

INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Community Health Council is to determine the health needs of the community and develop a plan of action for improving the health status of people in Decatur County, Tennessee.

COUNTY DESCRIPTION

Land Area

Decatur County, with an area of 345 square miles, is located on the eastern plateau of southwestern Tennessee on the Tennessee River. The river runs the entire length of the county south to north with close to 50 miles of shoreline.

Decaturville, the county seat, is located on state highways 69 and 100. Parsons is located at the junction of highways 69 and 412. The Alvin C. York bridge connects Decatur and Perry Counties. A new bridge is under construction in the southern part of the county.

The Decatur County School System serves 1,850 students with 135 certified personnel. Religious life is important in the community. God is worshipped in over 50 churches throughout the county.

Economic Base

Tourism and recreation are important industries in the community. Decatur County is known as the *Outdoor Capital of the South*. Much of the land is hardwood forest. Abundant wildlife includes deer, turkey, ducks, geese and raccoon. Eagles are also sited often in the county. The Tennessee River offers access to fishing, boating, water skiing, camping, swimming and jet skiing. Popular annual events include the World's Largest Coon Hunt for St. Jude, Gumdale Boat Races, October Heritage Festival and the Richard Crawley Memorial Trail Ride.

The Tennessee River is also the focus of important commercial activities. The commercial port facilities at Perryville load timber, coke, fertilizer and asphalt. The channel depth ranges from 35 to 55 feet with a depth of 12 to 14 feet at the dock sites.

High quality white sand for use in glass, golf courses and beaches is also abundant. Ball clay for the ceramic industry is found in abundance as are gravel and cert. Agricultural crops include corn, cotton, milo, okra, peppers, soybeans, squash, and wheat. Cotton and soybeans are the leading crops. Primary employers in the community include Kolpak (commercial refrigeration equipment), Eaton Technologies (electric motors and starters), and American Health Center (nursing homes).