

New Beginnings and Taking Time to Reflect

As we step into the New Year, we pause to reflect on the year behind us—a year filled with challenges, resilience, and meaningful progress in protecting and improving the health of our community. From responding to emerging needs to strengthening prevention, education, and support services, we are grateful for the dedication of our staff, partners, and community members who made this work possible. Looking ahead, the New Year brings renewed hope and opportunity. We remain committed to listening, learning, and working together to build a healthier, safer, and more connected community for all. With gratitude for the past and optimism for the future, we move forward into the New Year ready to continue serving with care, compassion, and purpose.

healthy TIMES

February - March

BI-MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

GREENE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Issue

19

Readiness

Anytime is a smart time to check in on emergency preparedness. Winter weather can still bring power outages, icy roads, and unexpected delays—so now's the moment to review your emergency kit, refresh food and water supplies, and make sure medications and flashlights are ready to go. A few minutes of prep can make a big difference if winter decides it's not done with us yet. For more information, visit ready.illinois.gov

Food Classes

- Saturday, February 7
- Saturday, April 14

Classes 8:am-4:pm

Testing 4:15pm - 6:15pm at the
Greene County Health
Department.

For more information and to sign
up, call Liz at (217)-942-6961
ext 4102

IRIS comes to Greene County



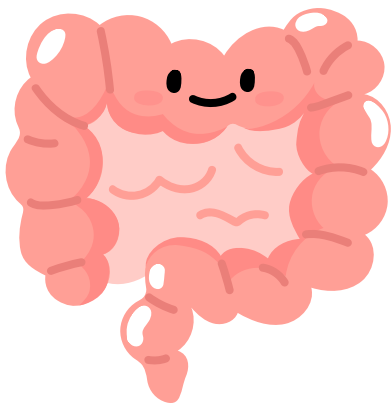
The Greene County Health Department is excited to announce the launch of IRIS! IRIS is a community-centered intake and referral system designed to help individuals and families find the support they need in one simple, welcoming place. Instead of navigating multiple agencies or repeating their story over and over, agencies can start with IRIS and be guided toward the right resources quickly and compassionately. By streamlining referrals and strengthening collaboration among local organizations, IRIS helps reduce barriers to care and ensures support reaches people more efficiently. The goal of IRIS is simple but powerful: to create a smoother path to help, improve outcomes for individuals, and build a stronger, healthier community for everyone.



FREE Colorectal

FIT Test

Colorectal health is often ignored because testing feels scary or inconvenient. This FIT test is simple to take in the privacy of your own home and there's nothing to drink! Call for your free test today!



To learn more, call
(217)942-6961 ext 4110



Greene County
Health Department

45 is the new 50

Recent guidelines recommend starting colorectal cancer screening at age 45 for average-risk individuals, shifting from the previous 50-year mark, with options for stool-based or visual exams, and continued screening through age 75 for those in good health

BREAST CANCER

SCREENING GUIDELINES

AGE



40 - 44

Choose to start annual breast cancer screenings if you wish to



45 - 54

Should get mammograms every year



55+

Can switch to every 2 years, or continue once a year

REMEMBER

Don't put your health on hold.
Schedule your mammogram.

If you need help scheduling your breast screening, reach out to us (217) 942-6961 ext 4110



Warm Winter Item and Hygiene Drive

We will be collecting warm winter items and hygiene products for those in need. Coats, gloves, hats, scarves, socks, shampoo, soap, laundry detergent, and other hygiene items are welcome. Contact us at (217) 942-6961 opt 6 for more information and drop-off location.



Be The Light

Be the light that listens,
that warms without asking
why,
That stays when the night
feels long
And hope feels tired.

You don't have to be the sun.
A candle changes everything.
A spark still pushes back the dark.
A glow is enough to guide
someone home.

So shine how you can, where
you are—
In kindness, in patience, in
truth.
The world remembers light
Long after the shadows
pass.

-Author Unknown

Life Changing Moments

A little over a year ago, a veteran passed through our community on foot—trekking across America with everything he owned on his back and an uncertain road ahead. He was unhoused, exhausted, and in need of support. When we discovered him sitting by the highway, we reached out and offered to help him. We discussed with him how we could best help him in the moment. We took him back to our office and our team did what we do best: we listened, we cared, and we acted.

We connected him with essential health services, helped coordinate shelter resources, and ensured he had access to food, care, and guidance during a critical moment in his journey. What began as a brief stop became a turning point. With stability, encouragement, and the right connections, he was able to rebuild in another state.



This past November, more than a year later, that same veteran returned—not because he needed help, but because he wanted to say thank you. He came back housed, healthy, and proud of the life he has built. He shared stories of reconnected relationships, a safe place to sleep, and renewed hope for the future. Most of all, he wanted our staff to know that the kindness shown during one of his hardest moments never left him. His visit was a powerful reminder that public health is about more than programs and services—it's about people. It's about meeting someone where they are, offering dignity and compassion, and helping light a path forward. We are honored to have been a small part of his journey and grateful that he shared the outcome of what hope, support, and community can make possible.



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Empathy

WORD SEARCH

understanding	friendship	listening
feelings	kindness	sympathy
sharing	respect	helpful
support	caring	warmth
love		

When does a duck wake up
 on Valentine's Day?
 At the Quack of dawn.



Fruit Parfaits are
 Healthy and
 Delicious!

Ingredients:

Yogurt

Granola

Berries: strawberries, blueberries, and
 raspberries (you may substitute with
 other fruits)

Small transparent glasses

Instructions:

Prepare the berries. Chop
 the strawberries into small
 pieces.

Spoon a layer of yogurt
 (about 1 inch) into the glass.

Add berries on top. Then,
 add a layer of granola.

Repeat the layers.

Enjoy the beautiful and
 tasty treat!

IT'S COOL
 TO BE KIND

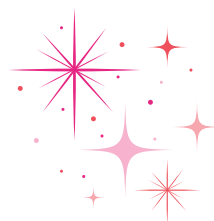


Talking Prevention & Lifesaving Screenings

The Greene County Health Department hosted a breast cancer and colorectal health education event at the Illinois Valley Senior Center, bringing important prevention conversations straight to the people who need them most. Community members gathered to learn about the importance of regular screenings, early detection, and how small steps can make a big difference in long-term health.

Staff shared easy-to-understand information about breast cancer and colorectal cancer, two conditions where early screening can be lifesaving. Attendees had the chance to ask questions, pick up educational materials, and learn about local resources available to help with scheduling screenings and follow-up care.

Events like this help break down barriers to care by meeting our seniors where they are and creating a comfortable space to talk about health. We're grateful to the senior center for partnering with us and to everyone who attended—your health matters, and staying informed is a powerful first step.



1-866-QUIT-YES

Greene County Home Health has dedicated nurses with a mix of clinical expertise, independence & compassion involving one-on-one care in the home.

CALL: (217) 942-6961

Opt. 4

Fax: (217) 942-6921

Accepting New Patients



Greene County Health Department

Services all of Greene and Scott Counties.
Offering Skilled Nursing; Physical & Occupational Therapy; (Limited) Speech Therapy; Home Health Aides

ACCEPTING : MEDICARE ~ MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS ~ AETNA ~ UHC ~ BCBS ~ HEALTH ALLIANCE ~ HEALTH LINK ~ HUMANA

Molly Peters State Appointment



The Greene County Health Department is delighted and proud to announce that Molly Peters, our Public Health Administrator, has been appointed by Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Director Sameer Vohra MD, JD, MA as Co-Chair of the SHA/SHIP Partnership alongside the Assistant Director of IDPH—the statewide team guiding the development and implementation of Illinois’s five-year statewide public health blueprint under the “Healthy Illinois 2028” initiative.

In her role, Molly will help steer the processes for the State Health Assessment (SHA) and the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)—a dual approach mandated by Illinois law under 20 ILCS 5/5-565. She brings more than 17 years of public health experience to the role. Molly began her career as a Health Educator at the Madison County Health Department, where she focused on health promotion. As funding priorities shifted, she transitioned into environmental health, first as an Inspector, then as a Sanitarian, and ultimately as an Environmental Health Coordinator. She has been our fearless leader at the Greene County Health Department since February 2020 and the Administrator at the Scott County Health Department since 2022. She is ending her year as the Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators President, Illinois Environmental Health Association South Chapter Vice President, and the Home Care Across Illinois Treasurer. When asked about her appointment, she humbly stated,

“The most important part of this work is speaking up for rural communities and ensuring we have a place at the tables where decisions are made. To bring resources, create change, and address the systemic barriers that limit our ability to be as prosperous as our urban partners, we need rural leaders consistently seated at those tables, leaders who are willing to speak up and advocate for progress in ways that strengthen our communities. When we truly understand the heart of our communities, the barriers we face, and the voices of the people we serve, we can continue moving toward a healthier, more thriving future. But we still need more voices and more leaders willing to step in and take that seat, because rural Illinois must be represented wherever decisions about our future are made.”

COMING
Soon



Newsletter

Our newsletter is available in digital form and print format! You can sign up for our distribution list at:

<https://GreeneCountyHD.org/newsletter>

