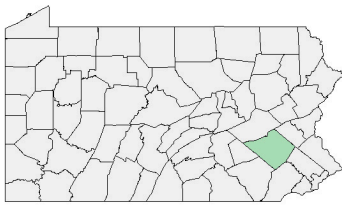
June 2026

BERKS COUNTY

Environmental Health Community Snapshot

This Environmental Health Community Snapshot provides a summary of environment-related public health data for Berks County as of 2023. Data presented here include county-level demographic information and environmental hazards that can affect human health.



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

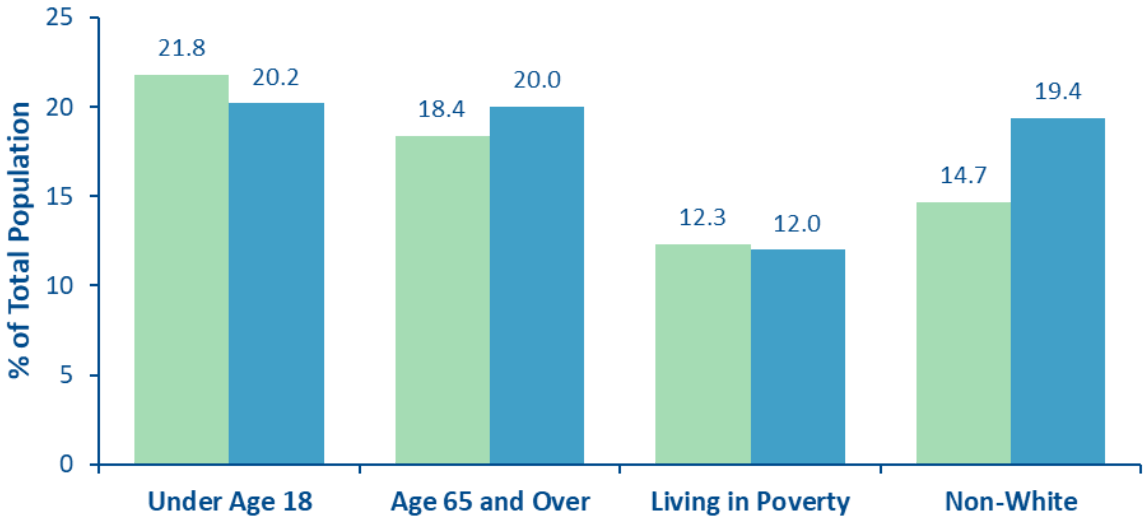
3.3%

of Pennsylvanians live in Berks County

432,821 people live in Berks County

12,961,683 people live in Pennsylvania

State and County Demographic Data



Quick Facts	Berks County		Pennsylvania
Life expectancy	79.0 years	✓	78.0 years
Percent low birthweight newborns	8.2%	✓	8.5%
Infant mortality rate	7.4 per 1,000 live births	!	5.6 per 1,000 live births
Median household income	$75,675	✓	$73,824

SNAPSHOT KEY

✓ County performed similar or better than the state

! County underperformed and/or was lower than state average

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Berks County Pennsylvania

DRINKING WATER QUALITY

77

Number of Public Water Systems (PWS) in Berks County*

*12 of which either fluoridate or obtain their water from a fluoridating system

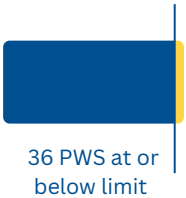
Contaminants Exceeding Regulatory Health Limits

Total Trihalomethane

Number of PWS above EPA standard of 80 µg/L

Haloacetic Acids

Number of PWS above EPA standard of 60 µg/L



Contaminants Meeting Regulatory Health Limits

- Arsenic
- Atrazine
- Di(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate
- Nitrate
- Radium
- Trichloroethylene
- Tetrachloroethylene
- Uranium

AIR QUALITY

8

Number of days in 2023 with Ozone over the National Ambient Air Quality Standard*

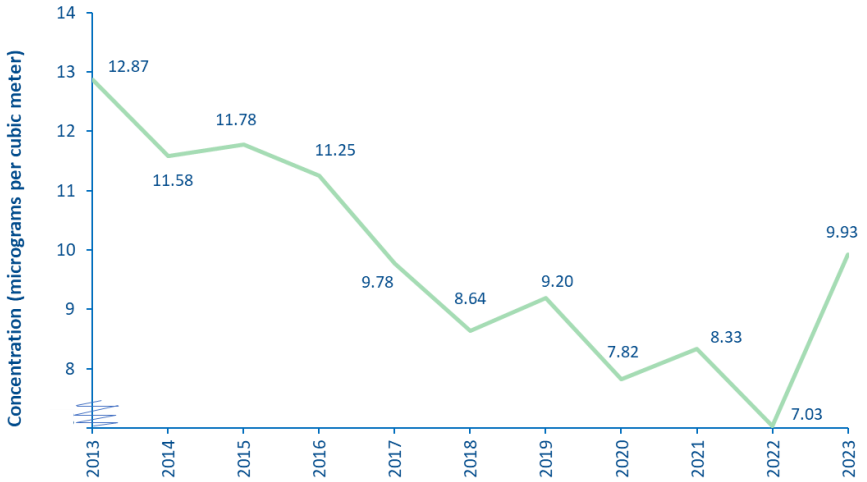
*Berks County has 2 total ozone monitors at 2 sites

6

Number of days in 2023 with $PM_{2.5}$ over the National Ambient Air Quality Standard*

*Berks County has 2 total PM monitors at 1 site

Annual Average Ambient Concentration of Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) in Berks County



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

47

Number of days with a flooding event over the last 10 years (2014-2023)*

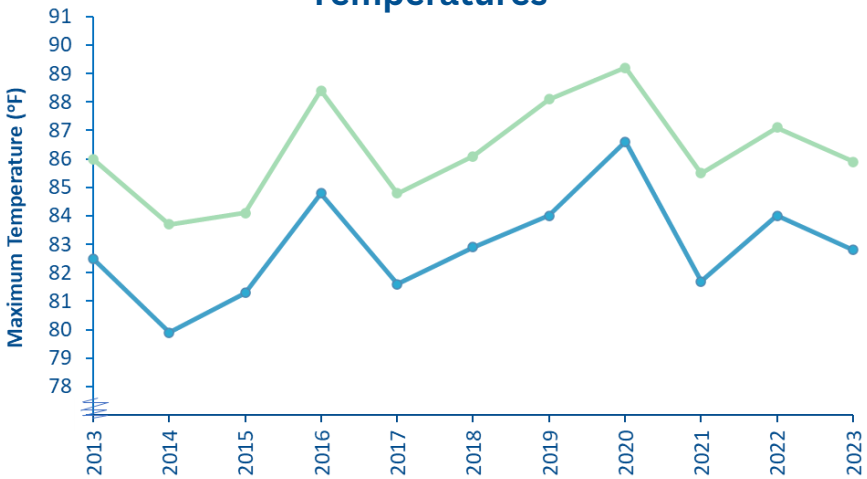
*There are 3,653 days in a 10-year period

132

Number of weeks with moderate drought or greater over 10 years (2012-2021)*

*There are 521 weeks and 6 days in a 10-year period. The most recent year for which data are available is 2021.

State and County Maximum July Temperatures



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County performed similar or better than the state

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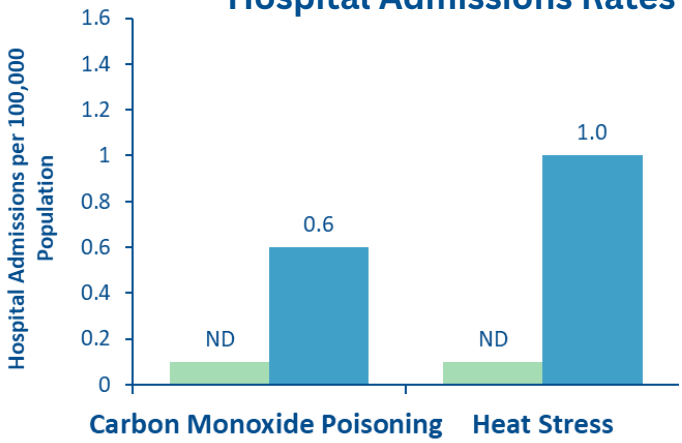
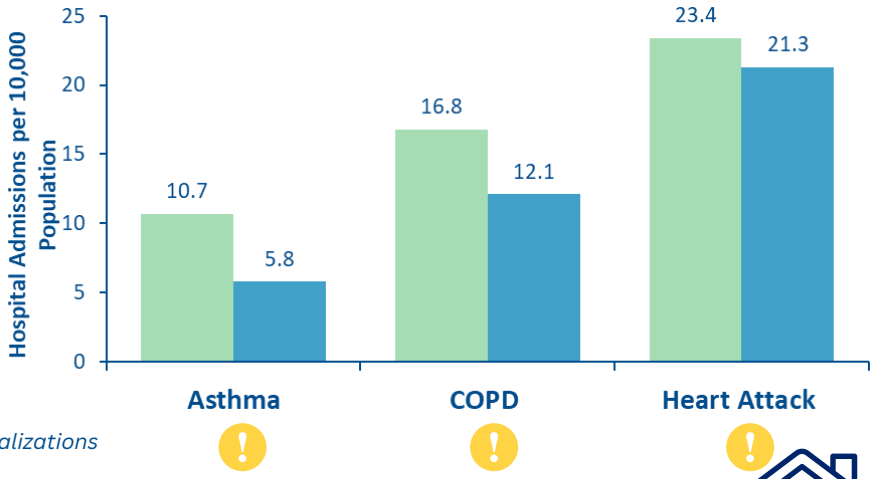
Berks County

Pennsylvania

ENVIRONMENT-RELATED HOSPITALIZATIONS

Hospital Admissions Rates for Environmental Health Conditions

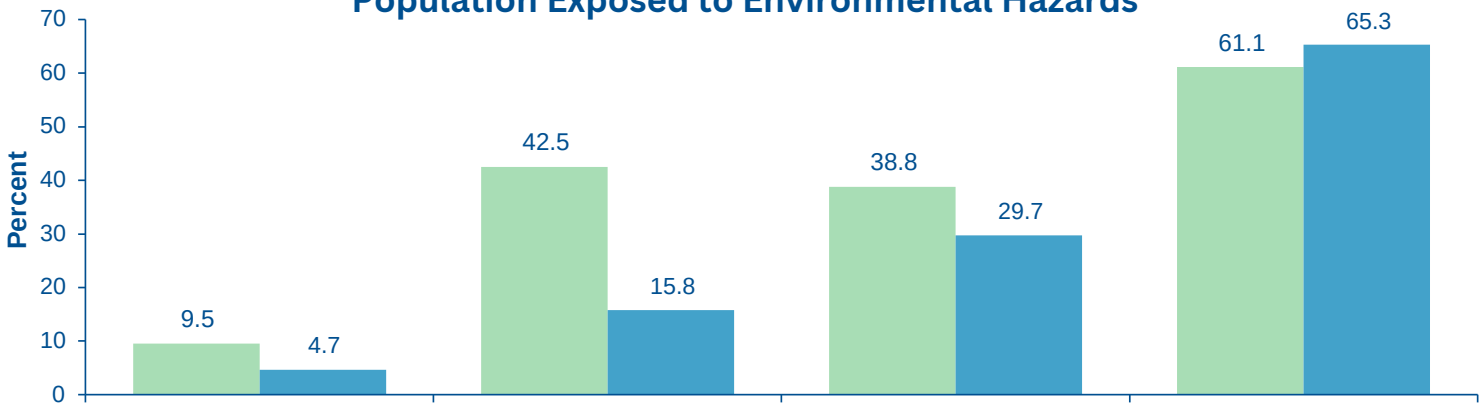




ND= Not displayed due to less than 10 condition-specific hospitalizations

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Population Exposed to Environmental Hazards



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PA Environmental Health Indicators Map displays environmental, social demographic, and public health data across PA.

PA Environmental Public Health Tracking Program delivers data to inform public health actions to protect Pennsylvanians from environmental hazards. This includes resources on putting environmental health data into action.

National Environmental Public Health Tracking (CDC) provides information from a nationwide network of integrated environmental health data that drives actions to improve community health.

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH TRACKING

Pennsylvania Department of Health

DATA SOURCES AND NOTES

U.S. Census Bureau; Pennsylvania Death Certificate Dataset; County Health Rankings

- Low birthweight refers to weight at birth of < 2,500 grams (5.5 lbs); infant mortality refers to the death of a child under 1 year of age.

PA Department of Environmental Protection; Safe Drinking Water Program

- Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) are reported as set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Click this link to see The National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. Not all county public water systems report contaminant levels for every year.
- Total Trihalomethane (TTHM) and Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) are produced in the process of making water safe for drinking. Drinking water with excess HAA5 and TTHM is linked to poor health outcomes.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Pennsylvania State Data Center

- $PM_{2.5}$ refers to fine inhalable particles, with diameters that are 2.5 micrometers or less.
- The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants that are considered harmful to public health. NAAQS for Ozone is 0.070 parts per million. NAAQS for $PM_{2.5}$ is 35 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$). Look up other NAAQS using this link.

National Centers for Environmental Information; Pennsylvania Department of Health (Bureau of Epidemiology); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; CDC EPHT Data Explorer

- Total weeks the county experienced drought over a 10-year period is based on the Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) from the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network Data Explorer.
- Get more information on tickborne diseases (including Lyme disease) on this dashboard.

Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4) Inpatient Hospitalizations

U.S. Census Bureau; Pennsylvania National Electronic Disease Surveillance System; Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

- Elevated childhood lead measured as percent of children (<6 years) with a confirmed blood lead level ≥ 3.5 µg/dL. Note that in October 2021, CDC revised the blood lead level considered elevated for children from 5 µg/dL to 3.5 µg/dL. This change was instituted in Pennsylvania starting in January 2022. Not all children under the age of 6 are tested for lead.
- Elevated adult lead measured as percent of adults (≥ 16 years) with a blood lead level ≥ 5 µg/dL.
- Homes built before 1978 are more likely to contain lead in paint and other household fixtures.
- Radon is an odorless, invisible, radioactive gas that can enter your home from the ground through cracks in the foundation. The EPA recommends mitigation at or above 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter). Look up radon test data by zip code using this link.

CONTACT US

Contact the Pennsylvania Environmental Health Tracking Program
within the Division of Environmental Health Epidemiology by phone or email:

(717) 787-3350 dehe@pa.gov https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/programs/environmental-health

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