

ANNUAL REPORT



2025

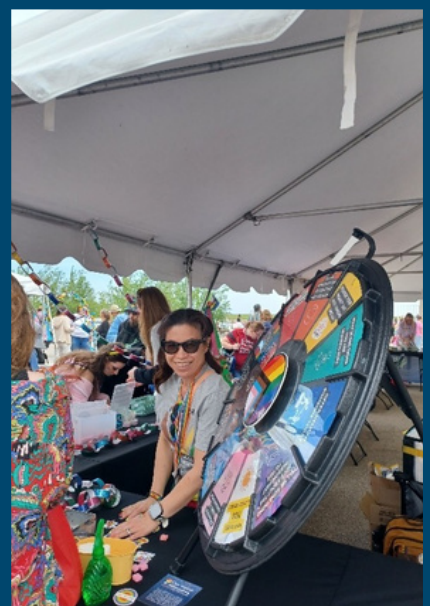
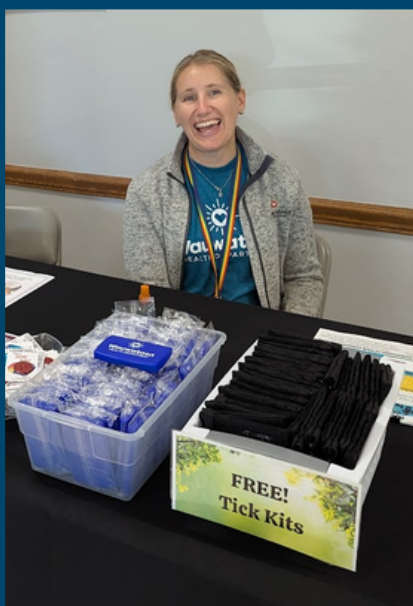


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FROM THE DESK OF THE HEALTH OFFICER

On behalf of the Board of Health and staff at the Wauwatosa Health Department, I am proud to present the 2025 Annual Report.

The past year challenged our department to remain responsive and adaptable to ongoing changes while continuing to provide consistent, reliable services to our community. Throughout it all, our team remained focused on the key priority areas that impact the health and well-being of our community, including mental health, substance use, and housing. These issues are deeply connected, and our work reflects a commitment to addressing them through a collaborative, community-centered approach.

We continue to rely on data, strong partnerships, and resident engagement to shape our programs and services. Equity remains at the center of our work, and we are dedicated to addressing systemic barriers and advancing policies that support health for all.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Wauwatosa Board of Health, City Administration, Common Council, volunteers, community partners, and our dedicated Health Department staff. This shared commitment makes our work possible. Together, we are building a healthier, safer, and equitable Wauwatosa.

Laura Stephens

Laura Stephens, MPH
City of Wauwatosa Health Officer & Wauwatosa Health Department Director



**HEALTH
PROMOTION**



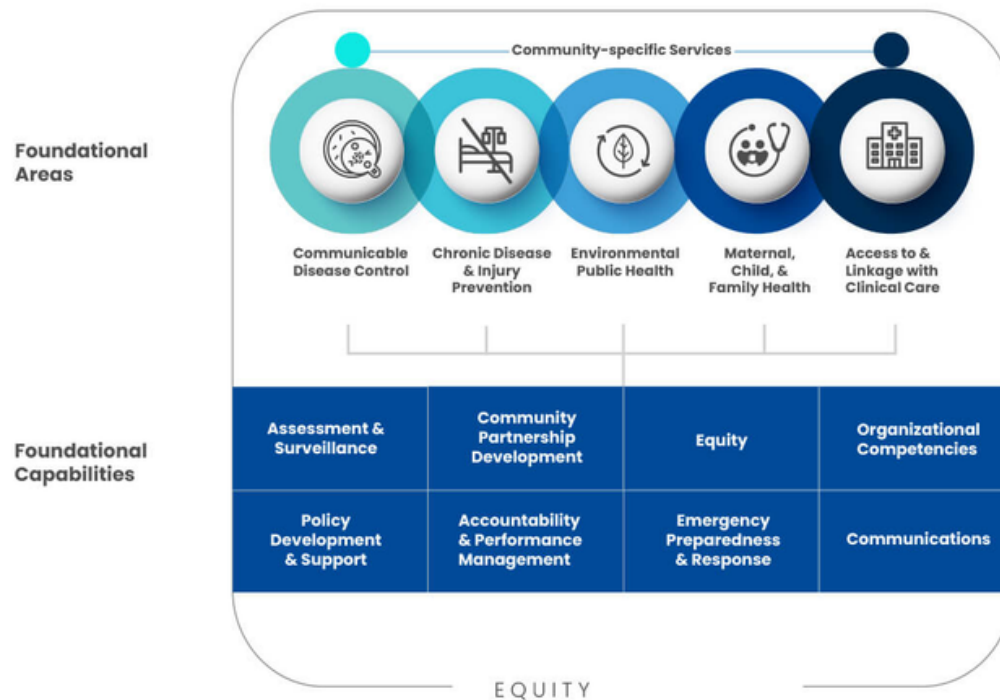
**DISEASE
PREVENTION**



**COMMUNITY
WELLNESS**

Wauwatosa Health Department Overview

The Foundational Public Health Services Framework



Under Wisconsin Statute 251.02(2), counties with over 500,000 residents must have municipal health departments.

As a result, Milwaukee County has 10 municipal ones, including the Wauwatosa Health Department (WHD).

WHD is guided by the Foundational Public Health Services Framework (left) in delivering services and advancing community health in Wauwatosa.

Public Health 3.0 Model

Public Health 3.0 refers to a modern approach to public health. Instead of focusing only on clinical prevention, it emphasizes improving health across the whole community through collaboration and by addressing the systems and conditions that influence health.

The Wauwatosa Health Department embraces the Public Health 3.0 model and recognizes the importance of addressing social determinants of health and advancing health equity.

5 Main Recommendations of Public Health 3.0

-  **Embrace the role of the Community Health Strategist**
-  **Cultivate Cross-Sector Partnerships to promote collective action**
-  **Consider Accreditation**
-  **Document Initiatives with Data and Metrics to focus, guide and assess impact**
-  **Enhance Public Health Funding**



Wauwatosa Health Department Overview

Mission Statement

Protecting and improving the health, safety and well-being of the community through advocacy, education, quality services, innovation, and partnership.

Vision Statement

A healthy, safe, equitable Wauwatosa

Core Values

Advocacy- We use evidence-based science, research, and best practices, to provide reliable community education to promote the health and well-being of all community members. We provide a trusted voice around matters of systemic injustice, and around the need for the creation of an equitable community in which all may achieve their best health.

Collaboration- We are committed to creating and sustaining strategic and intentional partnerships with residents, government entities, other city departments, non-profits, local businesses, and more. We provide leadership to connect individuals and groups toward working together for a healthier community.

Equity- We acknowledge historic and current injustices, conduct ourselves with compassion, and recognize the dignity and worth of all members of the community. We work in partnership to advance an inclusive and forward-thinking community.

Integrity- We are open and honest in our practices, committed to transparency, and share current and up-to-date information in an accurate and timely manner. We adapt to dynamic and evolving situations with openness and transparency.

Service- We provide high-quality, personalized customer service in an accessible manner. We display compassion and understanding to all individuals, partners, and members of the community.

Board of Health Members

Aletha Champine, Alderperson

Jennifer Cicero, MSW, LCSW; Member

Katherine Riebe, MA, MSP, CIPPH; Member

Kevin Robertson, MD; Medical Advisor

Christine Shaw, PhD, APRN; Chair

Health Department Administration

Laura Stephens, MPH - Health Officer/Director

Carmen Pangilinan, MSW, APSW - Public Health Strategist

Lisa Simonds - Office Assistant

Meghan Spredemann MS, REHS, RS - Public Health Manager

Emily Tianen, RN, BSN - Public Health Nurse Manager

Community Health Division

Kari Allison - Public Health Specialist

Hannah Gumina, MPH, CHES® - Substance Use Specialist

Kristen Hecht, MBA - Public Health Specialist (resigned November 2025)

PaChee Lee, MSW, LCSW - Youth Mental Health Social Worker

Zoe Rezner, MSW, LCSW - Youth Mental Health Social Worker

Kendall Wolter, MSW, APSW - Social Worker, Fire, Health and Police Response

Environmental Health Division

Courtney Ameen - Office Assistant

Andy Budde, MS, RS - Environmental Health Specialist

Mayra Castaneda, REHS - Environmental Health Specialist

Dana Eick - Public Health Specialist

Public Health Nursing Division

Ashley Hoffman, RN, BSN - Public Health Nurse

Ericka King, RN, BSN - Public Health Nurse

Cindi Lambert, RN, BSN, CLC - Public Health Nurse

Julia Nesheiwat, RN, BSN - Public Health Nurse

Mary Beth Tyson, RN, BSN - Public Health Nurse



Community Health Division

What is community health?

Community health focuses on improving well-being and preventing disease by addressing social, environmental, behavioral, and economic factors that affect health.

2025 Community Health By The Numbers



Social Work Services

Police, Health, and Fire Social Worker

- Responds to referrals from Police, Fire, and Health Departments
- Conducts comprehensive needs assessments
- Connects individuals to appropriate community resources in Milwaukee County
- Provides ongoing case management and follow-up support for Wauwatosa residents

Youth Mental Health Social Workers

- 2 Youth social workers serving Pilgrim Lutheran Middle School and the Wauwatosa School District
- Provides resources and referrals for youth, maintaining case management as needed

Fatality Review

- We launched a new program that meets quarterly, involving: Police, Fire, School, and Health Departments
- Conducts multidisciplinary review of firearm- and mental health-related deaths in Wauwatosa to identify systemic gaps and recommend prevention strategies
- Provides follow-up support for Wauwatosa residents experiencing grief and loss

Social Work Referrals

- Mental Health: 54
- Aging: 34
- Homelessness: 19
- Basic Needs: 8
- Fatality: 6
- Human Health Hazard: 21
- Domestic Violence: 6
- Substance Use: 3
- Youth & Parents: 769

Total: 920 referrals



Facility Dog

- Since 2023, Jordan faithfully served as our Facility Dog, bringing comfort and support to many. She passed away in 2024 after battling cancer and is greatly missed.
- We are grateful to introduce Leo, who is continuing Jordan's legacy in serving our Health, Police, and Fire teams and continues to add support and comfort.

***The Health Department Vending Machine provides resources to support harm reduction, such as: fentanyl strip tests, naloxone kits, gun locks, pregnancy tests, hand warmers, and more for free.**

Community Health Division

Priority Areas

In 2021, we surveyed the Wauwatosa community to identify priority areas to guide our work for 2023–2027. Based on this input, we established programing for the following priorities:

Priority Mental Health & Social Connection

- **Tosa Tech Time:** intergenerational technology assistance program
- **AARP Senior Planet:** digital literacy classes
- Secured funding to launch **Men's Shed**, a program for men to build social connections
- **Your Story is Still Brewing:** coffee shop suicide prevention campaign
- **TosaConnects:** partnership with Neighborhood Association Council (NAC) to strengthen community connection
- **Cooking Class:** intergenerational cooking classes to empower community members with healthy cooking skills

Priority Affordable Housing

- **Housing Week:** Community Education Campaign on connection between Health and Housing
- **Missing Middle Housing Walking Tour:** Community Education and Engagement on how Middle Housing may provide a solution to the city's housing needs
- **Puzzle Palooza:** Promotion of Housing resources, including Wauwatosa Home Loan Repair Program and RAVE alert system

Priority Substance Use

- **Regulation:** Passed local vape/smoke shop ordinance change to prevent youth substance use
- **Harm Reduction Hubs:** Utilized vape/liquor shops as harm reduction hubs for Naloxone distribution
 - Established a **Naloxone box** at Bluemound Froedtert Clinic
- **Never Use Alone:** Incorporated Never Use Alone Hotline information into after-visit summaries for non-fatal overdoses
- **Community Education:** Partnered with police to provide informational mailer to high risk postal routes in the city on the presence of Opioids in Stimulants like cocaine

TOSA TECH TIME



MIDDLE HOUSING TOUR



HARM REDUCTION

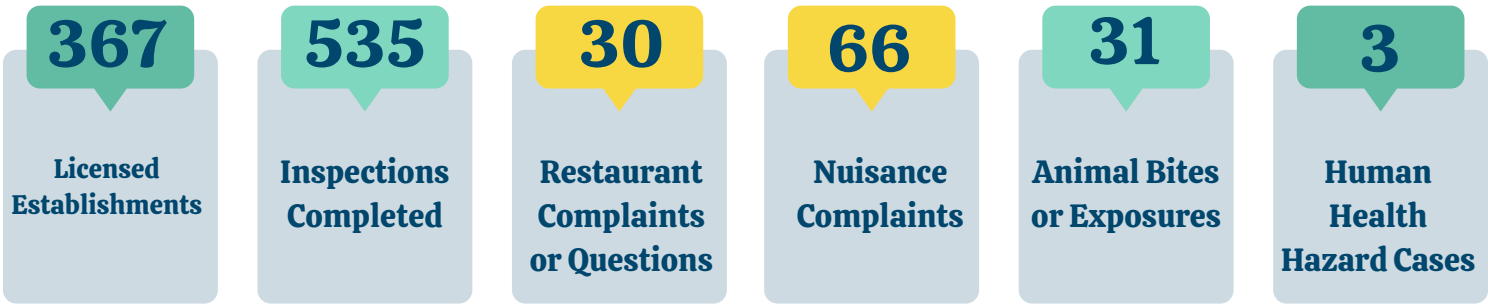


Environmental Health Division

What is environmental public health?

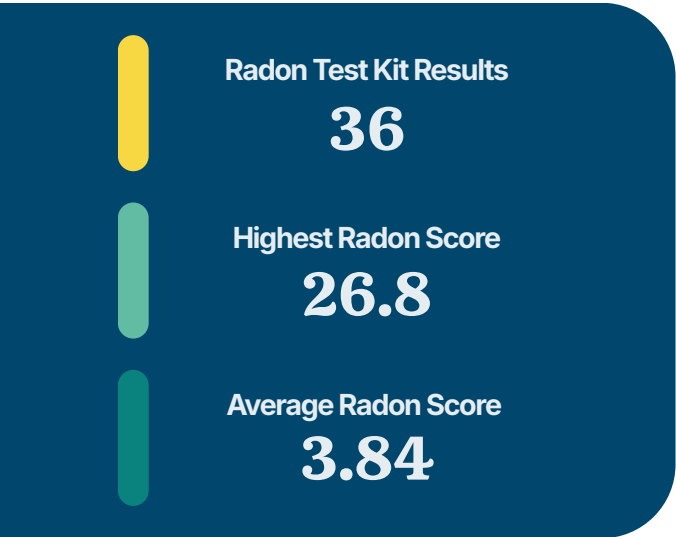
Environmental health is the branch of public health that focuses on the relationships between people and their environment, promotes human health and well-being, and fosters healthy and safe communities.

2025 Environmental Health By The Numbers*

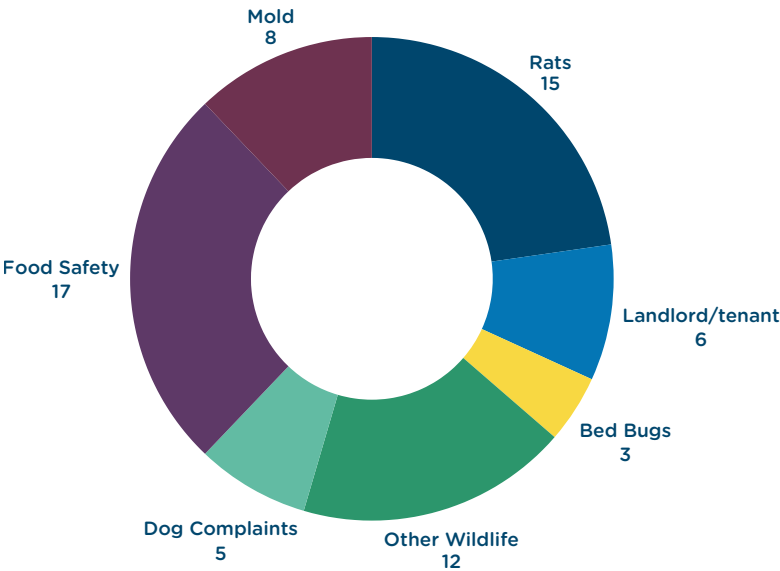


Radon Test Kit Program

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas that you can't see, smell, or taste, but may be in your home. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water and gets into the air you breathe. Radon has been found in all Wauwatosa zip codes. Testing is the only way to know if there is a radon risk. A radon test score of 4 and below is considered safe.



Nuisance Report Breakdown



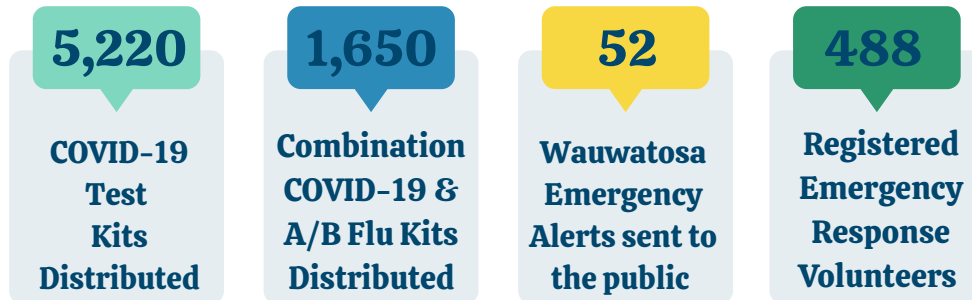
According to City ordinance, a nuisance is "whatever is dangerous, unsanitary, or unwholesome to human life or health."

**The Department switched databases in April 2025. Thus, these metrics are for April-December of 2025.*

Emergency Preparedness

The Wauwatosa Health Department continues to plan, prepare, and respond to public health emergencies in collaboration with local, regional, and state partners, including efforts to mitigate the spread of disease in our community.

2025 Emergency Preparedness By The Numbers



Floods



In August, the Wauwatosa community was impacted by severe flooding. Multiple rounds of heavy rainfall—reaching 10–13 inches in some areas—led to widespread flash flooding and caused the Milwaukee, Fox, Menomonee, and Root Rivers to rise to flood stage. The flood resulted in an estimated \$4.2 million in flood damage to city-owned public property, including Hart Park. Approximately 70 people, along with numerous pets, were rescued from floodwaters, including two rescues from the Menomonee River. Response efforts continued through the end of 2025 with long-term recovery.

Throughout the response, the WHD helped coordinate efforts by supporting public health operations in the Milwaukee County Emergency Operations Center and directly reached out to affected residents. To help the community navigate the aftermath of the flooding, WHD distributed **36** Flood Clean Up kits and delivered educational messaging about the importance of proper cleanup to prevent and reduce mold buildup. WHD also provided coordination for emergency response volunteers.



Flood Clean Up kits (pictured above) contain essential products to help sanitize and remove debris in the home, including cleaning products, trash bags, and protective equipment (gloves, masks).

Sign up for our emergency alerts!

Visit [Wauwatosa.net/alert](https://www.wauwatosa.net/alert)

Public Health Nursing Division

What is public health nursing?

The goal of public health nursing is to protect the health and safety of the people in our communities. Nurses work with individuals, groups, families, and communities, especially those who are at increased risk of illness, injury, premature death, and disability by:

- Identifying and activating resources, services and policies that protect health.
- Responding to current and emerging threats to the public's health and safety.
- Applying nursing and public health principles to assess, develop, implement, and evaluate care plans and health programs related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health protection services for individuals, families, and the community. (Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter DHS 139)

2025 Public Health Nursing By The Numbers



2025 Program Highlight

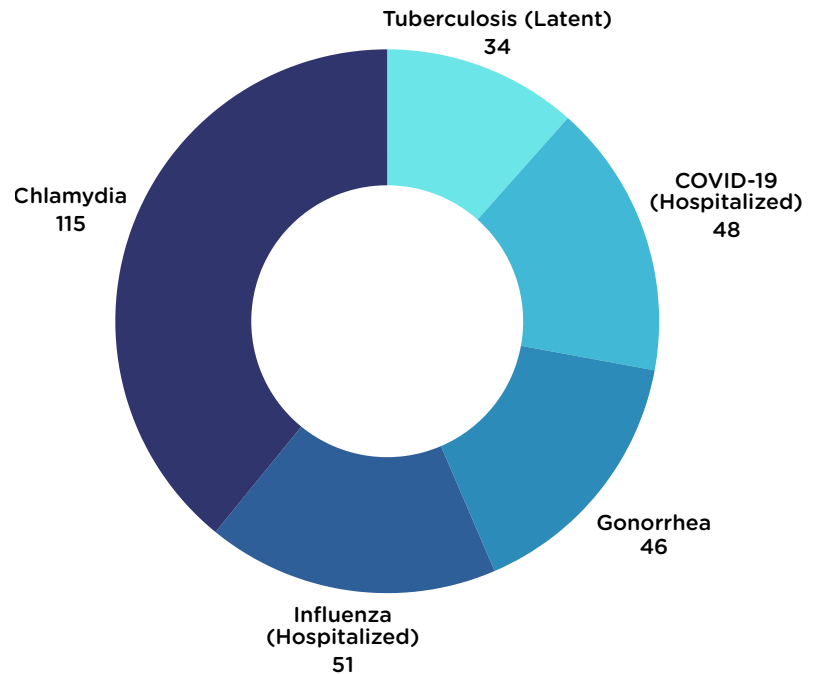
We launched a new resource program, **Period Pantry**, to provide period products to the community at no cost. Tampon and Pad Kits each contain 1-month supply of period products, sealed in a non-descript bag for privacy. These kits are routinely distributed throughout the Wauwatosa Library, schools, and other public spaces. Donations and grants covered supplies for both period product and condom distribution.

Public Health Nursing Division

Top Five Reportable Communicable Diseases

A **communicable disease**, also known as an infectious disease, is an illness or condition that is transmitted through direct contact with an infected person or animal. Some diseases are required by state statute to be reported to the local health department. These reportable diseases and conditions are considered to have significant public health impact.

There were **463 cases** of reportable communicable diseases in Wauwatosa, with **111 (24%)** being vaccine-preventable illnesses in 2025.



Falls Prevention

Falls remain the leading cause of non-natural death in Wauwatosa.

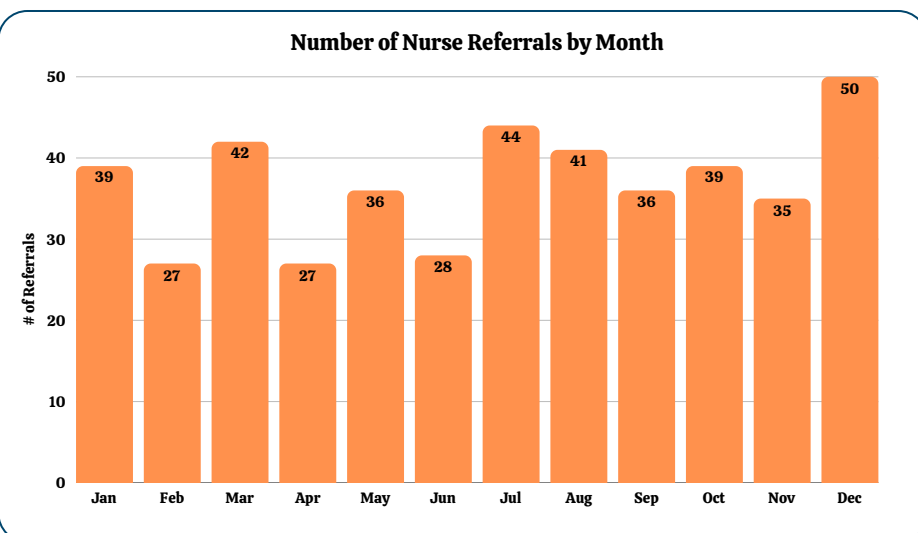
In response, Public Health Nurses facilitated 2 **Stepping On** courses to the community. Stepping On is a 7-week falls prevention course, and is consistently registered at capacity. We delivered the program to **26** individuals in 2025.



Nurse Referrals

At the Wauwatosa Health Department a **public health nurse referral** is a request for a public health nurse to follow up with a person, family, or group who may need health education, support, assessment, or connection to services. Many of these referrals involve communicable disease follow-up, but may also include immunizations, car seat checks, and childhood lead poisoning prevention.

Our public health nurses coordinated **444** nurse referrals in 2025.



Stay Connected

Contact Us:

414-479-8936

7725 W. North Ave.

Wauwatosa, WI 53213



Wauwatosa Health Department



@wauwatosahealthdept



Volunteer with Us!

We're always seeking passionate volunteers and interns to join us in making Wauwatosa a healthier, safer place for everyone in our community. Here are a few ways you can get involved:



**Emergency
Preparedness**



**Digital
Literacy**



**Events
Volunteer**

To volunteer, email
thealth@wauwatosa.net



Internship Opportunities

If you're interested in interning with the Wauwatosa Health Department, please fill out the "Health Department Intern" application on the [City of Wauwatosa's Job Opportunities page](#).