Williamson County Ranks as One of Texas’ Healthiest Counties

For the third year in a row, Williamson County ranks as one of the healthiest counties in Texas. The 2012 County Health Rankings listed Williamson County as the second healthiest place to live among 221 Texas counties. The Rankings also listed Williamson as having the fourth lowest number of premature deaths among county residents and fifth in the measurement of common diseases and illness within the counties’ border.

The rankings are produced by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The annual report analyzes the health of every county across the United States. The rankings cover health outcomes, mortality, and morbidity as well as factors influencing health such as smoking, exercise, and access to quality care. The report compares these measures among counties in each state. Williamson earned the number two spot this year. Williamson County & Cities Health District Executive Director, Dr. Chip Riggins says, “We look forward to this report every year because it highlights the efforts of our community health improvement coalition, the WILCO Wellness Alliance. The partners and agencies here all have a remarkable commitment to keeping our communities healthy. Some of the specifics within the rankings show that we are on the right track and focused on the right health issues.” Riggins added: “These folks have never been afraid to ask: where are we and what can we do better or differently?”

The Williamson County and Cities Health District consistently uses data to guide its prevention efforts. Since last year’s rankings, a Health Data users group has been formed which focuses on improving and sharing the most current and locally specific data available. In March, the health district, on behalf of the coalition, applied for and received a $500,000 ‘Transforming Texas’ Grant to expand efforts in the areas of tobacco prevention, physical activity and nutrition, and the clinical prevention of Type II Diabetes. “I think what the County Health Ranking really reflects is the importance of health data and a collaborative process to access and proactively improve health outcomes…especially in a rapidly growing community like ours.”

The rankings are available online at www.countyhealthrankings.org/texas/williamson. For more information about Williamson County health statistics or WCCHD services, visit your public health department website at www.wcchd.org.