



Health Department

Empowered to Live Well

August 6, 2020

Dear Residents of South Milwaukee and St. Francis,

The Health Department has received a number of inquiries from residents concerned about the data used to determine Burden of Coronavirus Disease in our community.

Currently, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, has identified activity level in communities using burden status which combines Burden Rate and Percent Positive Cases over a rolling two week period. This data is available at a county level at the State Department of Health Website <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>. Also located at this site are the definitions of burden status of high, moderately high, moderate, and low. Noting high is a case rate of greater than 100.

The local municipal health departments recognized that county level data is important but data for each municipality is important to have to make informed decisions. All local health departments are working in coordination through the Milwaukee County Unified Emergency Operations Center (UEOC). Through the UEOC, we were able to work with the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) to set up an Epidemiology Team to look at local data in Milwaukee County. This Epi. Team has calculated the burden rate for each municipality. The burden rate is calculated as the total number of laboratory confirmed cases over a 14 day period by population and then multiplied by 100,000 in an effort to compare equally with other municipalities.

This team also looks at the percent of positive cases of those tested that offers a trajectory to demonstrate if we are growing, shrinking, or no significant change. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that schools consider the percent positive of those tested in the community when determining what type of learning environment is better for decreasing community transmission. The CDC considers that if percent positive is at 5% or lower that would best for consideration of in person learning..

These two factors combined will determine the activity level/ burden of disease in our community.

The school districts are meeting with the health department on a weekly basis to receive updates as to the burden of disease in the communities among other topics.

The following questions have been received by many:

1. **How is the burden rate calculated?** As stated above the burden rate is calculated as the total number of cases over a 14 day period divided by population and then multiplied by 100,000 in an effort to compare equally with other municipalities.
2. **Does the burden rate only include the City of South Milwaukee or the City of Saint Francis?** Yes
3. **What is the definition of positive cases?** The positive cases used for calculating percent positive is the number of laboratory confirmed positive cases of those tested.



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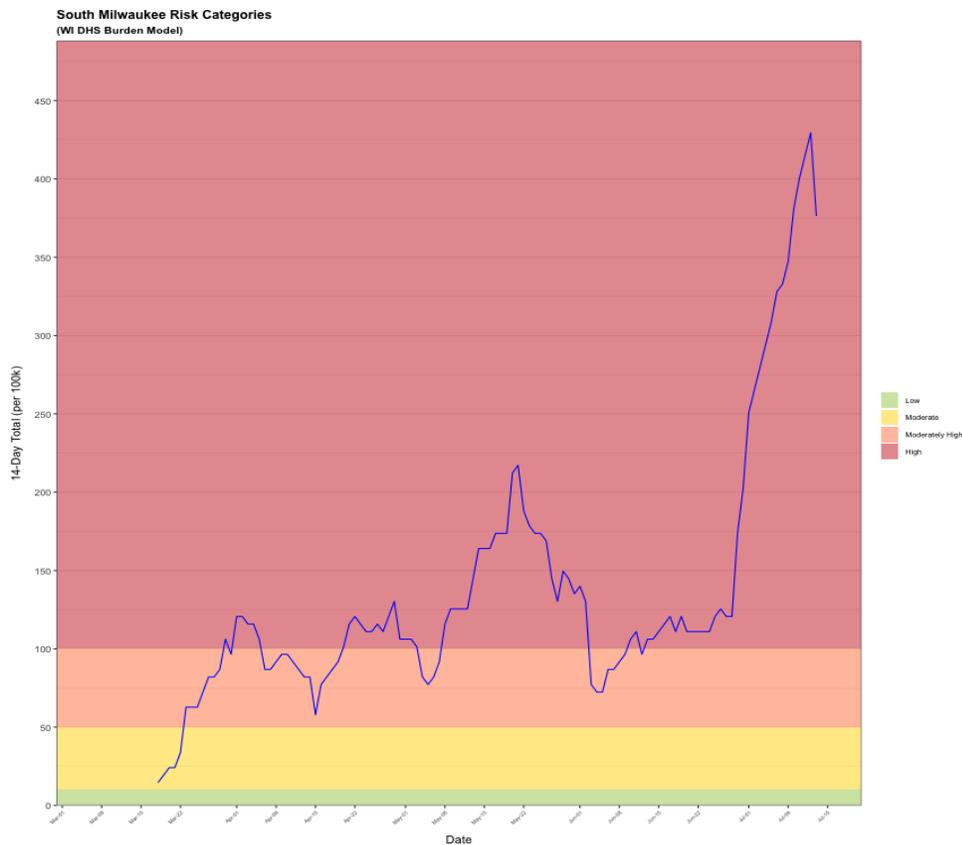
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For the data given to the school districts for recent school board discussions, the data used is for the time period that has the most complete information as there is a time delay in receipt of test results. Here is how the data was calculated.

South Milwaukee

Burden of Disease calculated for the time period of 07/04/2020-07/18/2020

Number of 78 (positive cases) / 20,725 (population) X 100,000 = 376



Percent positive

July 15-28	Total Tests	% Positive
South Milwaukee	957	10%
July 9-22	Total Tests	% Positive
South Milwaukee	931	11%

This shows no significant change in our percent positive.



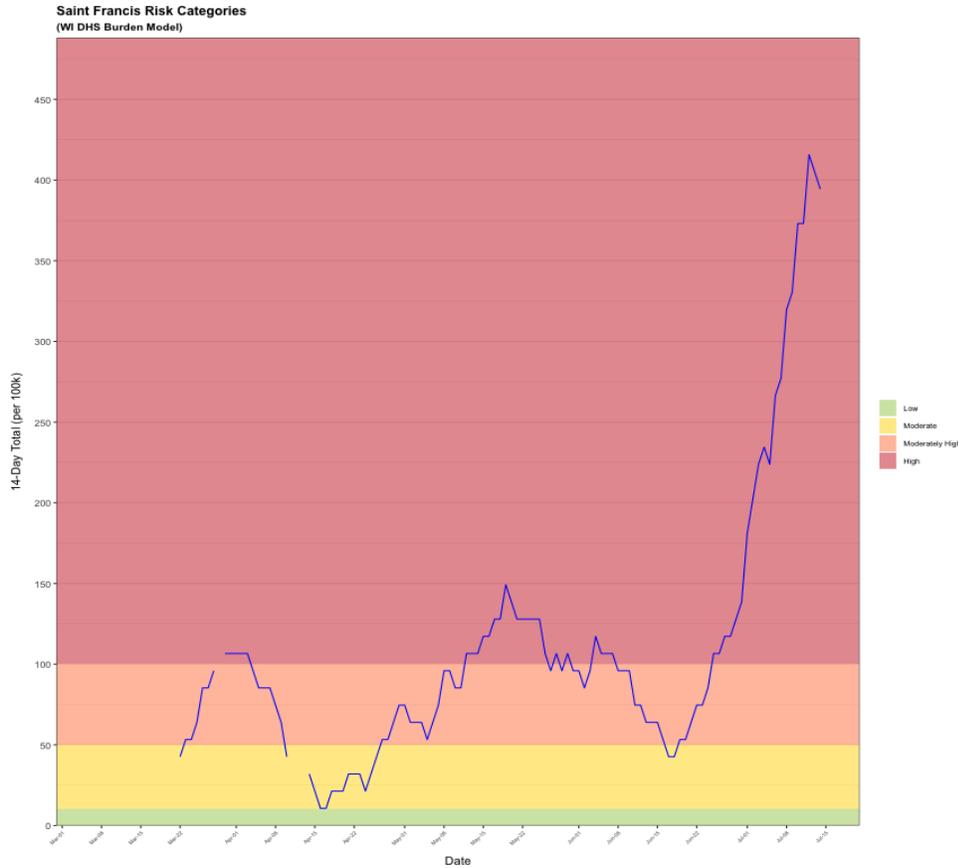
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Saint Francis

Burden of Disease calculated for the time period of 07/04/2020-07/18/2020

Number of 36 (positive cases)/ 9,381 (population) X 100,000 = 384



Percent Positive

July 15-28	Total Tests	% Positive
Saint Francis	517	7%

July 9-22	Total Tests	% Positive
Saint Francis	517	8%

This shows no significant change in our percent positive

Sincerely,
Jackie Ove, Public Health Administrator