



# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



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## UNL Extension Is Seeking Responses To Crofton Community Survey

BY MARK MAHONEY  
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CROFTON, Neb. — Like every community, Crofton, Nebraska, has its own culture, economy and strengths.

Building on these is key to boosting future prosperity, so instead of starting from scratch, economic vitality grows best when it highlights what makes a town special and shares those traits with others.

That's why Knox County Economic Development and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension's community development division, Rural Prosperity Nebraska, are asking for Crofton-area residents to give their input and help shape the city's future by filling out a 2026 community survey either online or on paper.

"This information is important when the community applies for grants or other funding to improve the quality of life," according to a Jan. 12 post on the Crofton Community Club's Facebook page. "Crofton is working to collaboratively create a plan to enhance the community. We believe we can achieve the best future for the community working together as one using the Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process."

Rural Prosperity Nebraska's Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process helps communities support innovation and entrepreneurship by understanding their unique characteristics, community assets and potential opportunities, as well as empowers community members to lead the way in shaping their economic future.

"Our first step in this planning process is to gather information from (people) through this survey," according to the Community Club's Facebook post. "We are asking individuals to participate in the survey who live in or near Crofton or who work in, shop or frequent Crofton. Your input is important and valued."

The survey asks participants questions that include rating Crofton's community amenities and which ones they would like to see added or improved, rating the priority level of potential community projects and rating the priority level of Crofton's

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JAY GRAVHOLT/P&D

Yankton County State's Attorney Tyler Larsen said overall cases handled by the office dipped in 2025, but drugs continue to be a problem for the county. "We very rarely have a case come in where (drugs or alcohol are) not involved," he said.

## SA: Drugs Remain Big Issue For Yankton Co.

BY JAY GRAVHOLT  
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As reported earlier this week, Yankton County saw a decrease in crime of just about every category during 2025. Both the Yankton Police Department and Yankton County Sheriff's Office had fewer calls for service last year compared to 2024.

The Yankton County State's Attorney's Office saw a small dip in their cases, as well, but State's Attorney Tyler Larsen said the focus remains on drugs and keeping the county safe.

"The volume of cases each year does seem to usually increase," he told the *Press & Dakotan*. "There was a little downturn this

year; however, I still think the severity of those crimes are still keeping it to a level that keeps us very busy."

Larsen said his office prosecuted 353 felonies and 1,126 class I or II misdemeanors last year.

"I think drugs are the leading factor to a lot of crime — drugs and alcohol," he said. "We very rarely have a case come in where one of those is not involved. We're still going to be tough on drug crime. Driving under the influence is still a very serious concern when it comes to public safety. You can't have people operating motor vehicles

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## A New Round Of Influenza Looming, Officials Warn

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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While the first wave of influenza has apparently subsided, area health professionals are now warning of a second peak likely to arrive in late January or February.

Recent figures indicate a possible uptick in cases, according to Elizabeth Healy, the infection preventionist at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (ASHH) in Yankton.

"Yankton County has remained relatively low for influenza numbers," she said. "But since influenza continues to rise and has not peaked, healthcare providers know our influx of patients and cases may still be coming."

The number of flu-related hospitalizations has increased in recent days, Healy said.

"Avera Sacred Heart Hospital saw a cluster of hospitalizations early in the fall, and now, we're seeing more hospitalizations as well," she said.

The Yankton region has reflected national reports of a mutated strain of influenza A (H3N2) this year, Healy said.

"Mutations are very normal for influenza, as it's notorious for throwing curveballs," she said.



Healy

"But this year's changes were more substantial than usual — not enough to spark a pandemic, but enough to fuel a severe season. The timing of this mutation was also terrible, as it was after the flu vaccine formula was finalized in February (2025)."

### AREA CASES

In Hutchinson County, the Parkston area may be experiencing a rise in flu cases, according to Lindsay Weber, president and CEO of Avera St. Benedict Health Center.

She cited a recent finding for her hospital.

"Our testing positivity rate was 12%, and we have had one hospitalization," she said. "However, we are hearing reports around the community of progressing illness, and we do anticipate more cases in the next week."

Hutchinson County currently shows slightly fewer vaccinations this season compared to last year, according to South

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COURTESY PHOTO  
Emma Horn, development and outreach director for ZoeCare Pregnancy Center of Yankton, helps administrate the "Go for the Gold" relationship program in area schools

## ZoeCare's 'Go For The Gold' Program Seeks To Foster Healthy Relationships

BY RANDY TRAMP  
P&D Correspondent

"Go for the Gold" is a healthy relationship training for youth that ZoeCare teaches in local high school classrooms.

ZoeCare currently works with Yankton, Gayville-Volin, and Vermillion High Schools; however, they are looking to expand to other schools as well.

"Go for the Gold's" motto is, "You are infinitely valuable. You are worthy of a healthy relationship."

"Have you ever had a flopped romantic relationship? What about a relationship gone wrong? All of us have our stories of less-than-perfect relationships. ZoeCare is invested in equipping students to face these same struggles in relationships," said Emma

Horn, development and outreach director for ZoeCare Pregnancy Center.

"We believe it is important for high school students to work through past relational mistakes and find future healthy relationships where they are valued and respected. Teaching 'Go for the Gold' to high school students empowers them with relational skills that are valuable in all their relationships, and especially those most intimate relationships."

Curriculum topics include: Setting SMART goals, the dating process, characteristics to look for in a partner, boundaries, grooming, warning signs of unhealthy relationships, teen dating violence and abuse, the effects of outside influences (i.e., alcohol, sexting, porn

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