



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STUDY RANKS ST. CHARLES COUNTY AMONG MISSOURI'S HEALTHIEST

"County Health Rankings" Places St. Charles County First in Health Factors, Third in Health Outcomes

St. Charles County, Missouri – A national study released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute ranked St. Charles County among Missouri's healthiest counties for the second consecutive year. This year, the county ranked first in Missouri in "Health Factors" and third in "Health Outcomes" after placing first in "Health Factors" and second in "Health Outcomes" last year. The complete nationwide and Missouri-specific rankings may be viewed at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

"Receiving these high rankings for the second consecutive year is a tremendous honor, both for our department's efforts and for the commitment made by residents to maintain healthy lifestyles," St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment Director Gil Copley noted. "Starting with a healthy and active community allows our staff to be proactive in dealing with potential risks and in educating residents on ways to improve their quality of life."

The rankings are based on data from vital statistics and government health surveys, and in many cases use several years of data for their calculations. Statistics measured include premature deaths (those who die from preventable diseases before the age of 75), obesity rates, binge drinking, smoking, access to healthy foods, unemployment, high school graduation rates, pollution, access to primary care providers, and self-assessed health status. The "Health Factors" rankings are based on the community's health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic conditions, and physical environment. The "Health Outcomes" rankings are determined by how long people live (mortality) and how healthy people feel (morbidity).

St. Charles County was cited among the top counties in Missouri in virtually every measureable category. The "Health Factors" section consists of health behaviors (county ranks fifth among Missouri's 114 counties), clinical care (ranks fifth), social/economic factors (ranks first) and physical environment (ranks 41st). The "Health Outcomes" section consists of Mortality (county ranks first in Missouri) and Morbidity — rate of poor or fair health assessment, rate of poor physical health days, rate of poor mental health days, and low birthright — (ranks 13th).

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“It’s hard to lead a healthy life if you don’t live in a healthy community,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A. president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “The *County Health Rankings* are an annual check-up for communities to know how healthy they are and where they can improve. We hope that policymakers, businesses, educators, public health departments and community residents will use the *Rankings* to develop solutions to help people live healthier lives.”

The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment is committed to the protection and enhancement of health and the quality of life for all members of our community. For information on programs offered and to discover ways the Department assists our community, please visit www.scchealth.org or call 636-949-7400.

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