

# Public health in Lawrence and Douglas County

1885-2008

1885

Kansas Board of Health established; Lawrence appoints first health officer, Dr. N. Simmons.

1901-1904

Smallpox and typhoid epidemics devastate Lawrence.

1917

The Kaw Water Plant comes on line in 1917; chlorination begins in the next decade.

1918

Spanish influenza pandemic strikes Douglas County and the world.



1921

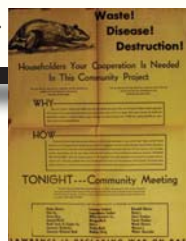
Tuberculosis clinic established by Lawrence City Health Unit.

1942

County joins city to form the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department. Community faces widespread milk shortage as war workers flock to city.

1948-1949

Public health officials initiate rat control campaign.



1955

First polio vaccine developed, thousands of Lawrence and Douglas County children and adults receive the shot.



1958

Survey of septic systems along Kansas Highway 10 reveal a 93 percent failure rate.

1964

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Board reviews and confirms that the department's mission is to remain population based.

1965

The Kansas legislature directs the State Board of Health to establish family planning centers and to disseminate information regarding birth control methods.



1977

The Health Department's WIC program, one of the first in the state, begins.

## The Health Department's homes



Lawrence City Hall  
(now Watkins  
Community Museum)  
1929-1970



701  
New Hampshire St.  
1970-1980



Lawrence  
Memorial Hospital  
1980-1999



Community Health  
Facility  
1999-present



2003

Federal funds are awarded to start a Medical Reserve Corps unit in Douglas County. Hundreds of people were affected by an outbreak of cryptosporidiosis, with 96 cases confirmed by the Health Department.

1999

After two years of construction, the Health Department and other community agencies move into the Community Health Facility.

1989

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention visits the Health Department to analyze data on the 1988 mumps outbreak that sickened 128 people.