

Milwaukee Respiratory Virus Surveillance Update

MMWR Week 50, Ending December 13, 2025

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Respiratory Illnesses In the News

WI DHS Confirms First Pediatric Respiratory Illness-Associated Deaths: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/news/releases/121825.htm>

Extended influenza seasons in Australia and New Zealand in 2025 due to the emergence of influenza A(H3N2) subclade K viruses: <https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2025.30.49.2500894>

New analysis indicates that vaccines greatly reduce hospitalizations for flu and COVID-19: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/new-analysis-indicates-vaccines-greatly-reduce-hospitalisations-flu-and-covid-19>

Overview

County

- There were 36 influenza-associated hospitalizations reported in Milwaukee County during the week ending on December 13, 2025. From September 28, 2025 through December 13, 2025, there have been 96 reported influenza-associated hospitalizations in Milwaukee County (72 City of Milwaukee residents).

State

- Influenza season is here; activity is increasing in emergency department, laboratory testing, and wastewater data.
- COVID-19 and RSV are also circulating at low levels as seen in emergency department, laboratory testing, and wastewater data.
- Rhinovirus/enterovirus and parainfluenza virus detections in laboratory data are elevated but are decreasing.

National

- Nationally, seasonal influenza activity continues to increase.
- 1 influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurred during this week.
- The most frequently reported influenza viruses this week were influenza A(H3N2). There are 8 jurisdictions with moderate flu activity and 17 jurisdictions with high or very high flu activity.

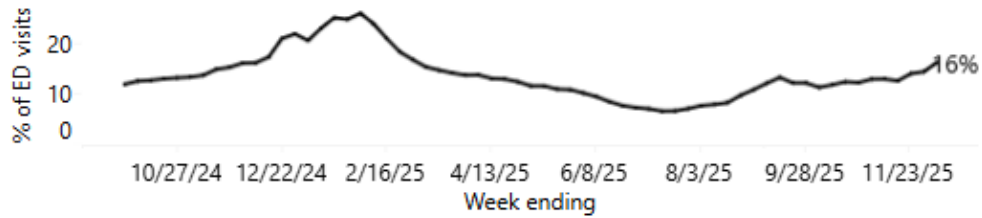
CDC Pediatric Data (Since Week 40)

2025-26 To Date: Total Deaths	2024-25 To Date: Total Deaths	Pediatric Deaths This Week	Notes on Deaths
3	288	1	Two influenza-associated pediatric deaths occurring during the 2025-2026 season were reported to CDC during Week 50. One death occurred during Week 47 (the week ending November 22, 2025) and the other one occurred during Week 50 (the week ending December 13, 2025). Both deaths were associated with influenza A(H3) viruses.

Statewide and Regional Influenza-like Illness Activity

Influenza-like illness levels were low statewide and moderate in the southeastern region of the state.

Overall respiratory illness trends over time

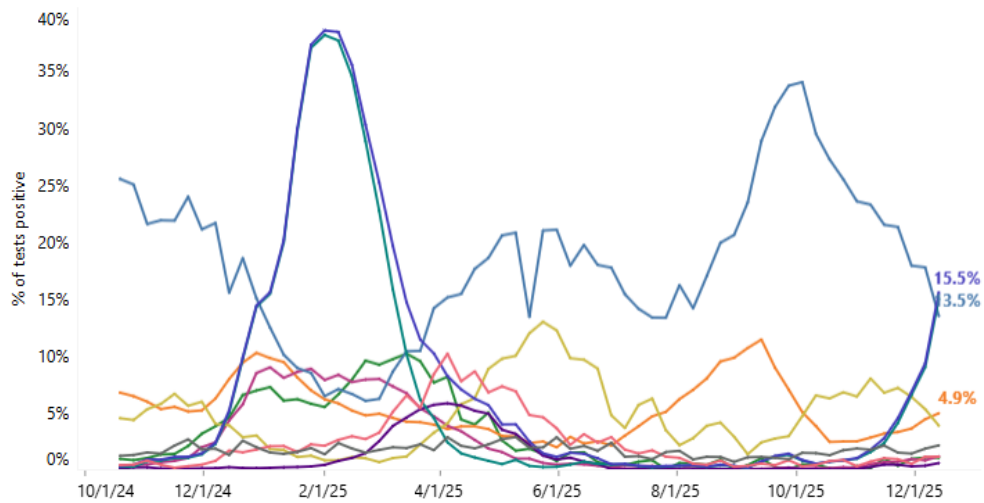


Southeastern Region Influenza-Like Illness Activity

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Respiratory Virus Surveillance, December 13, 2025

Respiratory Virus Laboratory Surveillance

Percent (%) of reported test results **positive** for selected viruses by week
Data are interactive. **Hover over lines** to see more information.



RSV = respiratory syncytial virus, hMPV = human metapneumovirus

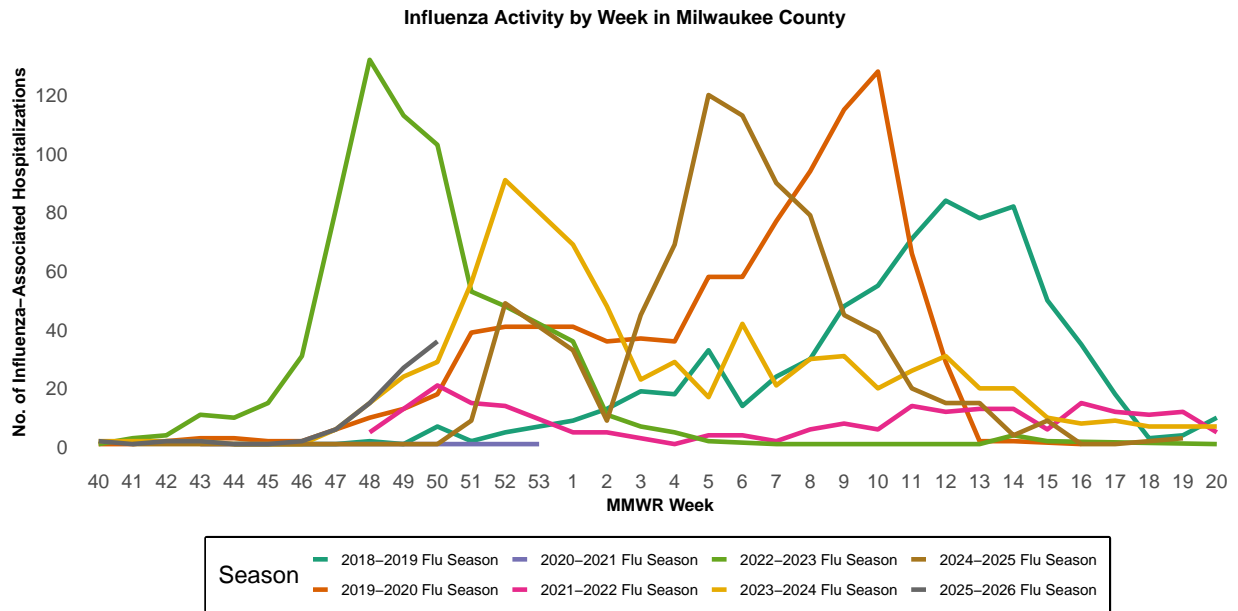
- Adenovirus
- Coronavirus (seasonal)
- COVID-19
- HMPV
- Influenza
- Parainfluenza virus
- Rhinovirus/ Enterovirus
- RSV

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Respiratory Laboratory Testing Data, December 13, 2025

Milwaukee County Influenza Activity

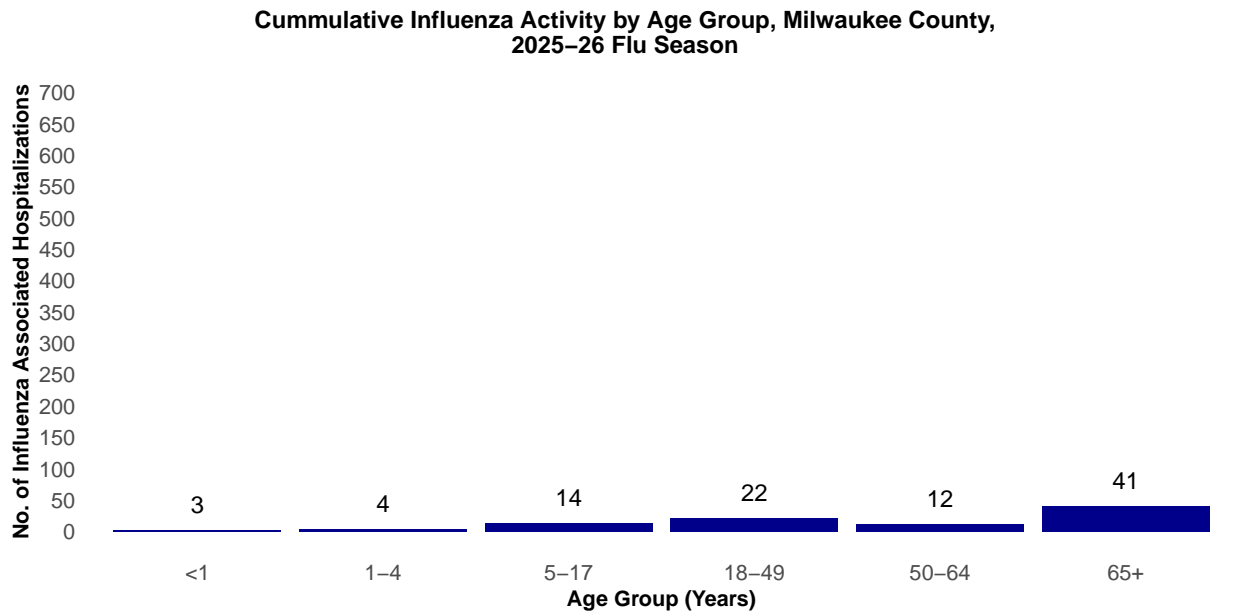
From September 28, 2025 through December 13, 2025 there have been 96 reported influenza-associated hospitalizations in Milwaukee County.

Milwaukee County Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations



*Flu activity was unusually low in the 2020-2021 flu season, despite high levels of testing. COVID-19 mitigation measures such as wearing face masks, social distancing, staying home, and school closures, in addition to flu vaccination, likely contributed to the low flu activity during this season.

Milwaukee County Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations by Age Group MMWR Week 40, 2025 through Week 50, 2025



Influenza Testing Data

Public Health Laboratory Influenza Testing Data To-Date (Since Week 40)

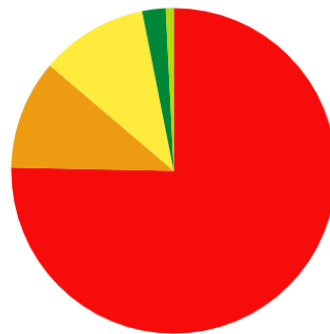
CDC Laboratory Testing predominant subtype is A. The predominant influenza A subtype is H3N2 and the predominant influenza B subtype is Victoria.

Lab	Number Tested to date	Number Positive to date	Most Recent Week Percent Positive
CDC	575,359	16,565	10,456/70,675 (14.8%)
WSLH	-	-	1,208/7,777 (15.5%)
MHDL	5	3	60%

National Influenza Testing Data, CDC FluView



Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC by Public Health Laboratories, National Summary, 2025-26 Season, week ending Dec 13, 2025
Reported by: U.S. Influenza/NREVSS Collaborating Laboratories and ILINet

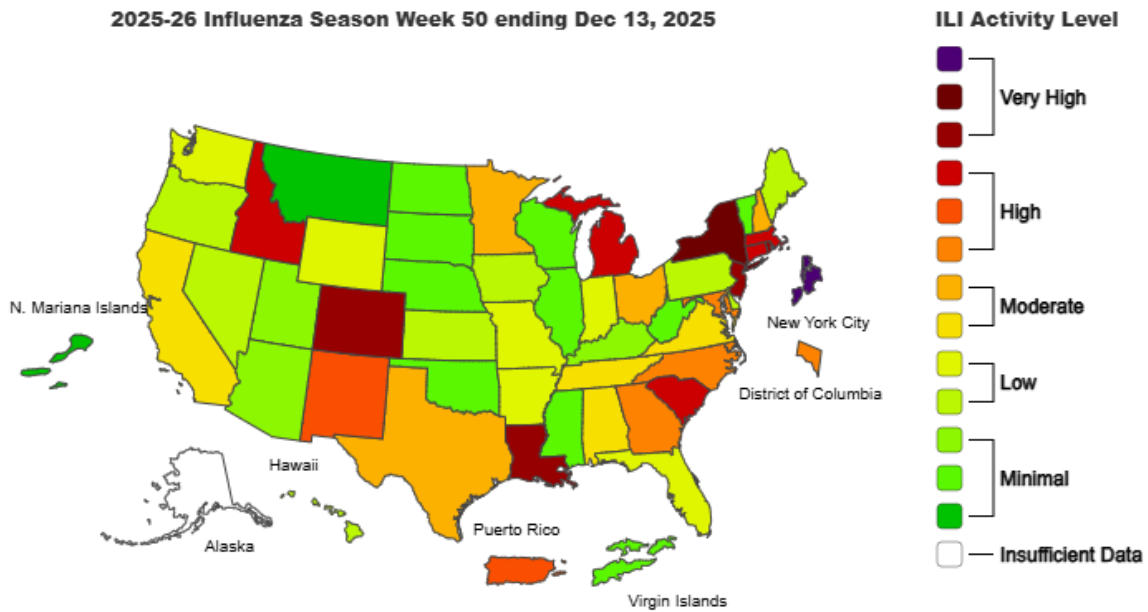


- Cumulative
 - Most Recent 3 weeks
- Number of Influenza Positive Tests
- A (H1)
 - A (Unable to Subtype)
 - A (H3)
 - A (H1N1)pdm09
 - A (Subtyping not Performed)
 - B (Lineage Unspecified)
 - H3N2v
 - B (Victoria Lineage)
 - B (Yamagata Lineage)
 - A (H5)
 - No Data/Small Data Sample

<http://gis.cdc.gov/grasp/fluview/fluportaldashboard.html> accessed

National Influenza Activity

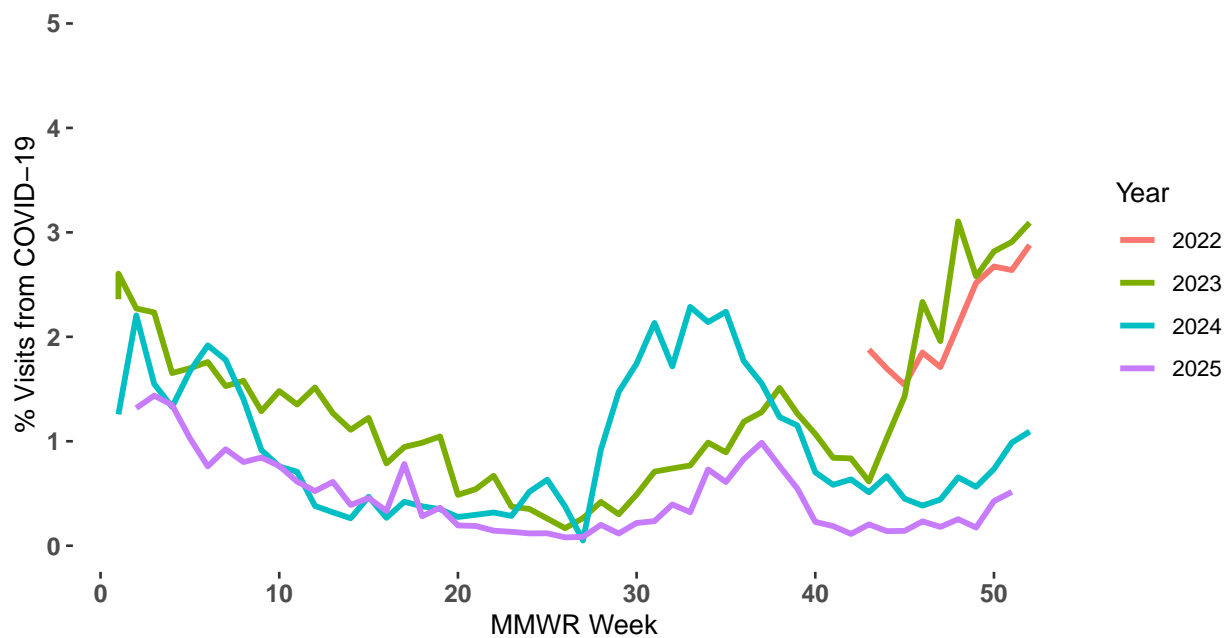
Outpatient Respiratory Illness Activity Map, CDC FluView



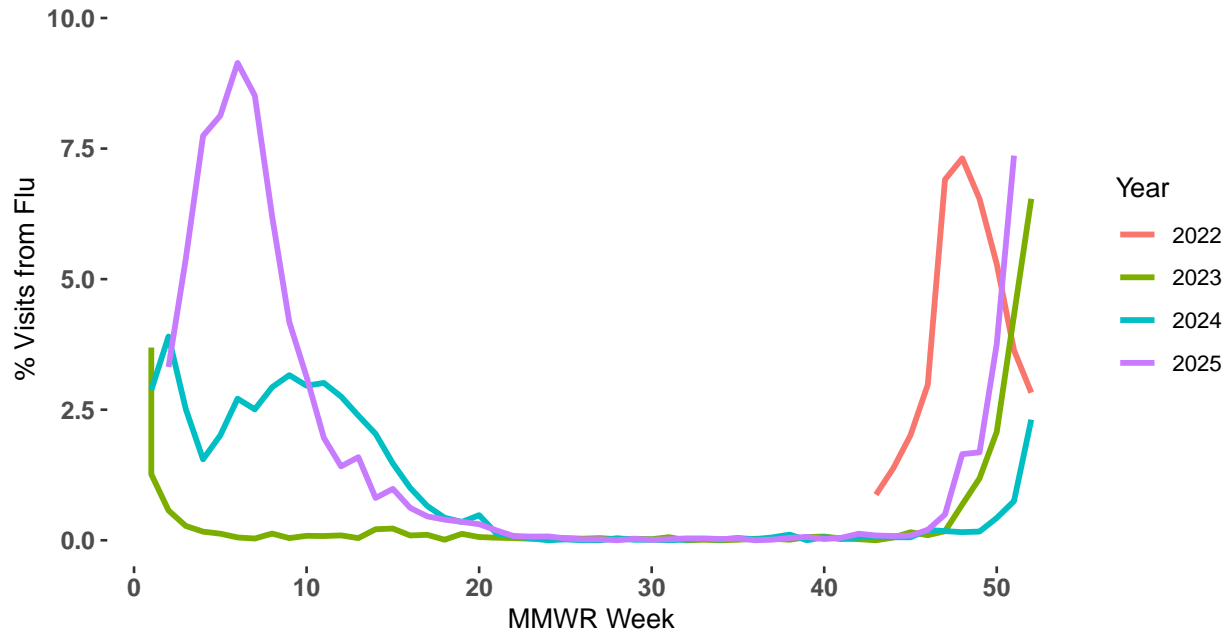
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm#MS2> accessed

Respiratory Illness Emergency Department Visits in Milwaukee County

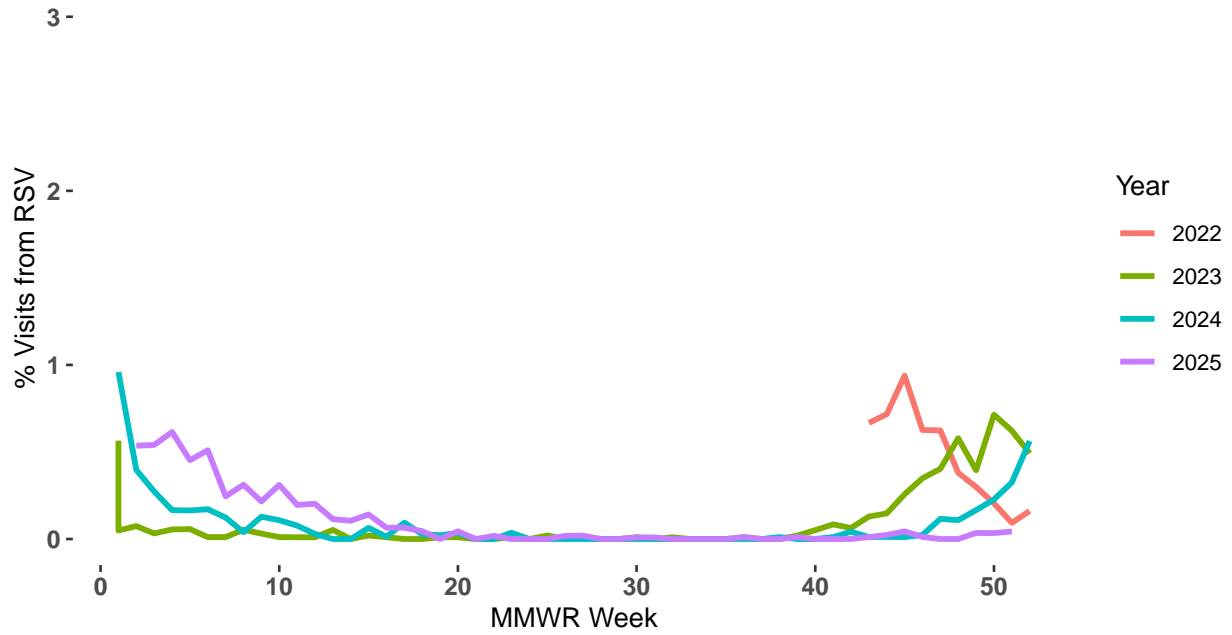
Emergency Room Visits Due to COVID-19



Emergency Room Visits Due to Flu



Emergency Room Visits Due to RSV



Respiratory Illness Immunization Rates of Milwaukee County Residents, 2025-2026 Season

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Immunization Program has dashboards for statewide and county specific immunization rates for influenza vaccinations, COVID-19 vaccinations, and both infant and adult RSV vaccinations. Each immunization dashboard contains demographic data for people receiving vaccines.

To access these dashboards:

- COVID-19: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/covid-19-vaccine-data.htm>
- Influenza: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/influenza.htm>
- RSV: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/rsv-vaccine-data.htm>

COVID-19 and RSV dashboards are updated weekly year-round and the influenza dashboard is updated weekly during the flu season.

Influenza Vaccine Composition 2025-2026 Influenza Season

All standard-dose flu shots will be a trivalent formulation. The trivalent vaccines for use in the 2025-2026 influenza season contain the following:

Egg-based vaccines

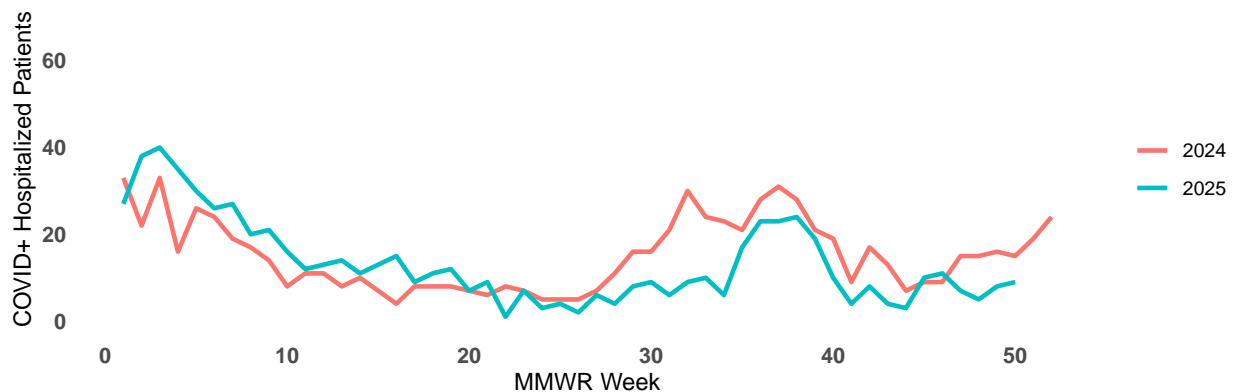
- an A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Croatia/10136RV/2023 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- a B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus

Cell- or recombinant-based vaccines

- an A/Wisconsin/67/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/District of Columbia/27/2023 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- a B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus

COVID-19 Activity

Hospitalized Patients that are COVID-19 Positive Timeline, Milwaukee County

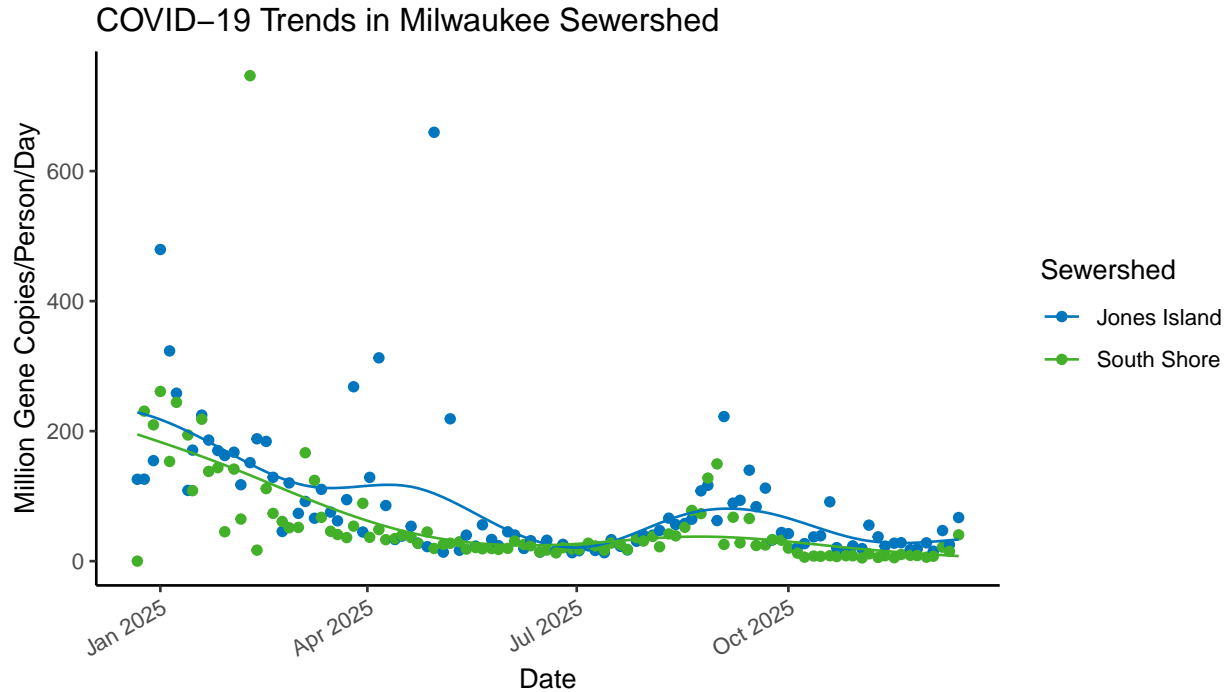


Data Source: WEDSS
Last Update: 2025-12-13

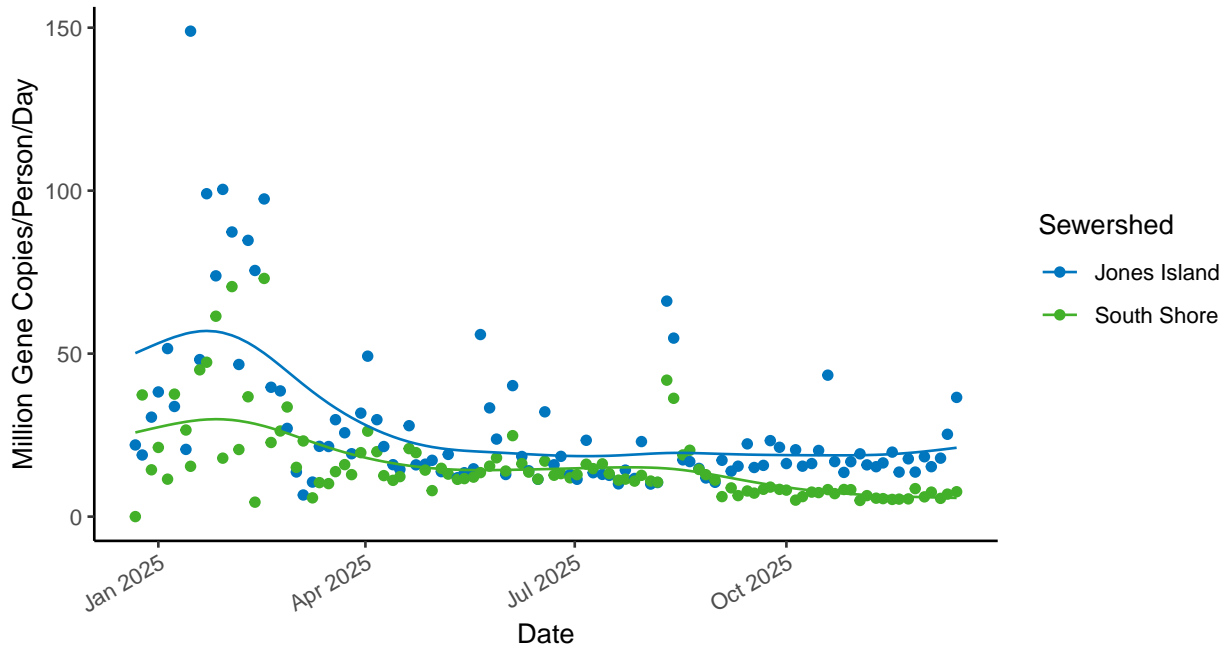
Wastewater Disease Surveillance - Respiratory Illnesses

Wastewater disease surveillance is a powerful tool that detects illness before people start to show symptoms. MHD Laboratory does routine disease surveillance from wastewater samples at Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Districts collection points, Jones Island and South Shore. Samples are taken twice weekly at each site. Wastewater disease surveillance can detect a wide variety of illnesses. At MHD, we test for COVID-19, influenza A, influenza B, and RSV respiratory pathogens.

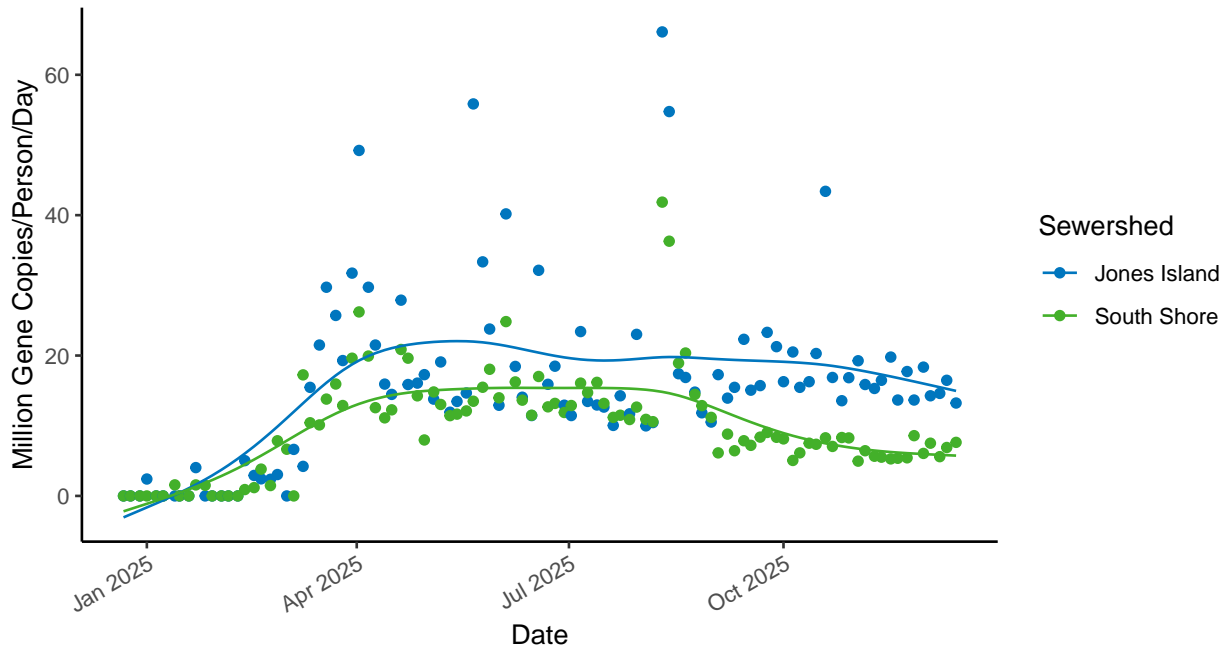
When interpreting wastewater surveillance data, the trend is the most important indicator of disease level in the population. Each of the plots below include a spline that represents the trend of illnesses.

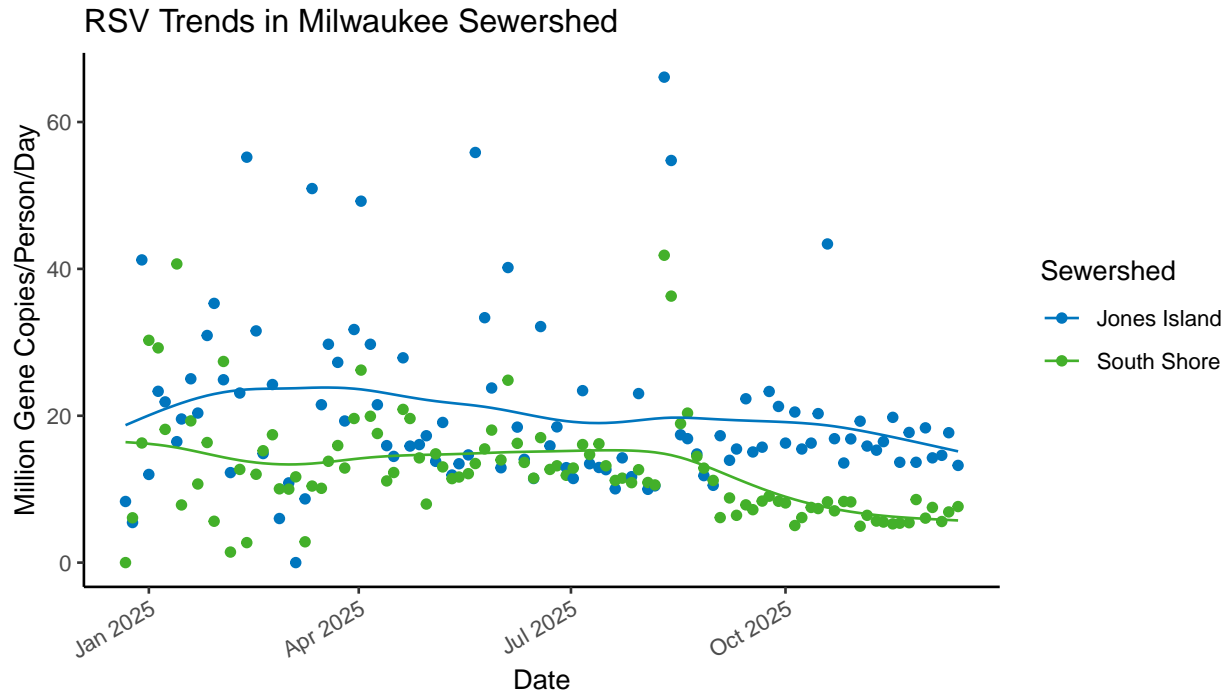


Flu A Trends in Milwaukee Sewershed



Flu B Trends in Milwaukee Sewershed





To see more interactive wastewater surveillance data, visit the MHD respiratory illness dashboard at <https://milwaukee.gov/wastewater>.

Data Source Details

ESSENCE: ESSENCE is a national database that shows Emergency Department (ED) Visits. ED Visits shown in this report include anyone who visits an ED in Milwaukee County, regardless of if they live in the county, who had a Chief Complaint or Discharge Diagnosis with a respiratory illness. The data from this source are great for showing early detection of changes to illness trends, but is not appropriate for determining exact case counts or true disease burden.

WEDSS: WEDSS is the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System where over 100 reportable conditions are stored. WEDSS uses clinical data from healthcare providers and local health departments, including the two clinical diagnoses that are used in this report - Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations and COVID-19-Associated Hospitalizations. When using clinical diagnosis criteria, data are often a few days behind in showing illness trends in the community due to the time it takes to make a formal clinical diagnosis.

Laboratory Test Data: The laboratory testing data in this report comes from many different public health laboratories including the Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory and Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provide national data from public health laboratories nationwide. Similar to data from WEDSS, laboratory testing data is often a few days behind in showing illness trends due to the time consuming nature of testing patient specimen.

Wastewater Surveillance Data: Wastewater Disease Surveillance data in this report is generated by the Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory in collaboration with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District.

Have feedback on the Milwaukee Respiratory Illness Report? Send an email with the subject line “User Feedback” to SURVNET@milwaukee.gov.