



## AN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING STORY

# CREATING MORE ENVIRONMENTS THAT PROMOTE SUN SAFETY

Monroe County, Wisconsin

### THE PROBLEM

In Monroe County, there is an average of 24 cases of melanoma for every 100,000 people every year, which is about the same as the Wisconsin average of 22 cases per 100,000 people. Like Wisconsin as a whole, the rate of melanoma in Monroe County has continued to go up over time. Since sunburns—especially at young ages—contribute to skin cancer risk, health department staff wanted to include outdoor recreational spaces as one of their prevention tactics.

### WHAT MONROE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT DID

Offering free, strategically placed sunscreen is one strategy health department staff used. They worked with employees at three pools and nine baseball fields to offer free sunscreen during summer months. Sunscreen packets were available at concession stands and front desks. In total, nearly 3,800 packets of sunscreen were given out, 500 of which were donated by a sunscreen company. Staff arranged for each pool and ball field complex to have a standing banner reminding patrons of five key sun safety behaviors.

### THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT

The sunscreen promotion was extremely popular. When one pool briefly ran out of sunscreen, their patrons asked when more would be available. Based on the success of this promotion, health department staff plan to work with their new partners to install and maintain sunscreen dispensers at local outdoor recreational facilities. By offering free sunscreen on-site, Monroe County Health Department and their partners have shifted community norms about sunscreen availability and made it easier than ever for Monroe County residents to protect themselves from the sun’s damaging rays.



This campaign is a great way to capture people’s attention to make sure they do something about protecting themselves from skin cancer.

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