A partnership between Anoka County SHIP, American Lung Association (ALA), and area Property Managers is creating healthier housing options for Anoka County residents. 20 properties have partnered with Anoka County SHIP and ALA since 2016 to promote smoking cessation to residents and/or discuss smoke-free policies and over 4,000 residents have been impacted by Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing work in Anoka County since 2016. Through support provided by Anoka County SHIP, Minnesota Fresh Farm was able to accept EBT/SNAP at their farm stand for the first time during the 2018 season and had over 80 transactions in their first season. This gives lower income residents, who experience higher rates of food insecurity and obesity, access to healthier food options they can afford. Our 2018 efforts around physical activity in the community focused on Safe Routes to Parks, which provided wayfinding resources as well as bike racks and fix-it stations to encourage walking and biking to parks throughout the county. Anoka County SHIP funded a fat tire bike fleet for the Anoka County Parks and Recreation Department to offer year-round biking classes and events.

Strategy D: the healthcare setting, had 19 PSE changes in 2018. Partners engaged in a policy and system change through the addition of a Screen, Counsel, Refer, and Follow-up (SCRF) program to be used with community behavioral health providers. This helps clients obtain community resources to access healthy foods, physical activity, and tobacco cessation efforts. Counseling and referring to outside resources is offered as needed, then providers follow-up with clients afterward with a conversation about what is working well and where more help is needed. In 2018, 354 total clients were screened, 385 were counseled, 121 were referred and 122 followed-up.

Strategy E is the focus of the second objective in the obesity priority area. It involves the PHES Women Infants and Children (WIC) program. The performance measure was revised to maintaining at least 85% of follow-up visits provided by a Registered Dietitian. Our rate was 82.1% in 2015, 84.4% in 2016, 89.6% in 2017 and 87% in 2018. Overweight is the most common risk factor for chronic diseases. Due to staffing changes, the prior objective of increasing the percentage of follow-up visits by a Registered Dietitian was not as feasible as originally anticipated.

Next Steps

The PHES Planning team made some changes to objectives in this area during the 2018 revision process. Previously for Objective 1, the goal was to reach 450 PSEs by 2020. Through the end of 2018, we had a total of 478 PSEs which exceeded our target. When we originally created the objective, we did not know how many PSEs to expect in each year. Because we have exceeded the original estimate, we decided to increase it to 610 and keep the objective and strategies for 2019. We expect to have close to the same number of PSEs in 2019 as we did in 2017-2018. Objective 2 was updated to be more feasible based on current staffing levels. Our ratio of Registered Dietitians to Nutrition Assistants has changed since the objective was originally created. Another obstacle to achieving this objective is that WIC doesn't schedule appointments. Families utilize the clinic on a drop-in basis, and WIC doesn't control who comes back for a return follow-up visit. The revised objective is feasible based on the data trend and current staffing levels.

Housing

About this Priority

Lack of affordable housing for families leads to transiency, high-density living situations, and homelessness. Limited shelter space for homeless families and adolescents means that housing efforts must take a wide approach to improving affordability and granting opportunities to gain long-term housing. The 2017 Anoka County Point-In-Time count revealed that 45 individuals are currently living outside, on the streets, in tents, or places not meant for human habitation. Additionally, 127 individuals are currently living in shelters or transitional housing.

Projected changes in population growth, demographic characteristics, and housing preferences among Anoka County residents means there will be a large increase in demand for housing units in the next 10 years. This includes senior housing and rental units, many of which would need to be accessible for those with moderate or low-income. Demand for low-income affordable housing far exceeds supply. A recent Housing Needs Assessment showed that 42.9% of Anoka County households pay more than 35% of their income on rent, which is the largest such proportion in the metro area. At these levels, paying for other costs of daily living becomes excessively difficult, and may lead to risky living situations or outright homelessness.

Goal: participate in county-based efforts to address homelessness and shortage of affordable housing.

Objective 1: Anoka County staff and community partners will increase the number of Anoka County residents receiving emergency shelter and street outreach who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk for homelessness, by 20% by 2020.

- **Strategy A:** increase supportive housing opportunities and supports for those experiencing homelessness, doubled up / couch hopping, or at risk for homelessness.

Objective 2: Anoka County staff and community partners will divert and prevent Anoka County households from becoming homeless by 30% by 2020.

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- **Strategy C:** increase community participation efforts to address homelessness and affordable housing through prevention and outreach activities.

Objective 3: Anoka County staff and community partners will increase the number of available homeless housing subsidies in Anoka County by 20% by 2020.

- **Strategy B:** increase the availability of affordable housing and supports for low income households through partnership with community resources.

Objective 4: Anoka County staff will support community partners to increase the number of available affordable housing units by 10% in Anoka County by 2020.

- **Strategy B:** increase the availability of affordable housing and supports for low income households through partnership with community resources.

Progress

Strategy A relates to addressing affordable housing and homelessness by using outreach for those in the community at risk for homelessness or who are experiencing homelessness. The goal was to increase the number of residents receiving emergency shelter and street outreach by 20% by 2020. At the end of 2018, we were at a 59% increase which far exceeds our target. This achievement is due to the County and its partners having great successes in diverting households. The YMCA in particular is great at connecting single youth and youth-headed families to resources efficiently.

Strategy B focuses on increasing the number of beds and affordable housing units available to members of the community. Partnerships are critical to the success of this strategy. Objective 3 was to increase the number of available homeless housing subsidies by 20% by 2020. At the end of 2018, we were at a 5% increase. Some barriers that were encountered with meeting this objective have been lack of funding to build on or renew existing programs (Tenant-Based Rental Assistance), program redesign (Rental Assistance for Anoka County) and development projects not being funded when proposed to serve harder to serve populations. Objective 4 was to increase the number of available affordable housing units by 10% by 2020. At the end of 2018, we were at 26%. The biggest driver in this increase was an increase in the number of Housing Support (Group Residential Housing) permanent housing beds. Also, Anoka County is working towards declaring Functional Zero for ending veteran homelessness. There were 7 vets on the registry at the end of 2018 and the goal is on track to be met in 2019. In 2019, there will be a new workforce housing expansion in Coon Rapids with approximately 200 units which will further assist in achieving our goals.

Strategy C in the Housing priority addresses homelessness and affordable housing through community participation efforts. The goal was to divert and prevent households from becoming homeless by 30% by 2020. At the end of 2018, we were at 20% which is on track to meet our goal. A big success story for this strategy in 2018 was a community connect event held at St. Timothy's church. This was a housing and resource fair which took place in coordination with the Wilder Triennial survey. Marketing was done for the event with the theme of "Building opportunities, strengthening communities." There were many resources available – mental health, food shelves, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Public Health Nursing, YMCA,

among many others. 59 households attended with at least 10% receiving housing because of the event. Due to the success, another event is being planned for 2019.

Next Steps

No changes were made to this priority area in 2018. Considering the success in implementing the strategies in this priority area, CHIP partners are moving forward as planned with these activities. PHES staff along with community partners meet several times annually to review the status of performance measures in this area and acknowledge any challenges that must be addressed. There have been additional barriers in meeting Objective 3 that have emerged but overall, activities are doing well, and we are on target to achieve our objectives related to affordable housing and homelessness.

Priority 5

Water Quality

Clean water is a priority for Anoka County and its communities. Groundwater is readily available throughout Anoka County, though increasing demand may potentially exceed local supply in some areas of the county. Oversight is key in maintaining local water resources that are adequate to support a healthy community and strong economy. Maintaining a collaborative approach to water management with state and local agencies helps Anoka County achieve this oversight.

Goal: maintain partnerships that lead to sources of safe drinking water for Anoka County residents.

Objective 1: host at least two Water Task Force meetings per year in Anoka County through 2019.

- **Strategy A:** a Water Task Force will be maintained to monitor current and emerging resource issues to identify collaborative opportunities.

Objective 2: provide a safe drinking water education event yearly for Anoka County residents.

- **Strategy B:** continue participation in the annual Children's Water Festival.

Progress

Strategy A: Anoka County Environmental Services staff hosted two water task force meetings in 2018 (April 25th, and October 24th). An issue of concern in 2018 was the implementation of surveillance, notifications and enforcement of buffer zone requirements for the protection of water quality and water resources. Management of street sweepings in areas around the Rum River was also addressed by the task force and the inclusion of identified responsible parties in development of strategies to dispose of street debris responsibly away from the river. Manganese was discussed by the task force as an emerging drinking water contaminant of concern. The EPA is in the process of developing an exposure limit for this naturally occurring metal and the task force worked in support of MDH in developing action plans for exposure

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limits of 100mg/L for infants and 300mg/L for children and adults. Infants under the age of one do not have the metabolic mechanism of older children and adults to get rid of the excess minerals like manganese from their bodies. These excess minerals and metals may have an impact on neurological development. Based on water quality data available for Anoka County, almost 70% of the groundwater samples exceeded the recommended maximum level of Manganese for infants. Anoka County now includes testing services for manganese in residential well-water tests.

Strategy B: The Children’s Water Festival takes place annually at the Minnesota State Fair grounds on the last Wednesday of September (September 26th in 2018). 288 students from Anoka County attended the educational event. In total, 23 schools, 71 classes, 1,709 students, 73 teachers plus chaperones participated from the metro. The festival was able to accommodate an increased number of participants in 2018 by rearranging the programming. The theme was “water connects everything and everyone on Earth”. The program provides effective, interactive education and supports goals for water literacy. The festival included 47 specific learning stations with more than 90 presenters including water and natural resource professionals and educators. Presentations focused on water conservation, water quality, stormwater and runoff, groundwater and wells, native plants benefit to water, aquatic species, mercury, and more.

Next Steps

No changes were made to this priority area in 2018. The objectives and strategies in this priority area were successfully completed in 2018. PHES will continue to monitor progress on this and other priority areas to ensure Anoka County residents can achieve their highest health potential.