

Buchanan County
Environmental Health Department

In January of 1975, with the recommendation from the five-member Board of Health, the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors adopted the State of Iowa standards for the proper installation of private waste water disposal systems and an ordinance to begin monitoring common health nuisances.

The Board of Supervisors then employed Mr. David Hamilton as the Zoning Administrator and the Environmental Sanitarian for Buchanan County. The duties of the sanitarian included the enforcement of the adopted ordinances, permitting, inspecting, and mapping.

In June of 1979, Mr. Hamilton retired from the position and those who have served the Buchanan County residents as sanitarian have included Mr. Robert Hummel from 1979 to 1980, Mr. Ed Fitzgerald from January 1980 to June 2011, and Mr. Chad Beatty from June 2011 to the present.

In 1989, the county began to permit, authorize, and inspect private wells within the county. The sanitarian duties include permitting, authorizing location, and confirming that grouting occurs on all private wells which serve up to 15 dwellings or up to 25 residents daily. Any wells which serve more than these amounts are permitted by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The department currently permits between 30 to 40 private wells, 90 to 110 private septic systems, reviews between 50 and 100 time of transfer reports, samples between 200 to 225 private wells, plugs between 12 to 15 abandon wells, and rehabilitates between 2 to 5 private wells each year. The sanitarian often times works in conjunction with Buchanan County Public Health, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and also reports to the Buchanan County Board of Health and the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors on a monthly basis.

The current Board of Health members include: Nyle McMartin, Rick McCormick, Josh Bowden, Inez Kremer, and Mary Schmitt.

The department currently employs two full-time staff members: Chad Beatty, 4 years; Kris Holle 13 years and one part-time staff member: Gary White, 1 year.

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