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**Media Contact:**

Ann Creaven, District Director  
Vermont Department of Health  
TEL 802 334-6707

Celebrate National Public Health Week April 1-7  
*Public Health is ROI: Save Money. Save Lives.*

**2013 County Health Rankings Detail Health Disparities in the Healthiest State**

NEWPORT – Vermont has been ranked #1 healthiest in *America's Health Rankings* for many years in a row. But Vermonters are not equally healthy, as reported in the latest *County Health Rankings* by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Now available at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org), the 2013 report ranks Chittenden County as the healthiest in the state, and Essex and Orleans Counties as least healthy. The rankings are based on health outcomes – length of life and quality of life – and factors such as smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, access to quality health care, income, education, employment and the built environment.

“Even in the healthiest state, there is more or less opportunity to be healthy depending on where you live,” said Ann Creaven, director for the Newport and Orleans district offices of the Health Department. “Many people living in the Northeast Kingdom, for example, do not have fresh fruit and vegetables that are readily available and affordable.”

Beginning this summer, a Lunch Box van, operated by the non-profit Green Mountain Farm to School program, will deliver fresh produce directly from local farms to rural areas like Canaan and Island Pond.

“Public health is what we do as a community to assure the conditions for people to be healthy. The Lunch Box van is just one of many actions being taken to improve the health of the people in our communities,” said Creaven.

According to the 2013 *County Health Rankings*:

- 18% of adults in Essex County and 14% in Orleans County report poor or fair health, compared to 8% of adults in Chittenden County.
- 30% of adults in Essex County and 23% of adults in Orleans County smoke, compared to 12% in Chittenden County.
- 26% of adults in Orleans County and 25% in Essex County report they are physically inactive, compared to 15% in Chittenden County.

- 12% report limited access to healthy foods in Essex County, compared to 5% in Orleans County and 4% in Chittenden County.

The *County Health Rankings* rank the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states. Nationally, the data revealed that unhealthy counties have more than twice the rate of premature deaths than healthy ones and childhood poverty rates are twice as high in unhealthy counties. The *Rankings* allow counties to see how they compare to other counties within the state based on a range of factors that influence health.

### **Celebrate Health during National Public Health Week**

During National Public Health Week April 1-7, the Vermont Department of Health will highlight the daily work of public health, and will launch *Healthy Vermonters 2020* – the state health assessment that documents the health status of Vermonters at the start of the decade, and sets the goals that will guide the work of public health through 2020.

The Newport District Office of the Vermont Department of Health invites you to join us on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at noon for a “Walk At Lunch Day” walk. Meet in the lobby of the Emory Hebard State Office building. Free Newport Walking maps will be available.

A mini Wellness and Resource Fair will be held on April 2 at Community College of Vermont between 3:45 – 5:30 p.m. All are welcome.

For health news, information and alerts, visit [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov), follow us on Twitter [twitter.com/healthvermont](https://twitter.com/healthvermont), and join us on Facebook/Newport district office at: [www.facebook.com/vdhnewport](https://www.facebook.com/vdhnewport).

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