LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY
Health Department

Milestones from the first 100 years of public health in Lawrence & Douglas County.

Source: Health Dept. Archives

1885
City of Lawrence creates post of Health Officer to control filth-borne epidemics.

Kansas Board of Health established following epidemics of diphtheria, typhoid, malaria and smallpox.

1889
U.S. Public Health Service established.

1901-1904
Smallpox and typhoid epidemics.

1909-1910
Poliomyelitis epidemic spurs KS legislature to fund statewide prevention campaign.

1914-1918
World War I

1918
Spanish Flu Pandemic.

Late 1920's
Sanitation programs begin to reduce cases of typhoid and diphtheria.

1928
Request made by State of Kansas to Douglas County asking that local health unit be formed.

1929
City of Lawrence creates city health unit.

1942
City of Lawrence Health Unit expanded to become a City-County Health Unit governed by Health Board.

1944
Study of local morbidity data shows reduced prevalence of communicable diseases.

1944-1945
Community public health newsletter "Know About Health" distributed.

1945
Health Officer seeks assistance from State to establish restaurant and trailer park regulations.

1947
KU physician reports to Health Board of great need to improve rural sanitation, water supplies, milk sanitation and sewage control.

1954
Community expresses concern that restaurants and slaughter houses not adequately regulated, push for local code fails.

1958
Survey of septic systems along Highway 10 reveal 93% failure rate.

1959
Health Officer receives complaints restaurants not adequately inspected. Proposed ordinance fails to pass as City Commission expresses desire to use voluntary methods.

1964
Health Department philosophy again defined. Mission of department to be only in areas of preventive medicine and environmental health.

1966
Report from League of Women Voters states there is a definite consensus for a county sanitation code and a food handlers certification program.

1970
Health Board member suggest air pollution controls should be enacted at the local level.

1971
Health Department forms a public information committee to initiate a public relations campaign.

1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980

1942 – 1947

1954 – 1966