

Quarterly Issues Programs List

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Stations: KWWK, KDCZ, KROC-FM, KYBA

July 1st, 2023 through September 30th, 2023

SECTION I. Issues

A) Public Health – Minnesota experienced its worst air quality on record in 2023. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency issued 24 air quality alerts for days when the air was polluted enough to be considered either unsafe for everyone or unsafe for vulnerable groups.

B) Mental Health– A new report from the Bowman Family Foundation, a non-profit that works to improve the lives of people with mental health and substance use conditions, shows 57 percent of patients who sought mental health or substance use care didn't receive it in at least one case between January 2019 and April 2022.

C) Legalization of Cannabis – On May 30th, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz signed a bill making recreational marijuana legal in the state. The new law took effect on August 1st.

D) Public Education – The Minnesota Department of Education released statewide test results for 2023 that show more than half of students are struggling.

E) Food Insecurity– Feeding America says, “In Minnesota, 390,000 people are facing hunger - and of them 120,650 are children.”

SECTION II – RESPONSIVE PROGRAMS

MINNESOTA MATTERS, hosted by Scott Peterson, Tasha Redel, Bill Werner, Mark Dorenkamp and Mike Grim is a weekly locally produced public affairs program that discusses matters of importance to Minnesotans. Minnesota Matters runs every Sunday morning on KROC-FM, KWWK, KDCZ, and KYBA from 6:00 a.m. and 6:30 a.m.

July 2nd, 2023 – - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Public Safety, Air Quality, Wild Fires

Leanne Langenberg from the Interagency Fire Center discusses the surge in wildfires in northern Minnesota in June.

Tony Ofsted, Director at the Minnesota Department of Commerce Fraud Bureau, addresses the rise in auto thefts in the state.

July 9th 2023 – - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Public Safety, Civil Rights, Police Violations

The hosts discuss a US Department of Justice report on the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) that found multiple civil rights violations. Findings included excessive use of force, racial discrimination, violations of First Amendment rights, and violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Emily Honner, Minnesota Department of Education joins to discuss “The Summer Meals Program” which offers up to two meals per day to Minnesota students during the summer. She explains eligibility and directs people to the Minnesota Department of Education website to located meal sites near them.

Representative Liz Lee of Saint Paul is interviewed and discusses concerns about the misclassification of ethnic groups in the 2020 Census data, particularly the misclassification of Hmong people as East Asian. Lee explains how these errors can impact public health and policy decisions.

July 16th 2023 – - Issues Discussed: Food Insecurity, Public Education, Public Assistance

Emily Hohner from the Minnesota Department of Education explains the Meals for School Kids program.

The hosts explore the upcoming offerings at the Minnesota State Fair.

July 23rd, 2023 – - Issues Discussed: Mental Health, Public Health, Healthcare Services

Bill Werner, discussed a report by the Bowman Family Foundation on mental healthcare in the United States. Then, Sue Abner Holden - from the Minnesota Chamber of the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI), joined to discuss the challenges in accessing mental health care, including issues related to parity and network adequacy.

Pamela Mink - Director of Health Services Research with the Minnesota Department of Health, discussed a study on the increased use of telehealth services in Minnesota. Telehealth services have seen significant growth in Minnesota, especially for mental and behavioral healthcare. The discussion touched on how telehealth has become a more accessible option, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

July 30th, 2023 – - Issues Discussed: Legalization of Cannabis, Mental Health, Public Health, Addiction

The legalization of marijuana and its potential consequences are discussed during this program. Senator Scott Jensen, Majority Leader Paul Gazelka, and House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler’s thoughts on marijuana legalization are all featured. Then, Lydia Bird from Hazelden Betty Ford joins the program to discuss health and addiction concerns related to legalizing cannabis.

August 6th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Safety, Legalization of Cannabis, Public Health

This episode starts by addressing the recent fatal shooting of a black man, 33-year-old Rick Cobb, by a state trooper during a traffic stop on I-94 in north Minneapolis. The hosts discuss the preliminary investigation and the circumstances leading up to the shooting. Hamline University Professor David Schultz, provides insights into when officers are allowed to use deadly force under Minnesota law.

The program also covers the legalization of cannabis in Minnesota for adults aged 21 and older. Senator Lindsay Port discusses the significance of this change and the expungement of records for those with prior nonviolent marijuana offenses, new cannabis laws, responsible use, and the importance of keeping cannabis out of the hands of young people.

August 13th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Health

A University of Minnesota study on racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 vaccination rates is highlighted on this program. The disparities in time to vaccination are also discussed, emphasizing the advantage of Minnesota's white population.

The hosts also talk about a proposed federal rule that would allow retailers in Minnesota to sell E15 gasoline year-round. The benefits of E15, as well as the challenges in getting it approved, are mentioned.

August 20th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Health, Food Insecurity

The program starts with an update from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Health about the impact of Canadian wildfire smoke on Minnesota's air quality. The Air Quality Index (AQI) is explained as are the concerns for sensitive groups like children, the elderly, and people with respiratory or heart conditions.

Second Harvest Heartland CEO, Allison O'Toole, joins to discuss the increasing need for food assistance in Minnesota. She says, food shelves are struggling to keep up with the rising demand, highlighting the importance of a strong farm bill and increased funding for nutrition programs.

August 27th, 2023 - Issues Discussed: Public Education, Public Safety, Public Health

The Minnesota Education Department released statewide test results for 2023, revealing that over half of the tested students are not reading at grade level. In math, about 55% did not meet grade level standards, and 61% fell short in science. The hosts discuss the report and talk about how local leaders want to address the lower scores. Republicans are advocating for a focus on academics and Democrats are emphasizing investments in mental health and other programs.

The Moorhead Police Department announced it was pulling its resource officers from schools due to a new law restricting law enforcement's use of certain techniques on students during altercations at school. The hosts talk about that decision and the statewide debate over the law's impact on student safety.

This program also reports on Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison's public hearings to address problems with medical billing and healthcare access in the state. Reports of aggressive hospital billing, unfair collection practices, and denial of care have prompted the investigation.

September 3rd, 2023: Public Education, Public Safety, Legalization of Cannabis

School Resource Officers are the first subject covered in this program. There's a debate about the role of SROs in schools after a recent change in the law. The law has made it unclear when SROs are allowed to use force, which has led some police departments to withdraw their on-site officers from schools. Some argue that this change may affect school safety.

The hosts also talk about a new program offered at St. Cloud State University. The university is launching a program to educate individuals about the cannabis industry. The program includes courses in cannabis

business, healthcare and medicine, compliance and risk management, and agriculture and horticulture. It is designed to provide opportunities for those interested in various aspects of the cannabis industry.

September 10th, 2023: Public Education, Public Health

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison is featured on this program and discusses the investigation of 52 student loan debt relief companies suspected of scamming students. These companies promise loan forgiveness but often charge high fees for services they cannot deliver.

Dr. Matthew Hunt, a University of Minnesota neurosurgeon, is hiking 350-miles to raise funds for brain tumor charities. He talks about his journey and the importance of supporting patients with brain tumors on this episode.

September 17th, 2023: Politics, Legalization of Cannabis, Public Safety

On this episode the hosts discuss the legal efforts being made to prevent former President Donald Trump from appearing on Minnesota's presidential ballot in 2024. The program explains the lawsuit is based on Trump's alleged role in the January 6th insurrection at the US Capitol.

Then the program talks about Minnesota's plans to regulate the cannabis industry and the process of appointing the first director of the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management.

And finally, the hosts share information about Rail Safety Week in Minnesota and the importance of educating the public about railway safety to prevent accidents.