

Public Health Newsletter

MARION COUNTY



Marion County Public Health

Environmental Health & Septic Tanks

As the clocks have changed, Cameron Kleinschmidt, Environmental Health Program Manager, recommends homeowners with septic tanks use this time as a reminder to clean out their septic tank's effluent filter. Twice-yearly cleaning isn't required, but it can help keep the system running smoothly and can prolong the life of the tank.

What else does Environmental Health do?

- Animal bites and rabies follow up
- Nuisance complaints
 - EH Chapter 40-46 & IAC Chapter 69
- Pool inspections
- Septic system permits and education
- Tattoo inspections
- Well water testing

If you have private well water, it's important to make sure it's safe to drink. Contact us to learn more about the Private Well Grants program- where you can get well water testing done for no cost.



Marion County Programs/Services

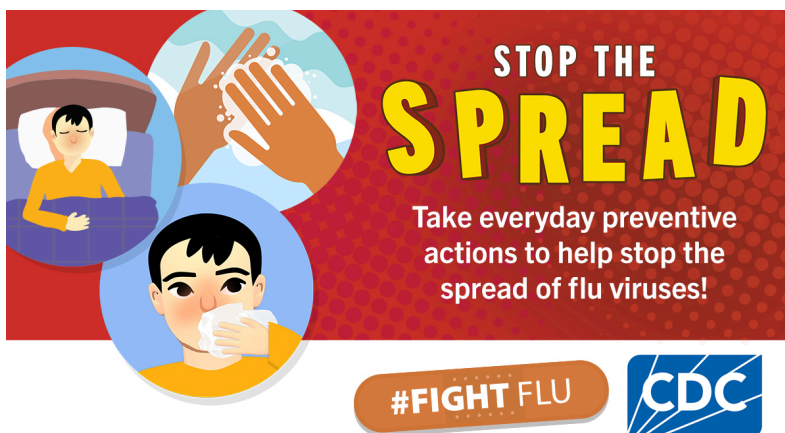
- Care for Yourself
- Communicable Disease Follow up
- Environmental Health
- Foot Care Clinics
- General Assistance
- Immunizations
- Preparedness (Emergency Response)
- Private Well Grants
- Senior Meals
- Tobacco Cessation

Community Education

- CPR/First Aid Classes
- Dementia Friends Sessions
- Narcan Training
- Stop the Bleed Course

National Influenza Vaccination Week

National Influenza Vaccination Week is December 1 through 6. This observance serves as a reminder that everyone 6 months of age and older can still get vaccinated to protect themselves against the flu.



What you should know about being #WinterReady

Winter storms can bring snow, sleet and freezing rain! It can take out your heat, power, ways of communications, and can cause serious accidents. The dangerously low temperatures can also cause hypothermia and frostbite if you or your pet is left in the cold for too long.

- Know what to do before, during, and after a winter storm
- Listen to local officials
- Have emergency supplies at home, at work, and in your vehicle
- Stay home during a winter storm
- Use heating devices safely
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm in your home

According to the CDC, 63% of temperature related deaths are attributable to cold exposure. Home heating is the **second** leading cause of home fires!



Consider Quitting Tobacco

With the start of the new year approaching quickly, there has never been a better time to consider quitting tobacco products.

Quitting tobacco is one of the best things you can do for your health. There are many benefits to quitting!

If you use tobacco products and would like to stop, Iowans have access to 3 free, confidential resources.

- **Quitline Iowa** provides counseling to all Iowans and can provide multiple cessation tools such as nicotine gum and patches.
- **My Life My Quit** is designed for ages 13+. The counseling provided by this service is typically via text as participants work through each module.
- **Your Life Iowa** is another service with the additional benefit of mental health counseling.

Make 2026 your year for quitting tobacco and kicking the habit for good!

Quitline Iowa: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

Your Life Iowa: (855)-581-8111 or chat online with the live chat feature

My Life My Quit: Text "Start My Quit" to 36072



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Employee Spotlight

Christina Van Vark has worked at Marion County Public Health for over 18 years, currently serving as the Assistant Director. She is the glue that holds the department together and is involved in every aspect of the five departments under the Public Health umbrella. She helps manage our office and staff, designs our materials, and is the go-to person for all IT related questions and issues.

She is continuously learning new things, frequently participates in trainings to develop new skills, and is often seen at outreach events; all to better serve our community.

Looking ahead, one of Christina's goals is to continue to work along side her colleagues to find new ways to strengthen and rebuild Marion County Public Health.



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SPECIAL EVENTS

Board of Health Meeting
Marion County Public Health Training Room
Tuesday, December 16, 2025 @ 5:00pm