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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

RUTLAND – 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, 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 health factors such as smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, access to quality health care, income, education, employment and the built environment.

“Rutland County is moving in the right direction and improved their ranking from 13th to 11th,” said Joanne Calvi, director for the Rutland district office of the Health Department. “Although we have plenty of work ahead of us many community partners in Rutland County are contributing to a healthier community reaching the overall vision of health people living in healthy communities.”

“The work of the Rutland Area Farm and Food Link (RAFFL), the Bouse Health Trust, Rutland County schools, and the RAP coalition all working together has contributed to Rutland doing better in the area of access to healthy foods where 3 percent report limited access to healthy foods in Rutland County, compared to 4 percent in Chittenden County,” Calvi said.

Rutland Area Farm and Food Link has worked steadily to expand availability and access to locally grown foods. Current initiatives underway are Farm to Workshare, Grow a Row and the Everyday Chef.

Among the findings in the 2013 *County Health Rankings*:

- 13 % of adults in Rutland County report poor or fair health, compared to 8% of adults in Chittenden County.
- 19% of adults in Rutland County smoke, compared to 12% in Chittenden County.

- 23 % of adults in Rutland County report they are physically inactive, compared to 15% 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.

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