

DENVER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Annual Report 2014



BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



DENVER
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

**Healthy
People**



**Healthy
Pets**



**Healthy
Places**



**Healthy
Communities**

**Healthy
Environment**

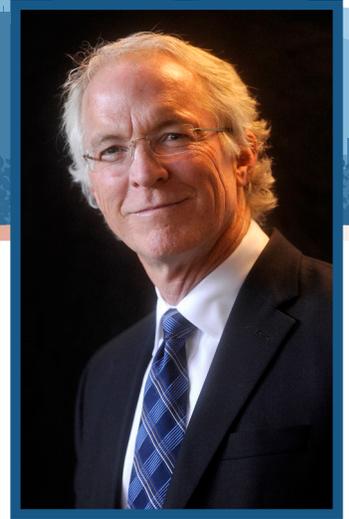


**Healthy
Planet**



BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we close out 2014, I'd like to celebrate both our city's status as a healthy, sustainable place and our successes as a department.

We are proud of Denver's status as one of the healthiest cities in the nation. This includes ranking 7th as the least obese city out of 159 metro cities according to Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index for 2014, 3rd on the list of top ten cities for bikeability according to America Association of Retired Persons, and 12th out 50 major metropolitan cities for bicycling in their 2014 Best Cities Report.

We are also one of the most environmentally sustainable cities, ranked 5th on the 2011 Siemens Green City Index and 11th on the 2013 American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy Scorecard. Denver is the first city in North America to have all of its departments and agencies certified through the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System.

Our food safety inspection program within the division of Public Health Inspections has achieved record level of compliance with Denver's food safety regulations with critical violations per inspection dropping by over one-third in the past three years.

The Denver Animal Shelter has one of the highest live-release rates in the nation, at 91%. Every healthy, adoptable animal has a good outcome at our shelter.

The Office of Medical Examiner is among only a few dozen nationwide to be consistently accredited by the National Association of Medical Examiners.

As a department, we expect to be accredited soon by the Public Health Accreditation Board, which began credentialing state and local health departments four years ago.

There are few accomplishments that our department achieves on its own. Whether it involves our work on the environment, animal protection, public health or autopsies, we work hand-in-hand with other government agencies, nonprofit groups and businesses to reach our goals. Thank you to all of you who make our successes possible, and help keep Denver as a great place to live and work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Linkhart".

Doug Linkhart
Executive Director

HEALTHY PEOPLE



Denver Environmental Health works collaboratively to ensure the health and welfare of those who live and work in Denver by offering programs that improve and protect the health of Denver residents.

ABOUT COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Community Health Division (CH) manages programs and promotes policies designed to provide Denver residents with the resources, education and support to be healthy.

CH works to make progress on national Healthy People 2020 goals by blending partnerships and best practices to improve quality of life. CH also manages Denver's tobacco legislation and enforcement, the Healthy Cornerstore Initiative, and ensures an efficient system of care that improves access for people living with HIV/AIDS through the Denver Office of HIV Resources.

In partnership with Denver Public Health, CH uses evidence-based public health practices to develop, measure and achieve goals and objectives in the Community Health Improvement Plan.

As administrators of the Safe Routes to School program, CH engages stakeholders in employing strategies to improve health and accessibility to allow children to safely walk and bicycle to school.

To ensure health considerations are fully integrated into the neighborhood planning process, CH works with Community Planning and Development and the community to conduct both citywide and neighborhood level health impact assessments.

2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Expanded partnerships for healthy eating, including participating in the LiveWell Denver Collaborative and the Denver Metro Partners for Healthy Beverage Consumption.*
- *Partnered with the Office of Economic Development to support the Mayor's Sustainable Food Policy Council by revising and updating mapping tools to identify areas of food insecurity.*
- *Collaborated with Denver's Community Planning and Development to develop and release the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea Health Impact Assessment.*
- *Increased funding and partnerships to support people living with HIV/AIDS, safe and active transportation and ways to address childhood obesity in young children.*
- *Introduced the "Culture of Wellness" curricula to bring healthy food/active living to child care agencies in Council District 3.*
- *Worked with community partners and retailers to develop and implement a healthy neighborhood market program, making fresh food more available and helping customers make better choices.*
- *Published a food system policy report to help guide policy decisions to address food insecurity and childhood obesity.*



HEALTHY PEOPLE



ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINER

The Office of the Medical Examiner (OME) is responsible for investigating deaths that occur suddenly and unexpectedly, by any unnatural or traumatic means, or under suspicious circumstances. OME also engages in community outreach and education to enable health professionals and law enforcement officials to better understand mechanisms of trauma and sudden death.

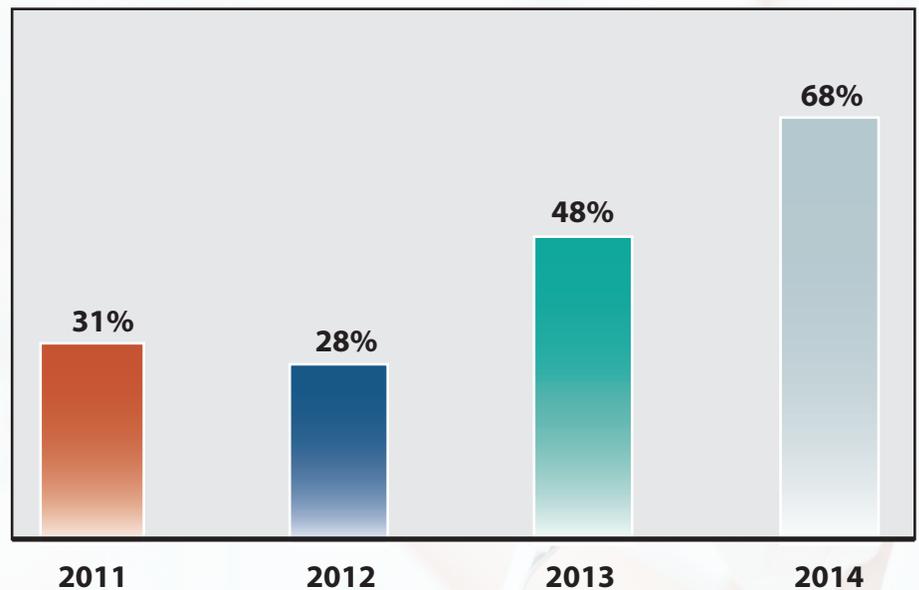
This information is used in a wide variety of applications—from criminal and legal proceedings, to insurance claims, product safety recalls and in creating and evaluating public health policy.

OME staff provides health education and outreach on issues such as suicide, homelessness and chronic disease prevention and other concerns impacting Denver residents.

2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Named new Chief Coroner Jim Caruso to head the Denver Office of the Medical Examiner.*
- *Created a report to the Mayor's office regarding homeless death demographics.*
- *Performed **612** autopsies and **318** external examinations.*
- *Responded to **945** death scenes, the highest number in the last 3 years.*
- *Recorded **4,403** deaths, the highest number in the last 3 years.*
- *Performed **1,104** exams.*
- *Completed **68** percent of autopsies in less than 30 days; an additional **27** percent were completed in 30 to 60 days.*

Percentage of Autopsy Reports Completed in Fewer than 30 Days



OME completed 68 percent of autopsies in fewer than 30 days; an additional 27 percent were completed in 30 to 60 days.

HEALTHY PLACES



Denver Environmental Health works collaboratively to ensure the health and safety of Denver's regulated establishments by conducting inspections, education and enforcement of the city's public and environmental health-related ordinances.

ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS

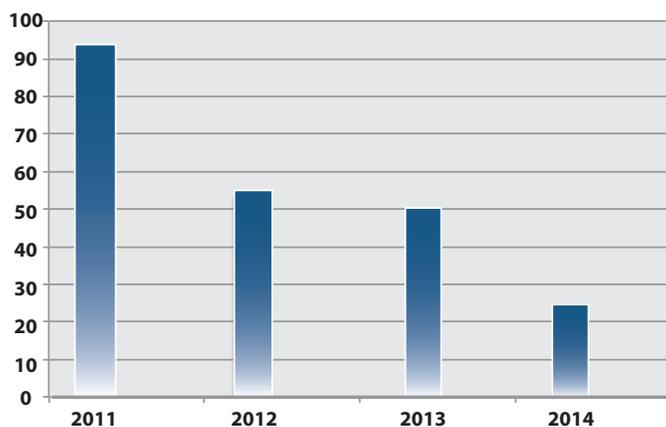
The Public Health Inspections (PHI) Division is responsible for protecting Denver's health and safety by ensuring that food service establishments, child care facilities, residential health, noise, lead, emergency vehicles, body art establishments, boarding homes, and pools are in compliance with the respective health and safety laws. This includes inspecting more than 7,000 licensed and regulated facilities in Denver each year.

PHI also investigates complaints regarding foodborne illness, residential health and housing concerns, noise, and is involved in the licensing of marijuana dispensaries and infused products manufacturing.

Through PHI's Healthy Families, Healthy Homes Program, PHI provides education and technical assistance in lead poisoning prevention, radon, mold and other household concerns.

Public Health Inspections

Average Complaint Response Time (Hours)



2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Revised and streamlined the child care and food safety plan review and licensing process to be more user-friendly and consistent with state documents.
- Developed policies and procedures to streamline record-keeping and public access to meth lab program records.
- Redesigned division website to incorporate more educational material in multiple languages for citizens and the regulated community.
- Managed a record number of media requests in the Food Safety Section.
- Provided more than 1,300 educational demonstrations and classes for regulated industries.
- Reinstated swimming pools and body art facility inspection program.
- Revised Chapter 23 (Food Safety) and Chapter 24 (Health and Sanitation) and secured the authority to issue administrative citations in all PHI programs.
- Developed policies and procedures for inspections of marijuana food operations.
- Assessed more than \$900,000 in administrative citations for repeat violations and closures due to imminent health hazards.
- Conducted over 15,000 public health inspections and complaint investigations of regulated facilities.
- Conducted four Lead Safety blood lead level screening events for children in high risk neighborhoods.
- Awarded a multi-county grant to provide radon education and outreach.

HEALTHY PETS

Denver Environmental Health works collaboratively with the community and animal welfare organizations to protect the health and safety of residents, and their pets.

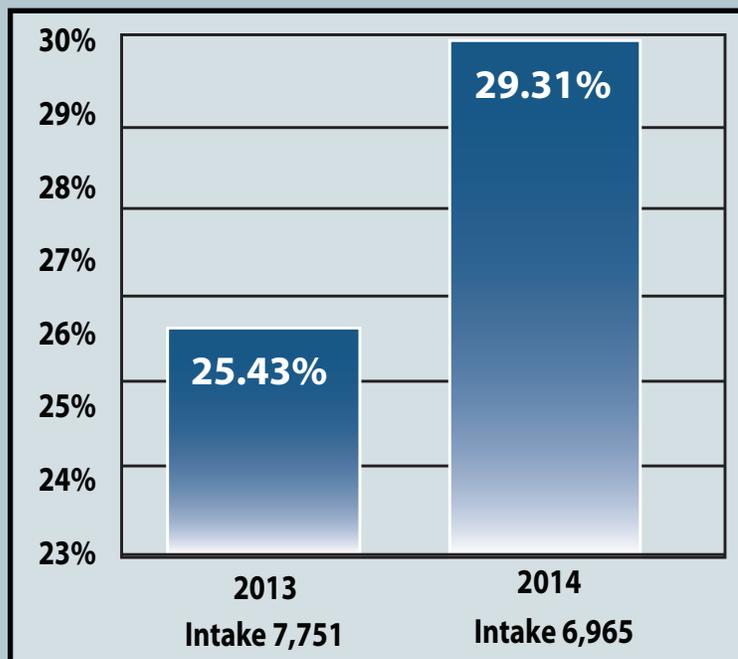


2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Maintained **91** percent live release rate.
- Reduced adoption return rate of animals.
- Responded to **19,724** calls for service in Animal Protection.
- Secured **\$51,000** in grants.
- Created Pit Bull Evaluator certification program to ensure consistency.
- Returned **30** percent of lost animals to their owners.
- Created Behavior Coordinator position to provide consistency in animal behavior assessments and develop enrichment programs.
- Reached nearly **800** residents through the Animal Control proactive outreach program.
- Participated in **33** pet adoption and education events.
- Provided **24** public presentations, reaching more than **500** individuals.

Animals Returned to Owner

(shown as a percentage based on DAP animal intake numbers)



ABOUT DENVER ANIMAL PROTECTION

The Animal Protection (DAP) Division is responsible for providing humane education and enforcement of the city's animal-related ordinances. This includes responding to more than 49,213 calls annually regarding lost, abandoned, or injured pets, and investigating complaints regarding cruelty, dog bites, and other human and animal-related conflicts.

DAP is also responsible for providing care, pet adoptions, pet vaccinations and licensing for more than 7,500 animals annually through Denver's municipal shelter, the Denver Animal Shelter.



HEALTHY PLANET AND ENVIRONMENT

Denver Environmental Health works to ensure a healthy, sustainable environment by collaborating with the community to provide environmental oversight, education and outreach to protect the planet for future generations.

ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

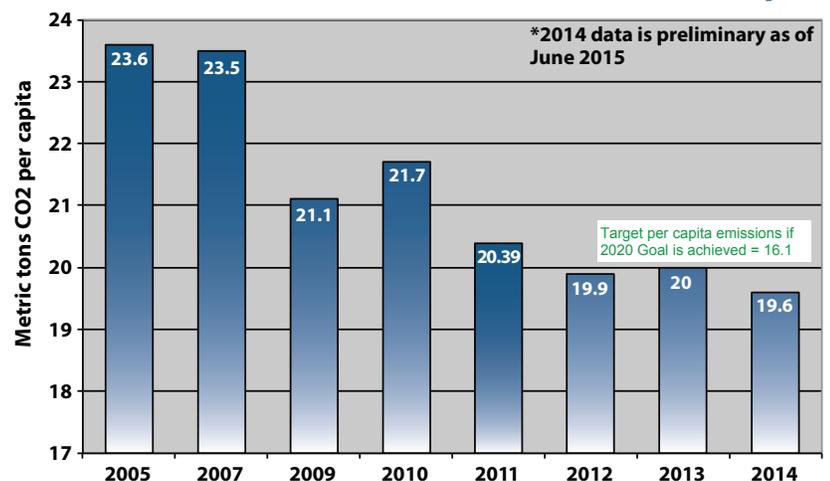
The Environmental Quality (EQ) Division protects Denver's environment by providing assessment, regulatory compliance, technical assistance, environmental education, and stewardship for a healthy planet.

EQ's manages Denver's air quality, water quality, site assessment and cleanup of land, solid/hazardous waste, and promotes programs that support low-carbon transportation, business and residential energy efficiency, and neighborhood sustainability.

EQ also plays a key role in managing Denver's emergency preparedness and response and the city's efforts to ensure internal compliance with environmental and safety guidelines at city facilities.



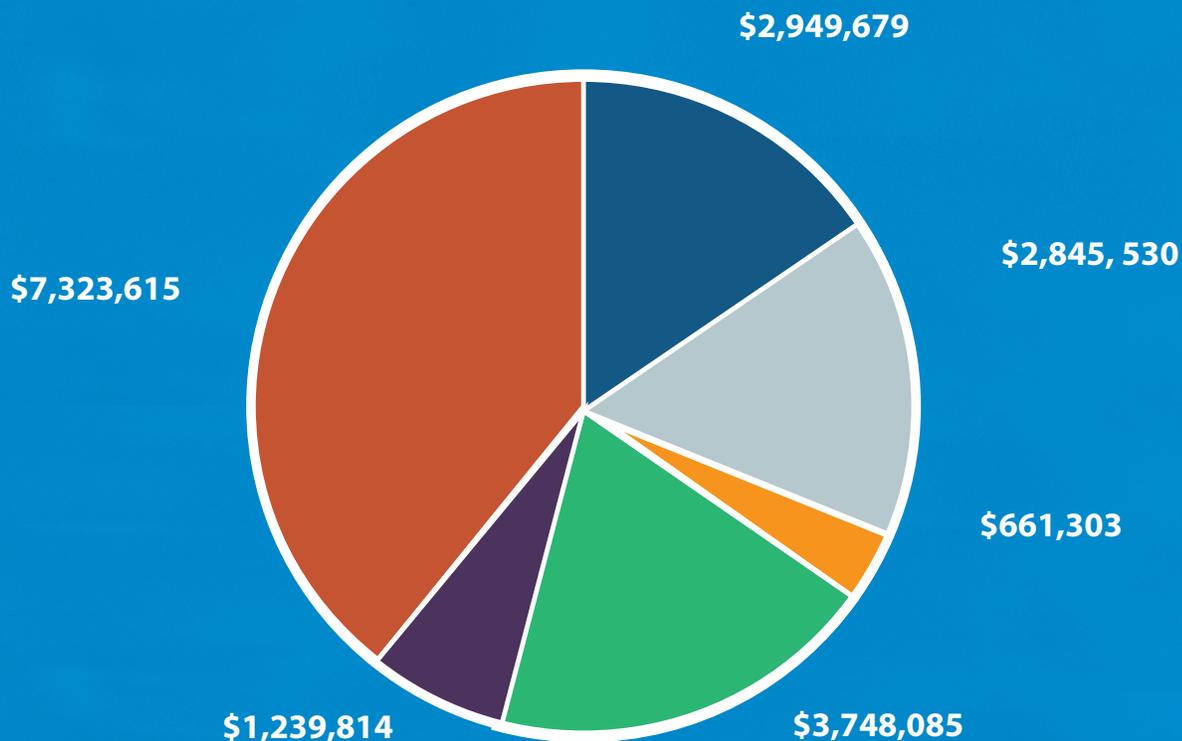
2005-2014* Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Per Capita)



2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Worked with Denver Public Works to complete the installation of 12 public electric vehicle charging stations, including the first two "DC Fast Chargers."
- Received Denver Regional Council of Governments MetroVision Local Government Bronze Award in partnership with Public Works for expanding electric transportation options in the urban center.
- Selected to join the City Energy Project, a collation of 10 national cities leading the effort to maximize commercial building energy performance (35% of city carbon footprint).
- Created Denver's first Climate Adaptation Plan to address and prepare for current and future climate change impacts.
- Delivered 63 annual environmental training sessions to 1,500 trainees in 32 departments and agencies.
- Helped residents and businesses conserve more than 30 million kilowatts of electricity and a million therms of natural gas through the Certifiably Green Denver and Denver Energy Challenge Programs.
- Developed a Mosquito Control Plan which includes an adult contingency control plan.
- Responded to 187 emergency response incidents, conducted and/or participated in 8 emergency response drills and exercises.
- Responded to 602 environmental complaints regarding air quality, asbestos, water quality, solid/hazardous waste, odors and abandoned waste.
- Launched the Sustainable Neighborhoods Program with North City Park, West Colfax and Regis/Chafee Park neighborhoods.
- Completed 236 Marijuana grow facility inspections and 189 license applications sign-offs.

EXPENDITURES



- Public Health Inspections
- Office of the Medical Examiner
- Community Health*
- Animal Protection
- Executive Director's Office
- Environmental Quality

Note: CH operating budget does not reflect \$7.9 million federal grant to fund HIV services or \$550,000 in grant funding to support healthy food access programs.



DENVER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Executive Director's Office | Community Health | Public Health Inspections | Environmental Quality

200 W. 14th Ave., Denver, CO 80204 | www.denvergov.org/deh

Denver Animal Shelter

1241 W. Bayaud Ave., Denver, CO 80204

Office of the Medical Examiner

660 Bannock St., Denver, CO 80204



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