



Central Nevada Health District Health Officer's Report

Submitted November 17, 2025
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Attached is a summary of events and activities for the Central Nevada Health District (CNHD) for the *third* quarter of 2025.

Environmental Health

Staffing Changes

The Environmental Health Services Division experienced staffing changes since the last reporting period. At this time, the Division has a total of 2 staff: one Environmental Health Services Division Manager and one Environmental Health Specialist who carry out and execute the requirements of the program.

Meetings and Professional Development

Environmental Health Services staff participated in several meetings and training events to support professional growth and coordination:

- Western States Program Standards: Participation in regional discussions on standardization and regulatory updates.
- Nevada Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention: State of Nevada University of Nevada, Las Vegas staff provided internal lead investigation risk assessment training.
- Northern Nevada Food Safety Partnership: Collaboration with stakeholders, health districts on issues about retail food safety, and to provide food safety training and information to the citizens, food industry professionals, and visitors of Northern Nevada.
- Nevada Department of Agriculture Meat Processing Partnership Meetings

Inspection Update

During this quarter, the Environmental Health Services Division completed 85 inspections and 34 temporary event inspections district-wide.

Burning Man Temporary Mass Gathering Event Inspection Milestone

During this reporting period, the Central Nevada Health District Environmental Health Services Division, in collaboration with volunteers and under a contractual service agreement with the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Environmental Health Section, conducted 416 temporary event inspections of food service operations and sanitation vendors at this year's Burning Man

Temporary Mass Gathering Event. This record-breaking achievement for the State of Nevada represents a 91% completion rate of total permitted temporary establishments, marking a significant milestone in statewide environmental health oversight.

Internal Operations, Planning, Preparedness, Public Outreach

The Environmental Health Services Division is developing strategies and educational campaign outreach to increase public awareness and access to Environmental Health Services related regulations through public forums and social media channels.

Epidemiology

The Epidemiology Department has been focusing on preparing for this upcoming respiratory virus season. The respiratory virus season begins week 40 for 2025 and will conclude in late spring of 2026, according to the CDC. Our efforts this quarter have focused on coordination, education, and readiness with the State of Nevada's Department of Public and Behavioral Health, our communities, hospitals, and our schools in preparation for this coming season. An H5N1 Plan is in place to provide surveillance in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Agriculture, veterinarians, dairy farmers, and residents.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

1. Respiratory Virus Season Response Planning
 - a. The Department has recently met with our community nurses to go over outbreak response plans and respiratory virus readiness. The staff have given information on the previous respiratory virus seasons and advised on anticipatory trends for this coming season.
 - b. Currently, all respiratory viruses are on trend for rates with the 24-25 season.
2. Community engagement
 - a. CNHD created two public health prevention programs for chronic health that will be implemented in early 2026. These preventative programs will focus on diabetes prevention and cardiovascular health. CNHD is hoping to have 100 residents within our jurisdiction participate in the prevention classes.
3. Harmful Algae Blooms (HAB)
 - a. HABs reported in the CNHD for the Lahontan Lake area in Churchill County and Walker River Lake in Mineral County. Education on HABs has been disseminated to our residents.
4. Training, Exercises, and National Coordination
 - a. Disease Investigation staff participated in national training sessions and outbreak response drills (measles, pertussis, influenza A), aligning our local strategies with current best practices and CDC guidance.

Other Notable Infectious Disease Focuses

CNHD addressed other notable infectious disease concerns this quarter. CNHD monitored an increase in Q fever activity in Fallon between June and September 2025. There was no epidemiological link or commonality between any cases. There was a small number of reported Campylobacter cases in Churchill County and in Eureka; none of the cases were related.

Clinical Services

Family Planning & Sexual Health Services

The volume of CNHD clinic visits for Family Planning has increased since the summer months. We saw an increase in the number of patients seeking cervical cancer screening in Churchill/City of Fallon and Lovelock clinics, which is correlated with the Women's Health Connection (WHC) resuming late in the last quarter. We are credentialed with several insurances and continue to provide services on a sliding-scale fee for those who are uninsured. There has been a similar number of STI testing visits and contraception visits this quarter. Chlamydia case numbers have been consistent over the last year (no significant increase or decrease).

Immunization & Outreach Services

In October, CNHD's focus was on Influenza vaccines. Community vaccination events were offered in Fallon, Churchill County, Pershing County, Eureka and Crescent Valley, and Mineral County. In addition, vaccine outreach was offered at the senior centers and to homebound individuals in these counties. The number of people vaccinated was slightly lower overall than in 2024. However, there was an increase in Influenza vaccinations in Eureka County.

Clinic services continue to administer VFC and 317 vaccines. The immunization rates for both children and adults have decreased compared to the previous quarter, now that the back-to-school vaccine season has concluded. We are back to administering around 50 vaccines per month for all counties.

Efforts to increase vaccination rates have included distributing outreach flyers in all communities and on social media platforms, offering all vaccines, and highlighting MMR immunization. To enhance awareness, coloring books focusing on vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases, along with childhood immunization schedules, were distributed at each back-to-school event.

Outreach efforts have been ongoing at senior centers in Churchill, Mineral, Eureka, and Pershing counties.

Our Clinic RN will be attending the Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) training later this month.

Tuberculosis Prevention & Control Tuberculosis prevention events involve the routine weekly collection of QuantiFERON Gold tests to clients of the residential treatment facility in Churchill County. Additionally, nursing school and high school students, as well as others in the

community, are offered TST skin tests. The clinical team will meet on November 18, 2025, to finalize revisions to plan for 2026.

Public Health Preparedness

The Central Nevada Health District (CNHD) Public Health Preparedness Program experienced staffing changes following the departure of the district's only Public Health Preparedness Planner during the first week of September 2025. Since that time, the Environmental Health Services Division Manager and Interim Administrator have worked together to continue moving the program forward.

The Environmental Health Services Division Manager attended the Regional Integrated Preparedness Symposium held in Reno, Nevada, in person from September 22–24, 2025, and participated virtually in the Regional Integrated Preparedness Symposium held in Elko, Nevada.

In October, the Environmental Health Services Division Manager participated in a hazardous materials (HazMat) spill exercise alongside the Pershing County Emergency Manager and other local stakeholders. Additionally, the Environmental Health Services Division Manager and Interim Administrator oversaw the coordination of the annual flu Point of Dispensing (POD) events for the Central Nevada Health District, in partnership with local county emergency managers, hospitals, and other community partners.

The Environmental Health Services Division Manager also contributed to the Churchill County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Hazard Mitigation Plan and is currently supporting the development of the Mineral County Mass Casualty Plan.

The Central Nevada Health District continues to actively support all LEPC meetings throughout the district and will continue preparedness efforts as well as development efforts to complete Emergency Operations Plans, Emergency Response Plans, Continuity of Operations Plans, and preparedness efforts throughout the district.

Miscellaneous

Laboratory services will be adding CLIA-waived rapid HIV and syphilis testing in early 2026.

“Shared Clinical Decision Making” is currently being defined for the CNHD and included in policy and procedure for all clinical services to meet CDC recommendations for service delivery.

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- Dr. James Zubernis, DO, was appointed to the CNHD Board of Health as the Medical Representative on November 13, 2025.
- Release of the RFP to complete the comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment of the district boundaries in compliance with the Public Health Accreditation. The goal is to award the most responsive bidder during the January 2026 Board of Health Meeting.
- CNHD is still in the market for the new CNHD Administrator / Health Officer. During the November 2025 Board of Health meeting, the board voted to increase the salary range significantly. Once Churchill County, agendaized for November 19, 2025, the position will be reposted at an increased rate.
- At the request of member jurisdictions of CNHD Health Officer is working to develop proper protocols for correctional medical facilities.
- The Eureka Office will open in December and begin to see patients.
- In early spring, the Sexual Risk Avoidance program will be launched in three counties and supported in the fourth.
- CNHD is working to implement a full website design to add convenience, clarity, and allow the public to engage with educational items, etc. The website will also allow for a dashboard to bring better awareness of current CNHD statistics.

Shannon Ernst, Interim Administrator