



[www.sanjuanpublichealth.org](http://www.sanjuanpublichealth.org)

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



## PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT

Our mission is to protect and promote the health of all San Juan County residents by preventing illness and injury, establishing and promoting healthy environments, advocating policy based on scientific knowledge of issues relating to public health, promoting services that address personal health and well-being, informing and educating the community regarding issues of public health, and providing a committed, educated, and effective public health professional workforce.

Prepared By:

**San Juan Public Health  
Department**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE HEALTH OFFICER

Resilience as a

- Team,
- Partners, and
- Community

Rising Up Together



2023 brought unique challenges to our team. People close to us faced death, disability, and disrupted futures.

We saw this, too, among people we serve each day. Sometimes in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Sometimes as we presented health education in our communities. Sometimes among those confronting cancer. Sometimes among those getting routine permits for septic systems, food services, or water systems. Sometimes these challenges were the reason people sought out certificates in our Vital Records office.

We see the resilience in your eyes as you share your challenges and hopes. It inspires us to stick together and realize our mission to protect and promote the health of individuals and families all across San Juan County.

Here we highlights successes and challenges, along with plans to rise up -- securing a sustainable future for Public Health -- together with our partners, our communities, and you, so that we all may attain the best health possible.



**Grant Sunada, PhD, MPH**  
Executive Director &  
Health Officer



# 2023 BOARD OF HEALTH

## MEMBERSHIP

- Trent Herring, Chair, Blanding
- Ron Skinner, Vice Chair, Monticello
- Jamie Harvey, Commissioner
- Suzette Morris, White Mesa
- Revina Talker, Monument Valley
- Lois Young, Bluff
- Sylvia Zhonnie, Montezuma Creek



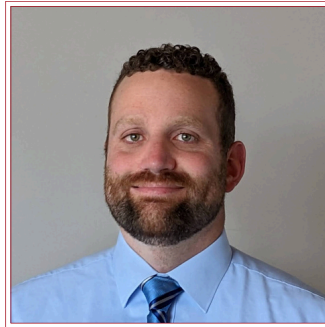
We thank Trent Herring for his leadership within our Board and his service to our community as our Chair from 2022 to 2023. He has stepped down from the Board due to taking the role as Blanding City Administrator.

According to San Juan County Ordinance 2018-01-A, the San Juan County Board of Public Health is “empowered to enforce all ordinances of the County and all applicable ordinances of the municipalities, and the laws, rules, and regulations and standards of the State of Utah, now in force or that may hereafter be enacted, which relate to the health, sanitation and environment of the County.”

# DEPARTMENT STAFF



**Ronnie Nieves**  
Environmental Health Director



**Tyler Ketron**  
Business Manager



**Brittney Carlson**  
Nursing Director, RN



**Katie Knight**  
Public Health Nurse, RN



**Angela Kunz**  
Public Health Nurse, RN



**Bridget Horrocks**  
Public Health Nurse, RN



**Rebecca Benally**  
Health Promotion Director



**Mike Moulton**  
Emergency Response  
Coordinator

**Lourdes Long**  
Childhood Care Coordinator

**Jilian Walker**  
Receptionist



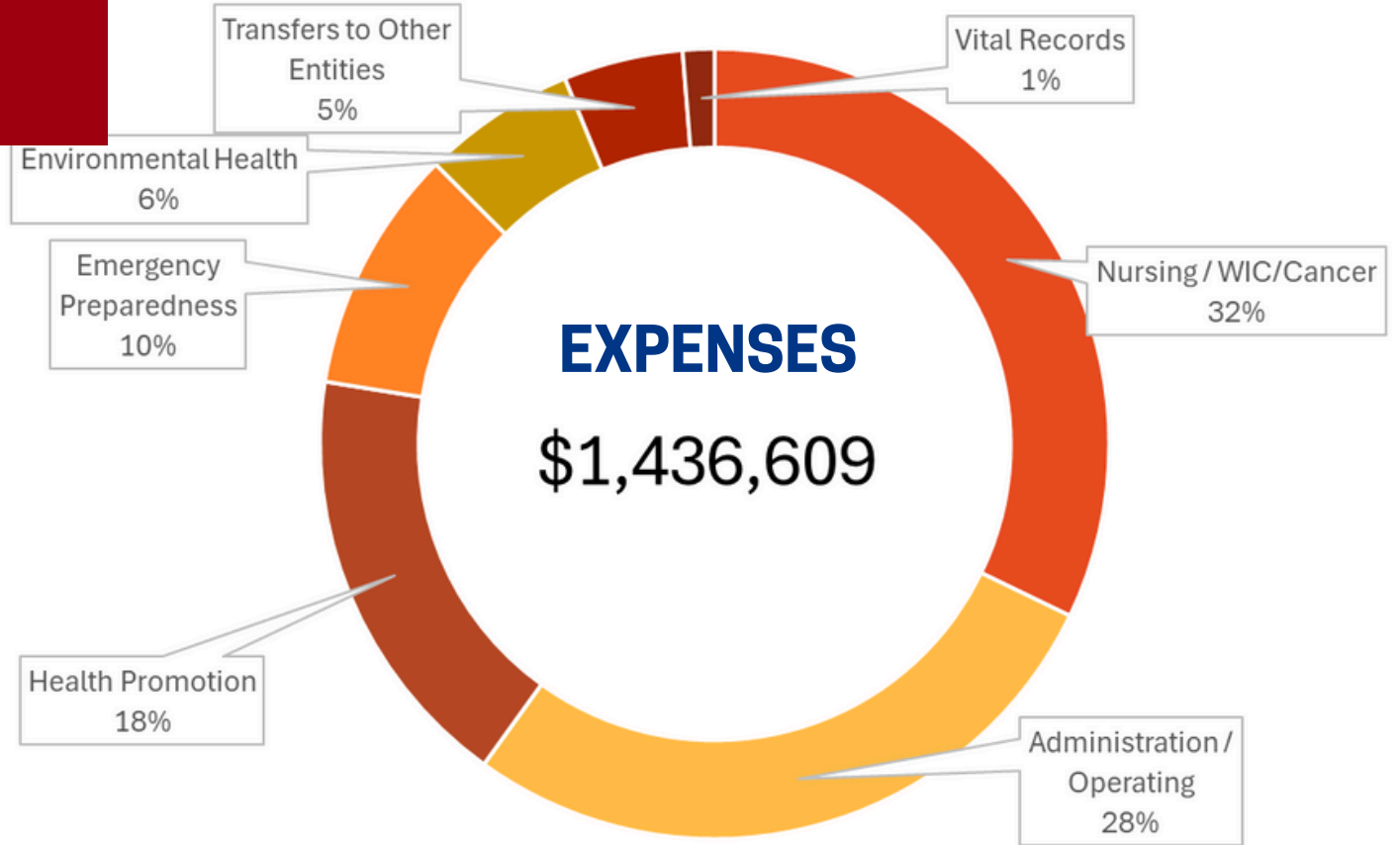
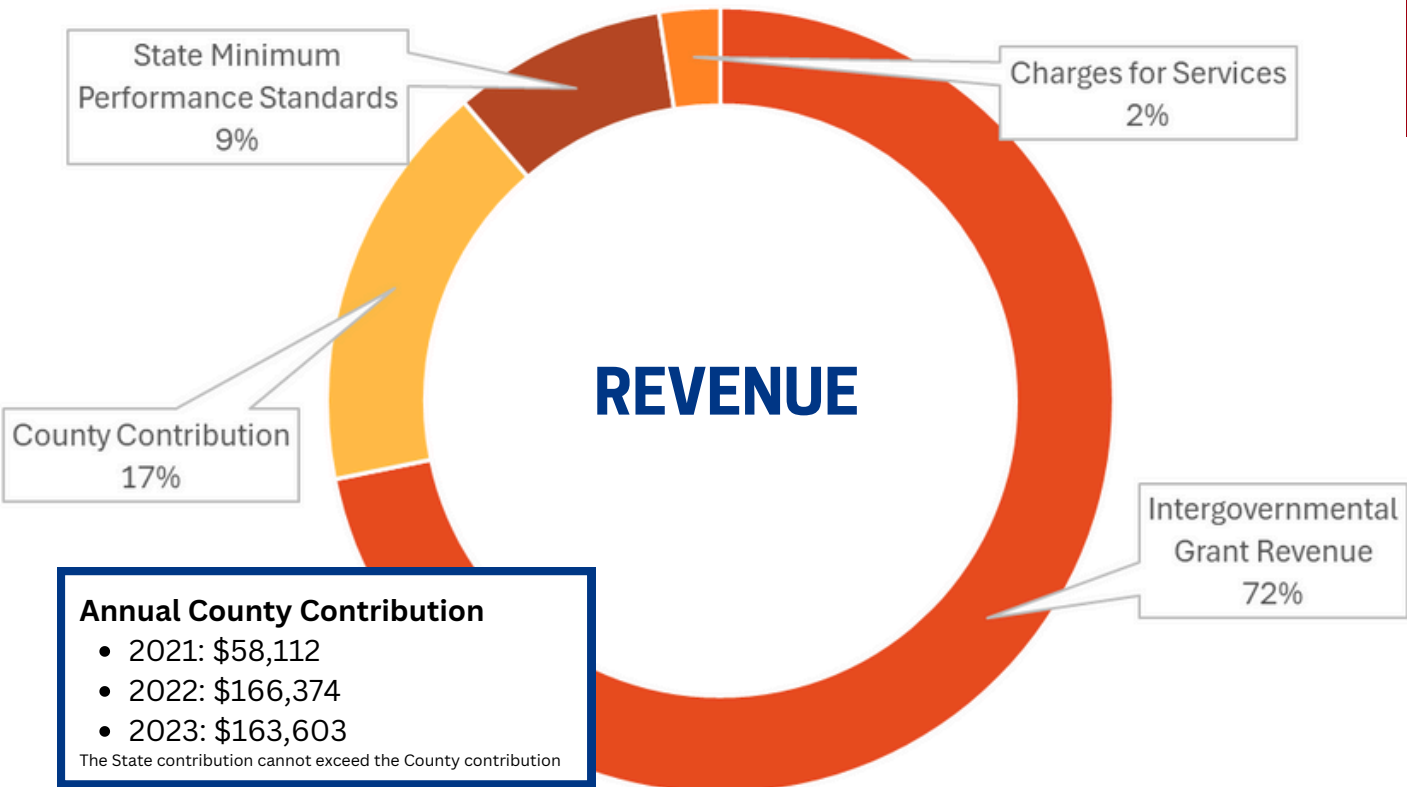
**Chante Sherrow**  
Receptionist



**Tisheena Yazzie**  
Epidemiologist



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



# COMMUNITY HEALTH SNAPSHOT



- Access to Exercise Opportunities
- Primary Care Physicians
- Flu Vaccinations
- High School Completion
- Child Care Centers
- Dentists
- Mammography Screening
- Children Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- Juvenile Arrests

- Excessive Drinking
- Insufficient Sleep
- Uninsured Children
- Unemployment
- Air Pollution
- Severe Housing Cost Burden

- Adult Smoking
- Adult Obesity
- Impaired Driving Deaths
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Limited Access to Health Foods
- Driving Alone to Work
- Long Commute
- Uninsured Adults
- Unemployment
- Children in Poverty
- Children in Single-Parent Households
- Injury Deaths
- Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths

## Key to Symbols



Our community is performing BETTER than the state, and the difference is statistically significant.



Our community is performing ABOUT THE SAME as the state. Differences are not statistically significant.



Our community is performing WORSE than the state, and the differences is statistically significant.

County Health Rankings: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/utah/san-juan?year=2024>

# EPIDEMIOLOGY DISEASE INVESTIGATIONS

During 2022, San Juan Public Health investigated 177 cases of the following diseases in San Juan County:

- Campylobacteriosis
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Chlamydia
- Coccidioidomycosis
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Gonorrhea
- Haemophilus influenzae
- Hepatitis C
- Influenza
- Lead poisoning
- Meningitis
- Norovirus
- Salmonellosis
- Streptococcal, Group A
- Streptococcal, Group B
- Syphilis

## COVID-19 Statistics

**Total Cases for Year 2023:** 660

### Jurisdiction

Utah Navajo Health System: 441

San Juan Public Health: 219

## Approved Activities for COVID-19 Funding Extension

**\$2,142,795.63 -- 2024-2026**

- COVID-19 and related epidemiology
- Epidemiology conference & training
- Integrating COVID-19 mobile testing with WIC and other public health resources
- Long COVID-19 provider and public education
- Community health worker outreach
- Public information staff training
- Tuberculosis/COVID-19 training for Medical Director
- Contracts with marketing firm to tailor local educational materials
- Contract with data consultant to improve data related to COVID-19 risk/protective factors and hospitalizations



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Food Service - Protecting the citizens and visitors of San Juan County by enforcing food safety regulations is a primary role of San Juan Public Health.

The Environmental Health Director regularly inspects day-care facilities, swimming pools, hotels, and motels to help ensure our public is safe and protected from diseases and hazardous agents commonly spread in such facilities.

Food Handler & Food Service Permits		Health Inspections	
Food Handlers Permits	67	Septic System	41
Food Establishment Inspections	51	Public Pools Water Samples	30
Food Establishment Permits	42	School Inspections	9

- Environmental health activities were performed by contractors between August and December 2023 due to local staff being on medical leave.
- All environmental health activities are currently limited to off-reservation locations due to tribal sovereignty.
- A large portion (41%) of environmental health costs are covered by fees, local Public Health tax, and State Minimum Performance Standards funding.

## GOALS:

1. Train and permit all establishments (restaurants and pools) in San Juan County to protect public health public health and maintain operating costs for environmental health inspections.
2. Explore collaborative environmental health agreements with tribal governments.

“Helping provide the Environmental Health needs of our diverse communities in San Juan County is extremely rewarding. Working one-on-one with individual community members, businesses, schools, and other government agencies creates a unified approach to the overall health of our local residents and visitors alike.”

Dennis Shumway  
Environmental Health Director



# WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



## Drinking Water

San Juan Public Health's Environmental Director works with the State of Utah and the Department of Environmental Quality to inspect drinking water systems at public campground schools and municipalities in San Juan County ensuring regulations are followed and safeguarding the health of residents and visitors alike.



## Waste Water

All septic wastewater systems in San Juan County are inspected and permitted by San Juan Public Health. In 2023 the Environmental Director conducted septic systems inspections, permit provisions, and recertifications. In addition to inspections, records of septic systems within the county are maintained and provided to residents upon request.



## Water Quality

One of the many responsibilities of San Juan Public Health is monitoring water quality issues associated with specific public health concerns. Lakes, rivers, streams, ground water, standing water, etc. are monitored for possible problems associated with E. Coli, Harmful Algal Blooms and other public health concerns.



## Air Quality

Works in conjunction with the Division of Air Quality to ensure compliance and address air quality issues.



## Waste Management

In an effort to protect the public and the environment from exposure to contamination caused by the improper treatment, storage and disposal of waste. San Juan Public Health ensures compliance with waste management regulations including hazardous waste radiation control, solid waste, and used oil.



## Response and Remediation

San Juan Public Health is in charge of protecting the public health of San Juan County's environment through investigating chemically contaminated sites to ensure proper cleanup. We coordinate with the Department of Environmental Quality who inspects underground gasoline and other storage tanks to ensure proper use.

# HEALTH EDUCATION & PROMOTION

The process of enabling people to increase control over their health and improve their lifestyle through community partnerships, protecting the community, and minimizing health disparities.



## PREVENTION SERVICES

Seat Classes	-	5
Seat Inspections	-	5
Seat Distributed	-	8
Prevention Program Classes	-	19
Tobacco Vendor Training & Compliance Checks	-	64

## GOALS

- 5 quarterly site visits to La Sal school & community.
- Establish a partnership with Spanish Valley Clinic.
- Establish a partnership with Navajo Mountain. schools through quarterly visits.
- Sustain partnership with all the partners.

“I enjoy getting to know new people. I'm still very new to my work and I enjoy being able to work directly with the community. Being there to connect and provide resources is what motivates me. I want people to have access to vital needs.”

Zoe John, Health Educator



# NURSING SERVICES

“I really enjoy working in the WIC program. I love that it helps families during the early years of a child's life. It is very helpful when families are trying to get their education and funds are low. I think it is awesome that it offers healthy foods, specifically fresh fruits and vegetables. I love helping new moms with breastfeeding problems and seeing them succeed. I feel the most joy when I am helping and serving others.”

Katie Knight, RN, WIC Director:

## Number of clients served in 2023

**WIC**  
**307**

**CSHCN**  
**13**

**Nursing Education Classes**  
**36**

**Breastfeeding Support**  
**25**

**TCM**  
**13**

**394 Total Clients**

## What We Offer

### Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

WIC is a nutrition education program that supplies supplemental foods for pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, as well as infants and children up to age 5. Benefits include healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding information, education and support, and referrals to other programs and services within your community.

### Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN)

CSHCN is a program designed to partner with families of children and youth with special health care needs to connect and coordinate services which may assist your child's development.

We assist families by creating care plans, exploring solutions to housing and financial issues, provide referrals to resources and support groups, and more.

### Parents as Teachers Program

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based early childhood family support and parent education home-visiting model. Families may enroll in Parents as Teachers beginning with pregnancy and remain in the program until the child turns three.

7 Families were visited about 20 times each. This included nurse home visits and monthly social activities. Activity packets, including books and educational handouts, were dropped off monthly. The needs of the families were assessed and referred to resources as necessary

### Breastfeeding Support

San Juan Public Health nurses offer monthly community breastfeeding classes. Individual breastfeeding help consultations are also available by appointment. There are no fees. Every pregnant or postpartum parent is eligible to participate.

### Targeted Case Management (TCM)

TCM is a service that assists mothers and children (0 – 4yrs.) who are eligible to gain access to needed medical, social, educational, and other services. TCM services are a covered benefit for all Medicaid children.

TCM Home visits are scheduled for postpartum women and infants by a registered nurse. The home visit includes an initial intake assessment and teaching on safety, breastfeeding, nutrition, perinatal mood disorders, and other individualized health-related topics. Follow-up visits are provided on a case-by-case basis. The nurse will connect families to additional resources as needed.

# CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS PROGRAM



Families Served in CSHCN

13

CSHCN Community Outreach Activities

9



## MONTICELLO FREE CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM

In December 2023, San Juan County Public Health re-launched a life-saving program with funding to screen people who lived, worked, or went to school in Monticello prior to 2003.

The Monticello Victims of Mill Tailing Exposure (VMTE) Committee and the Monticello Free Cancer Screening Program is urgently raising awareness about the health risks of exposure to uranium mill tailings from the Monticello mine. Prolonged exposure to tailings has been linked to an increased risk of various cancers and other health issues. Current uranium milling and mining operations in the USA operate under highly stringent regulations. However, these safety regulations did not exist in the 1950s and 1960s for the Monticello Uranium Mill.



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



This position and related activities ensure that San Juan Public Health fulfills the requirements for Utah Public Health Minimum Performance Standards.

## Emergency Services

Emergency Training Completed by Staff - **30**  
 COVID-19 Home Test Kits Distributed - **848**

“I enjoy being a part of something that can benefit my community. I'm motivated by learning what can be accomplished when people lift where they stand.”

*Mike Moulton, Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator*





## Mission And Vision Statement

*San Juan Public Health works to protect and promote the health of all families and communities we serve - including rural, underserved, and tribal - through compassionate support, education, connecting to resources, creative partnerships, healthy environments, and preventing disease and injury.*

## OUR VALUES

W – We improve

E – Empower families and communities to make healthy decisions

C – Collaborate with community partners

A – Act on data we collect with communities

R – Respect the diversity of everyone we serve

E – Empathy and making a difference in all we do



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