

*Story originally printed in the La Crosse Tribune or online at [www.lacrossetribune.com](http://www.lacrossetribune.com)*

**Published - Thursday, November 20, 2008**

## **Health of La Crosse County ranks 14th**

*By TERRY RINDFLEISCH / [trindfleisch@lacrossetribune.com](mailto:trindfleisch@lacrossetribune.com)*

La Crosse County is the 14th healthiest county in the 2008 Wisconsin health ranking report released today.

Crawford County was the next healthiest county in the area at No. 35, and Vernon County was ranked 39th. Jackson, Monroe and Trempealeau counties ranked in the bottom quarter.

The annual report is the sixth annual health checkup of 72 counties and the city of Milwaukee developed by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

La Crosse County dropped from No. 11 in the 2007 rankings to 14th.

All counties in the La Crosse area, except for Jackson, ranked poorly in binge drinking, said Derek Moore, epidemiologist for the Coulee Region Public Health Consortium.

Moore said western Wisconsin has one of the highest binge drinking rates in the state, and Wisconsin has the highest rate in the nation for binge drinking.

"Our biggest problem is binge drinking, and it's not just college students," Moore said. "It's throughout the region."

Sexually transmitted infections, smoking and lack of physical activity are also major health concerns in the area, Moore said. "Smoking, diet and alcohol use determine health outcomes five to 10 years down the road," he said.

### **BY THE NUMBERS**

2008 health rankings in Wisconsin, by county:

County 2007 rank

1. Ozaukee 1
2. Waukesha 2
3. Dane 5
4. Iowa 4
5. Eau Claire 3

6. Washington 8

7. St. Croix 9

8. Outagamie 7

9. Portage 6

10. Door 5

14. La Crosse 11

35. Crawford 21

39. Vernon 36

42. Buffalo 47

50. Trempealeau 61

65. Monroe 58

66. Jackson 64

69. Juneau 71

#### **MORE ONLINE**

For additional information on counties in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, the La Crosse Area Health Sciences Consortium has created a user-friendly Web site with several measures of health at [www.lmhscscorecard.com](http://www.lmhscscorecard.com).

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