

PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT FUND SUMMARY

The mission of the department, in partnership with the communities it serves, is to preserve, promote and protect the health and environment of the residents of Weld County. The department achieves its mission by focusing activities in 9 of the 10 nationally recognized public health essential services (the 10th essential service – research – is one to which the department has not historically committed resources). The essential services are delivered through five divisions (from largest to smallest): Public Health Services (clinical services including nursing); Environmental Health Services; Health Communication, Education & Planning; Administrative Services (including Vital Records) and Public Health Emergency Preparedness.

The department's total 2015 budget is \$9,447,955. The department's net county cost target budget for 2015 was established at \$4,320,296 by the Budget Director and Board of County Commissioners. The department's 2015 budget request conscientiously forecasts the workload for the coming year and will provide services with the resources allocated to carry out its essential services and core functions in support of Weld County's goals and objectives. Available resources are allocated within the department's five divisions to support the mission of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health. The department accomplishes this mission through continuous fiscal diligence and commitment to being efficient financial stewards of taxpayers' trust and resources and in accordance with the Board's directive to deliver efficient government to the residents of Weld County.



The Department of Public Health & Environment remains challenged to keep pace with service needs as the county population continues to grow and more families are living in poverty. The complexity of work, shortage of qualified Public Health personnel and intermittent surges in activity (e.g., disease control and investigation of various communicable diseases endemic to our region, oil and gas expansion, etc.) create unique staffing issues that stress routine operations. The proposed 2015 budget was prepared to ensure adequate resources will be available to efficiently and effectively deliver essential services to the increasing number of residents and businesses in Weld County.

Highlights of changes to the 2015 budget include:

- The Division of Environmental Health Services received approval in 2014 for a 2.0 FTE increase in Environmental Health staff. This additional FTE is included in the proposed 2015 budget.
- Total Department staff numbers reflect a very modest increase in FTE of 1.475 which reflects the addition of two new Environmental Health staff and a minor reduction in staff hours following the loss of a small grant in the Public Health Services division. Although the department is gradually experiencing a rebound, our overall requested FTE of 91.70 in 2015 is still down by 3.390 FTE approved in the FY2008 budget prior to the recession.

- The department's objective in preparing its budget for 2015 was to remain at level funding except for increases related to hiring new staff, cost of living adjustments, step increases and benefit adjustments. Across many divisions there was a marked increase in health insurance costs due to increased participation in the county's health plans, likely as a result of the mandates in the Affordable Care Act.
- The Public Health Services division budget reflects increased costs in the supplies and purchased services categories. Specifically, medical and laboratory services and medical supplies costs are projected to rise at a rate of 6.8% in 2015.
- Expenditures associated with the public health accreditation process have been budgeted across all divisions for 2015. In the future it is anticipated that the ability to apply for and/or receive federal and state funds will be tied to achieving national accreditation.