



Fond du Lac County Health Department

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Public Health
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**Fond du Lac County
Health Department**

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COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY CONCERNS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Local health departments are required by Wisconsin State Statute to regularly and systematically collect, assemble, analyze, and make available information on the health of the community. The purpose and intention behind the survey questions are to assess and review conditions that impact health in the local community. This includes assessing health issues across a variety of areas, including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, environmental safety, mental health and physical health. This is done in part through the community health survey which is conducted every three years and led by the Healthy Fond du Lac County Steering Committee. This steering committee consists of a variety of community health partners.

We are getting a lot of questions surrounding the community health assessment survey that recently went out to Fond du Lac County community members regarding the firearms questions. There have been concerns expressed by citizens that the questions about firearms in the household are overstepping second amendment rights.

The questions include:

- Are any firearms kept in or around your home, garage, barn, shed or in your car or truck?
- Are any of these firearms now loaded?
- Are any of these loaded firearms also unlocked, where you do not need a key or combination to get the gun or to fire it? A safety is not a lock.

The questions about firearms have been asked in previous survey years, including 2005, 2008, and 2014. The sources of the questions are the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System of the CDC. One of the reasons the questions were included in the survey is due to concern of injury, violence, and mental health. In Fond du Lac County, suicide is a leading cause of death and mental health has been identified as a community health priority for a number of years. Firearms are used in over half of all suicide deaths in Fond du Lac County. This highlights the importance of the safe storage of firearms and where to focus suicide prevention efforts. Survey responses are confidential and only reported in total percentages.

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