



AN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING STORY

PREVENTING HEAT-RELATED INJURY

Grant County, Wisconsin

THE PROBLEM

As a rural, farming county with an aging population and a higher poverty rate, Grant County has many factors that makes heat-related injury more likely. Grant County Health Department (GCHD) staff looked at their [County Environmental Health Profile](#) and learned their rate of heat-related emergency room visits was two times greater than the Wisconsin average.

WHAT GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT DID

GCHD staff convened partners to talk about extreme heat. At this meeting, GCHD staff had the opportunity to talk about the issue and distribute awareness materials, such as maps of cooling centers. Two cooling centers were added as a result of this project.

GCHD also created a fan donation program. Individuals can donate new or gently used fans at six community sites, including Goodwill and local thrift shops. The Women, Infants, and Children program, congregate meal sites, and other partners distribute vouchers for free fans. GCHD staff are actively promoting the cooling centers, fan donation program, and other resources through community presentations and local media, including [one popular radio spot](#).

THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

Grant County residents now have 25 cooling centers to access during extreme heat—quite a feat for a county of 51,000 people! During the first few months of the fan donation program's operation, residents redeemed nearly a dozen fan vouchers. Through community partners, GCHD staff are able to promote their cooling centers and fan donation program to a wider audience, reducing the likelihood of heat-related injury.



We are delighted and fortunate to have 25 different cooling centers located throughout Grant County and encourage residents to use these centers when temperatures and heat indexes soar.

LORI REID
Director of Grant County Aging and
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WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING PROGRAM
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