

Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment 2006



MISSION

We exist to serve all citizens in the prevention of disease and injury through protection, promotion, and delivery of quality, cost-effective services for community, personal, and environmental health.

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Table of Contents

I.	Community Assessment Team and Assessment Process.....	3
II.	A Picture of Edgecombe County.....	4
	a. Geographic Information	
	b. Historical Information	
	c. Demographic Information	
	d. Social, Economic, and Political Information	
III.	Health Information.....	11
IV.	Community Concerns/Priorities.....	19

Appendices

- Appendix A: Advisory Group & Work Group
- Appendix B: Area Medical Directory
- Appendix C: Dentist Accepting Medicaid
- Appendix D: Edgecombe-Nash Mental Health Resource Guide
- Appendix E: Early Care & Education Resources
- Appendix F: Community Health Assessment Survey
- Appendix G: Key Informant Survey
- Appendix H: Community Health Assessment Results
- Appendix I: Key Informant Survey Results
- Appendix J: Rating/Prioritization Worksheets



I. The Community Assessment Team and Assessment Process

The Edgecombe County Health Department took the lead role in the community health assessment process. An advisory group of 20 was formed with a variety of community members and leaders. From the advisory group, a work group of 12 was formed, including the Edgecombe County Health Department Health Education Team.

The survey tool used was a modified version of the “Compass Survey” used by the United Way in Cleveland County, North Carolina. The Edgecombe County Community Survey was distributed throughout the county by means of the work group. The community survey included questions about the economy, education, environment, health, housing, leisure, safety, social issues, and transportation. In addition to the community survey, a Key Informant Survey was mailed out to local business owners/leaders, agency directors, board of health members, county commissioners, town officials, health care providers, leaders from county departments, churches, civic groups, law enforcement, and fire and rescue.

The Epi Info Program was used to analyze the survey results. Major issues were identified as 50% or higher from the community and key informant surveys. Secondary data was analyzed, and major issues were identified as well. A total of fifteen issues were identified for the prioritization process. The advisory group met and used a rating/prioritization worksheet to identify the top priorities for Edgecombe County. The criteria used for selecting health priorities were as follows: Magnitude of the Problem; Seriousness of the Consequences; and Feasibility of Correcting. The advisory group came to a consensus, and four major issues were selected as the top priorities.

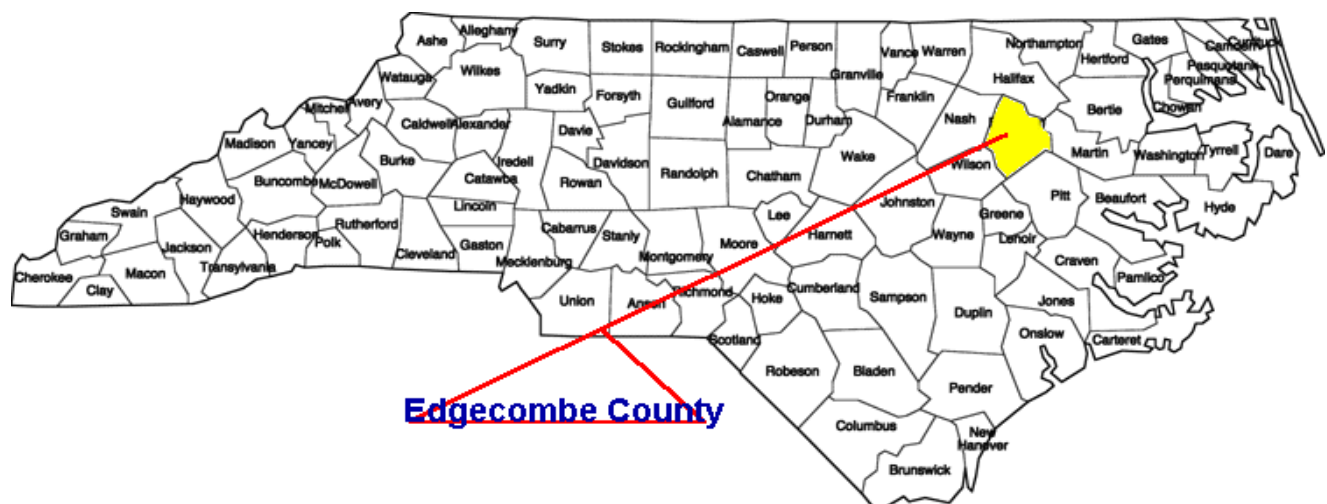
The Edgecombe County Health Department works with a variety of agencies and communities within the county. Through the community health assessment process we have expanded and strengthened our relationships. The advisory group and work group will continue to meet and work on the action plan. Our intentions are to reestablish our Healthy Carolinians group through this process.



II. A Picture of Edgecombe County

a. Geographic Information

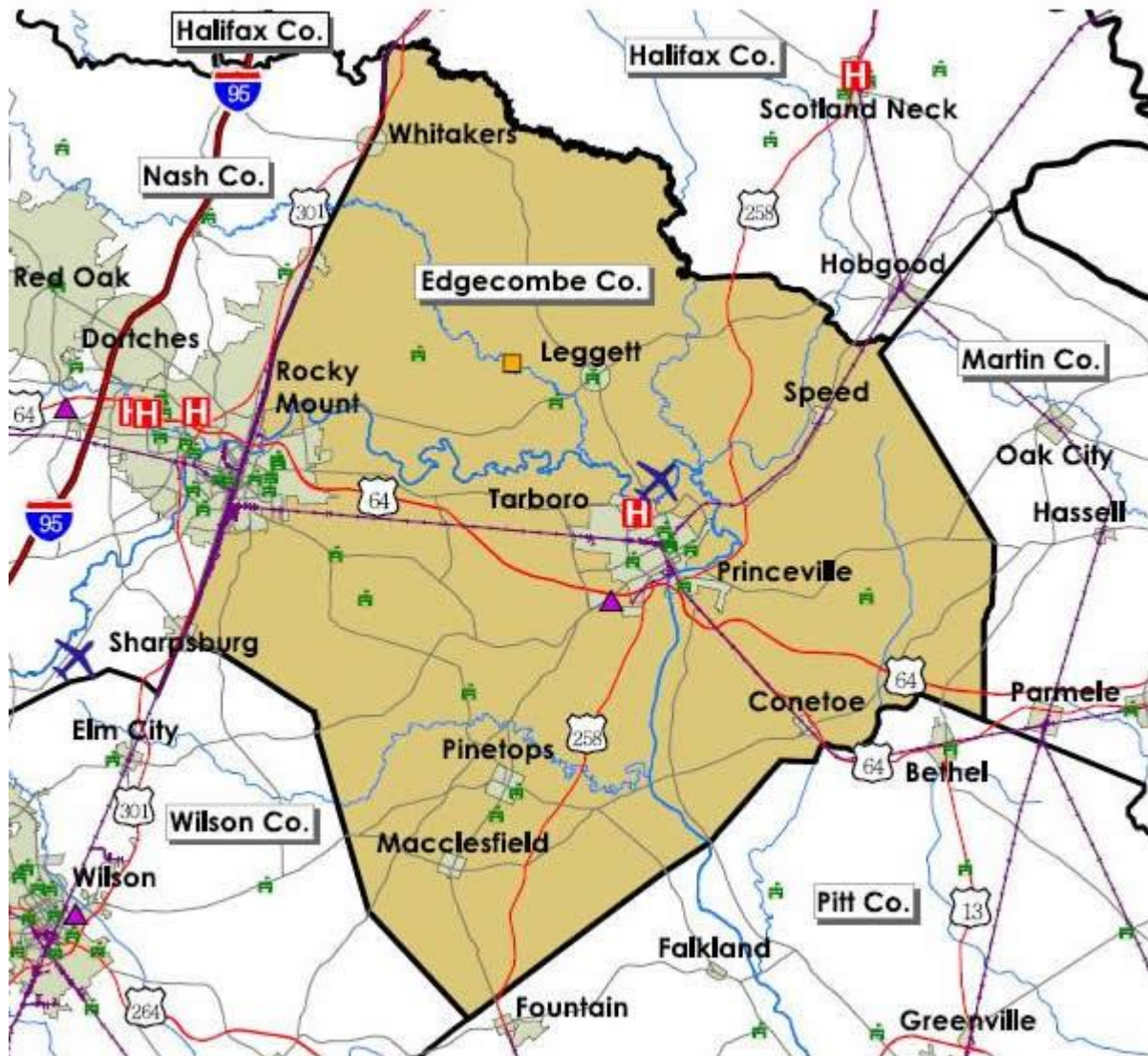
Edgecombe County is in the eastern section of the state. It is bordered by Halifax County on the north, Nash County on the west, Wilson County on the southwest, Pitt County on the southeast and Martin County on the east. Only 65 miles from the state capitol of Raleigh, the county is strategically in the center of a rapidly growing region along the main corridor between the Piedmont and the Outer Banks, and is only 25 miles from I-95.



- **Town of Tarboro** is the county seat of Edgecombe County and is considered one of the oldest towns in the state. It is located in the center of the county and is the home of the main office of the Edgecombe County Health Department and the only hospital in the county, Heritage Hospital, as well as three medical clinics, Tarboro Clinic, Tarboro Women’s Center, and Freedom Hill Clinic.
- **The City of Rocky Mount**, the 12th largest metropolitan area in the state, is situated in the heart of I-95 and the US 64 corridors, which is geographically centered between New York and Florida. A branch office of the Edgecombe County Health Department is located on Atlantic Avenue. Oakwood Medical Center is also located in Rocky Mount.
- **Macclesfield** is located 3 miles west of NC 124, which intersects US 258 about 12 miles south of Tarboro. Medical services are provided by Macclesfield Health Care Center, which is affiliated with Heritage Hospital in Tarboro.
- **Pinetops** is located in the southern area of Edgecombe County, 17 miles from Rocky Mount and Wilson, 11 miles from Tarboro. The Town has its own police department, volunteer fire department and emergency services by the Pinetops Rescue Squad.
- **Princeville** was incorporated on February 20, 1885 and is the oldest city chartered by Blacks in America. It is located across the Tar River, south of Tarboro.
- **Conetoe** is located 8 miles east of Tarboro. The Conetoe Volunteer Fire Department answers fire and first responder calls. The Edgecombe County Sheriff’s Department is responsible for crime control and public safety.



Interstates, Highways and Main Roads



- US 64 travels east to west, it connects Edgecombe County on the west to Raleigh and traveling east to the beautiful Outer Banks of North Carolina.
- US 258 runs from north to south through the heart of Edgecombe County.
- NC 43 travels north south to the coastal plains and travels through the Town of Pinetops.
- NC 42 travels east west to the Piedmont/Coastal Plain and travels through the Towns of Conetoe and Pinetops.



b. Historical Information

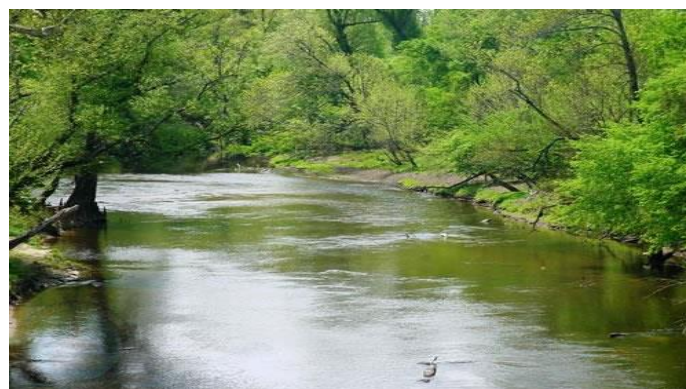
Edgecombe County was formed in 1732 from Bertie County by proclamation of the Governor. The assembly did not confirm its creation until 1741. The county was named for Richard Edgecombe, who became Baron Edgecombe, an English Nobleman. It covers a 505 square mile area, which remains primarily rural. The Town of Tarboro is the County seat. It was incorporated in 1760 and is located on the Tar River. It has a history of a thriving river port throughout the 18th and 19th centuries and Tarboro was once considered as a candidate for North Carolina's capital city.

Twenty-six individual properties including the historic district of Tarboro are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Many are in or near Tarboro, the county seat. They include: The Barracks, Calvary Episcopal Church, Coolman Plantation, Blount-Bridgers House, Oakland Plantation, the Town Common, and the Railroad Depot Complex.



*The Blount-Bridgers House
This home was built in 1808 by General Thomas Blount.*

In 1999, over 49% of Edgecombe County was flooded after Hurricanes Dennis, Floyd and Irene dumped over 30 inches of rain in less than two weeks. The Tar River had crest at 43 feet above flood stage, leaving more than 6,500 (10%) of the total population of the county housed in emergency shelters. Many of the county's roads were impassable. The county was virtually an island as roads were either covered with water or blocked by fallen trees and downed power lines. Hundreds of homes were flooded causing many families to be displaced for months throughout Edgecombe County.

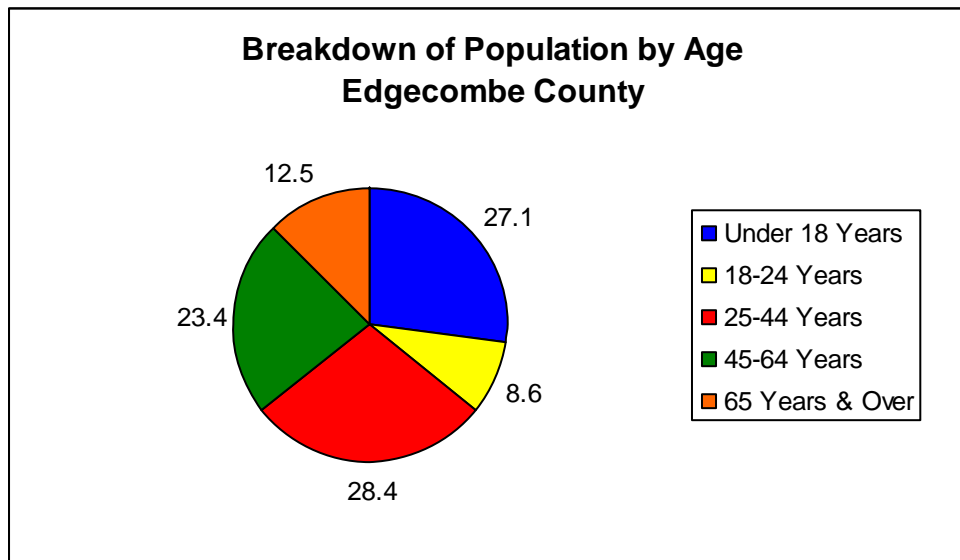


The Tar River at New Boat Dock on Dunbar

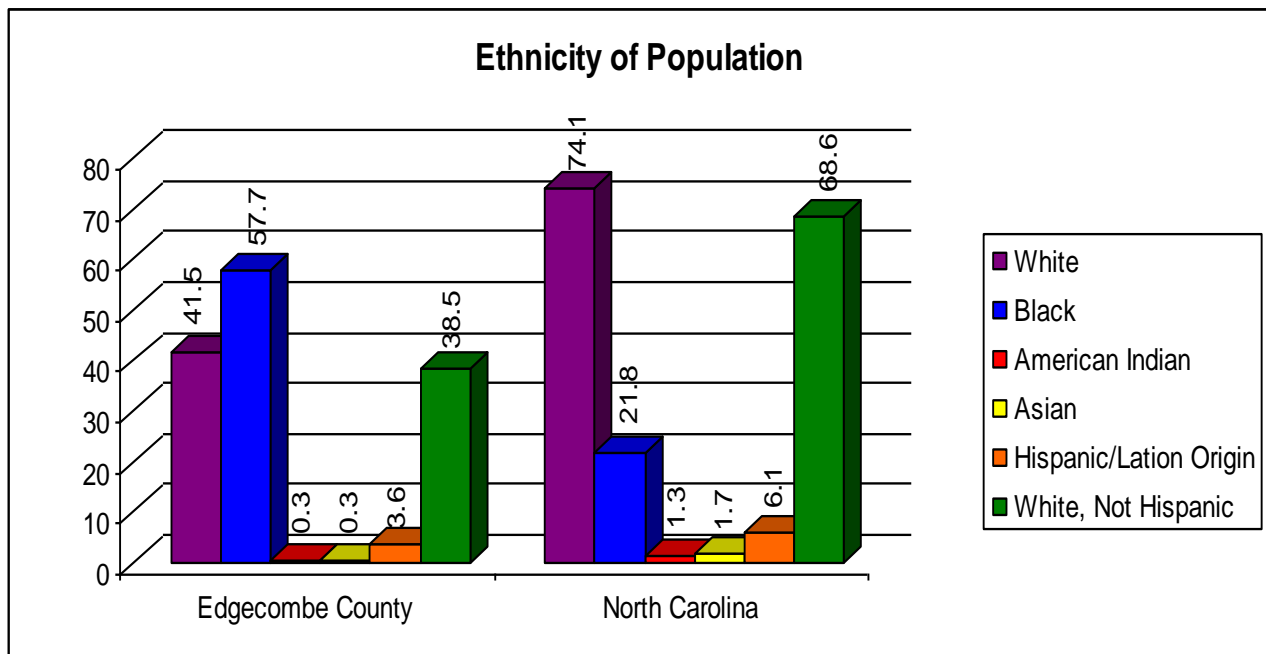


C. Demographic Information

Edgecombe County has a population of 55,606 with a -1.9% population change from 1990 to 2000. There are more females (53.6%) and Blacks (57.7%) within the population. The median age is 36.2. There are 20,392 households with an average size family of 3.16.



Data Set from the US Census 2000 Summary: Age and Sex



US Census Bureau QuickFacts



The county school system consists of 11 elementary, 4 secondary and 1 combined school with approximately 7,495 students enrolled. In 2005 the average SAT score was 902 compared to North Carolina with an average score of 1,010. The dropout rate for grades 9-12 in 2004-2005 was 5.97; North Carolina 4.74.

Edgecombe County Public Schools

Coker-Wimberly Elementary
 G W Bulluck Elementary
 Stocks Elementary
 G W Carver Elementary
 Princeville Montessori
 Roberson Elementary
 W A Pattillo A+ Elementary
 West Edgecombe Middle

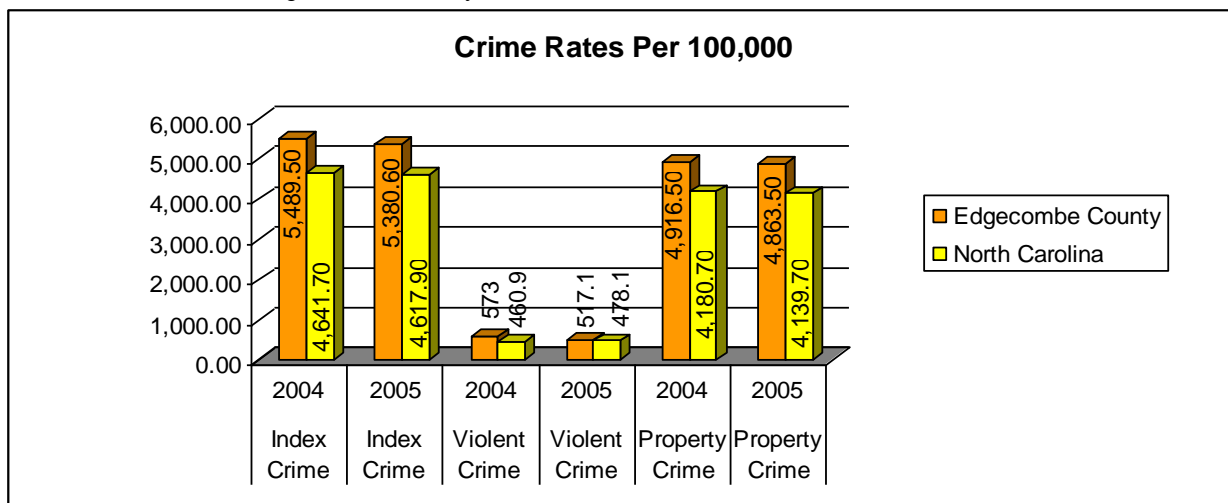
Phillips Middle
 South Edgecombe Middle
 CB Martin Middle
 Center for Ed Achievement
 North Edgecombe High
 Tarboro High
 SouthWest Edgecombe High

d. Social, Economic, and Political Information

1. Daily living conditions:

Edgecombe County offers a mild year 'round climate with four distinct seasons. The average minimum temperature is 49.1 degrees Celsius, and the average maximum temperature is 72 degrees Celsius. The average yearly precipitation is 48.23 inches. The county water supply is provided by the Town of Tarboro and City of Rocky Mount. Many residents have wells for water and septic tanks for sewage. Water quality is monitored by Environmental Health Specialist's and other county officials.

The Edgecombe County Sheriff's Department is the lead law enforcement agency in the county. From 2004 to 2005 there was a decrease in the crime rates. The following graph demonstrates the Index Crime Rate, Violent Crime Rate, and Property Crime Rate comparing Edgecombe County and North Carolina in 2005. Although Rocky Mount is located in both Edgecombe and Nash Counties, offenses committed in Rocky Mount are counted in Edgecombe county totals.



North Carolina Department of Justice, State Bureau of Investigation

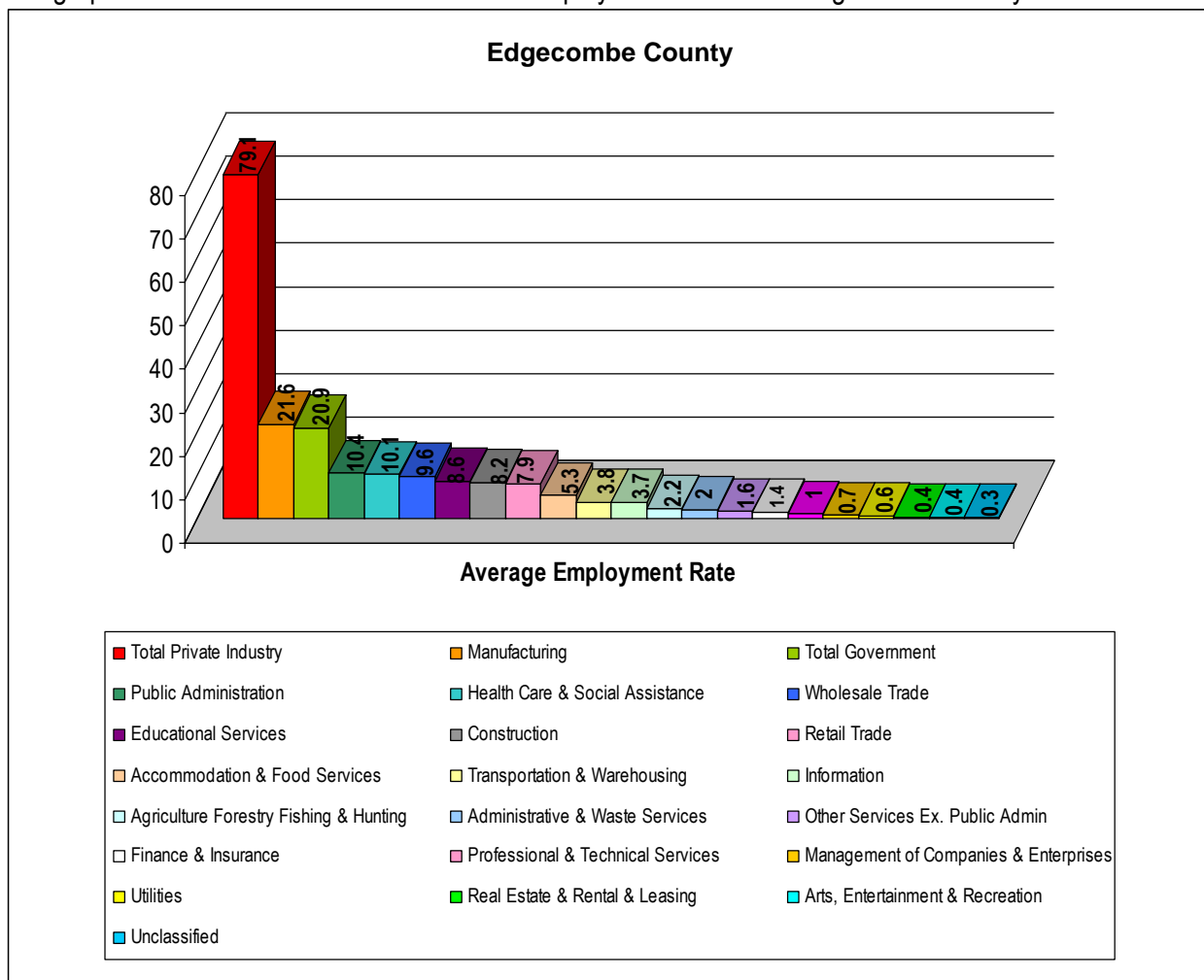


2. Sources of Economy



The county maintains a firm agricultural base while supporting the addition of environmentally friendly industries. The top manufacturers in 2005 were Sara Lee Corp, Carolina System Technology Inc., Air System Components LP, Barcalounger, General Foam Plastics Corp., Superior Essex Communications LLC, Glenoit LLC, TYCO Plastics, Long Agribusiness LLC, and Mayo Knitting Mill Inc. The top non-manufacturing employers were City of Rocky Mount, Barnhill Contracting Co., QVC Rocky Mount Inc., Edgecombe County Schools, Edgecombe County, McLane Mid-Atlantic Inc., East Carolina Health Inc., Nash-Rocky Mount Schools, US Postal Service, and Sprint Mid-Atlantic Telecom, Inc.

The graph below demonstrates the sources of employment in 2005 for Edgecombe County.



North Carolina Department of Commerce



Edgecombe County's unemployment rate as of December 2005 was 8.1, North Carolina 4.7. The Per Capita Income in 2003 was \$22,328 compared to North Carolina with a Per Capita Income of \$28,071. The percent of residents living in poverty in 2000 was 19.6 compared to 12.3 for North Carolina.

Income & Poverty	Edgecombe County	North Carolina
2003 Per Capita Income	\$22,328	\$28,071
2000 Residents in Poverty	19.6%	12.3%
2003 Children in Poverty	29.4%	19.1%

3. Political Information

In the last two presidential elections, Edgecombe County voted Democratic. According to 2004 unofficial votes, Kerry received 12,478 votes and Bush received 7,990 votes. The November 2000 race showed that Edgecombe County strongly supported Al Gore with 11,315 votes; Bush received 6,836 votes. The 2000 Census reported that Edgecombe County had the following numbers of potential voters: Total: 39,801, Female 22,215 (55.8%), and Male 17,586 (44.2%).

The Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners (consisting of 7 members) is the Governing Body for implementing policies, rules and ordinances for Edgecombe County citizens and employees. In 1996 the General Assembly enacted District representation for the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners transitioning from an at large election process. Regular meetings are held on the first Monday of every month.

Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners

Charlie Harrell, Chairperson

District 4

Leonard Wiggins, Vice Chairperson

District 3

Calvin Anderson

District 1

Jonathan Felton

District 5

Viola Harris

District 2

Thomas Cherry

District 6

Wayne Hines

District 7

Lorenzo Carmon

County Manager

4. Local Group Affiliations

Edgecombe County has a number of group affiliations within the region. The local telephone book is the best resource for identifying groups in the area.

5. Other Existing Resources

See appendix



III. Health Information

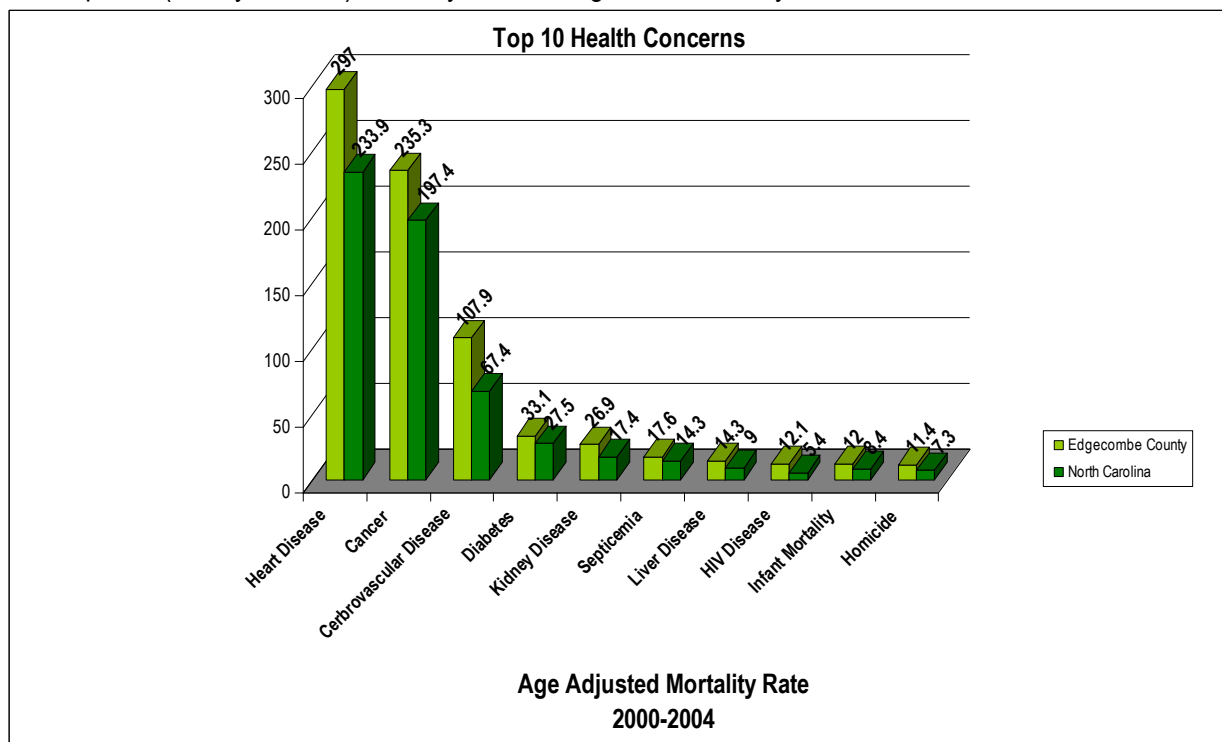
Health data compiled by Community and Key Informant surveys, and the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics was reviewed. The Top 10 Health Concerns for Edgecombe County are as follows:

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Cerebrovascular Disease
4. Diabetes
5. Kidney Disease
6. Septicemia
7. Liver Disease
8. HIV Disease
9. Infant Mortality
10. Homicide

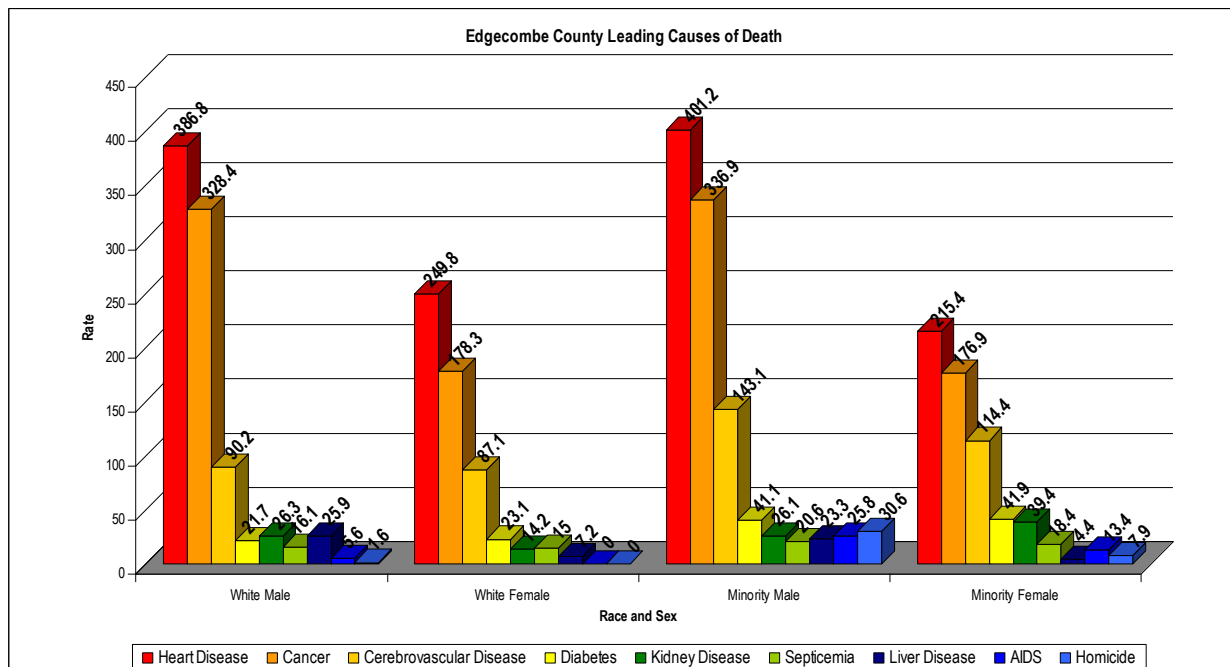
Mortality Data

In 2004, there were 572 deaths among Edgecombe County residents (1060.9 deaths per 100,000 persons). The age-adjusted mortality rate for Edgecombe is 1.2 times the state rate – 1099.8 vs. 897.6.

- HIV Disease mortality rate for Edgecombe County is 2.2 times the state rate.
- Cerebrovascular Disease (stroke) mortality rate for Edgecombe County is 1.6 times the state rate.
- Chronic liver disease mortality rate for Edgecombe County is 1.6 times the state rate.
- Homicide mortality for Edgecombe County is 1.6 times the state rate.
- Nephritis (kidney disease) mortality rate for Edgecombe County is 1.5 times the state rate.



Edgecombe County and North Carolina's age adjusted mortality rates from 2000-2004 for the top 10 health concerns above.



Hospitalization Data

In 2004, Edgecombe County had a hospitalization rate of 155.2 (8,368) per 1,000 compared to North Carolina's rate of 108.8. The following table is a breakdown of inpatient hospital utilization and charges by principal diagnosis (excluding Newborns & Discharges for out-of-state hospitals).

Diagnostic Category	Total Cases	Discharge Rate (per 1,000 population)	Average Days Stay	Days Stay Rate (per 1,000 population)	Total Charges	Average Charge Per Day	Average Charge Per Case
Heart Disease	1,109	20.6	4.7	97.1	\$24,132,246	\$4,611	\$21,760
Colon, Rectum, Anus Cancer	30	0.6	9.0	5.0	\$949,786	\$3,531	\$31,660
Trachea, Bronchus, Lung Cancer	51	0.9	7.3	6.9	\$1,088,024	\$2,941	\$21,334
Female Breast Cancer	16	0.3	2.4	0.7	\$170,406	\$4,369	\$10,650
Prostate Cancer	15	0.3	4.6	1.3	\$219,420	\$3,180	\$14,628
Cerebrovascular Disease	280	5.2	5.9	30.7	\$4,567,451	\$2,756	\$16,371
Diabetes	170	3.2	4.6	14.6	\$1,682,286	\$2,140	\$9,896
Kidney Disease	87	1.6	10.1	16.4	\$2,549,406	\$2,890	\$29,304
Septicemia	117	2.2	10.8	23.4	\$4,231,781	\$3,348	\$36,169
Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis	28	0.5	9.0	4.7	\$459,704	\$1,817	\$16,418
AIDS	26	0.5	8.2	23.4	\$558,976	\$2,612	\$21,499



Cancer Data

During 2003, there were 316 new cases of cancer diagnosed among Edgecombe County residents. The most common type of cancer was breast, followed by lung and prostate cancer. Cancer incidence rates are 1.3 times the state rate for breast, prostate, and colorectal cancers, and 1.2 times the rate of lung/bronchus cancer.

Number of New Cancer Cases Diagnosed Per Year

	2000	2001	2002	2003
	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases
Female Breast	50	77	50	65
Lung/Bronchus	35	49	50	49
Prostate	35	57	57	46
Colon/Rectum	35	32	42	31

1999 to 2003 Cancer incidence Rates

	Edgecombe		North Carolina	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Prostate	232	199.4	26,794	152
Female Breast	302	185.3	32,889	147.3
Lung/Bronchus	232	81.8	28,086	69.3
Colon/Rectum	180	63.6	19,394	48.2

Health Insurance

An estimated 9,236 (19.2%) people in Edgecombe County had no health insurance in 2004. The prevalence of uninsured is greater for ages 18 to 64 versus ages 0 to 17 (22.1% versus 12.4%). During the same time period, the prevalence of uninsured was 17.5% in North Carolina.

Estimates of Uninsured Population in Edgecombe County - 2004

Age	Number	Percent
Ages 0 to 17	1795	12.4
Ages 18 to 64	7442	22.1
Ages 0 to 64	9236	19.2

Medical Care Providers

The availability of medical care providers is lower in Edgecombe County compared to the state averages. The table below compares Edgecombe County to North Carolina rates.

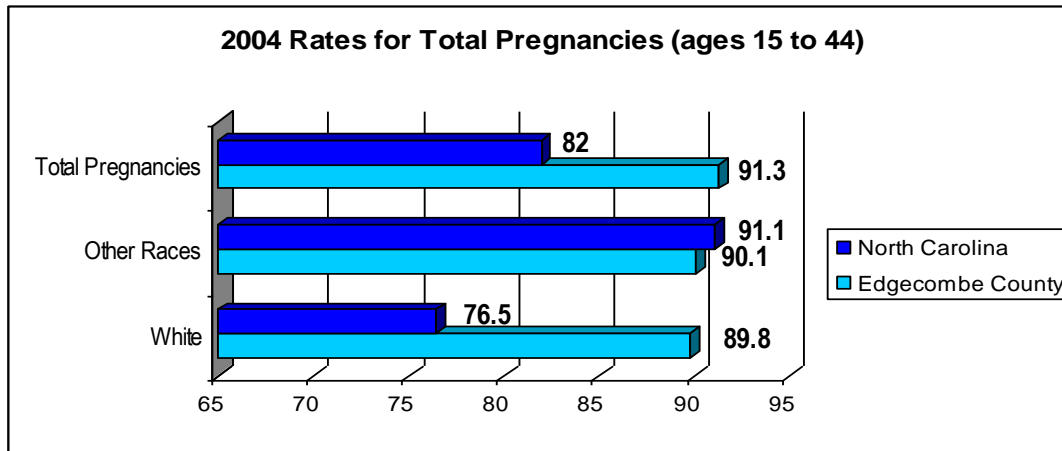
Active Health Professionals per 10,000 Population

Health Professional	Edgecombe	North Carolina
Physicians	6.9	20.7
Primary Care Physicians	4.3	8.8
Dentists	1.5	4.4
Registered Nurses	57.1	92.1
Pharmacists	3.9	8.4

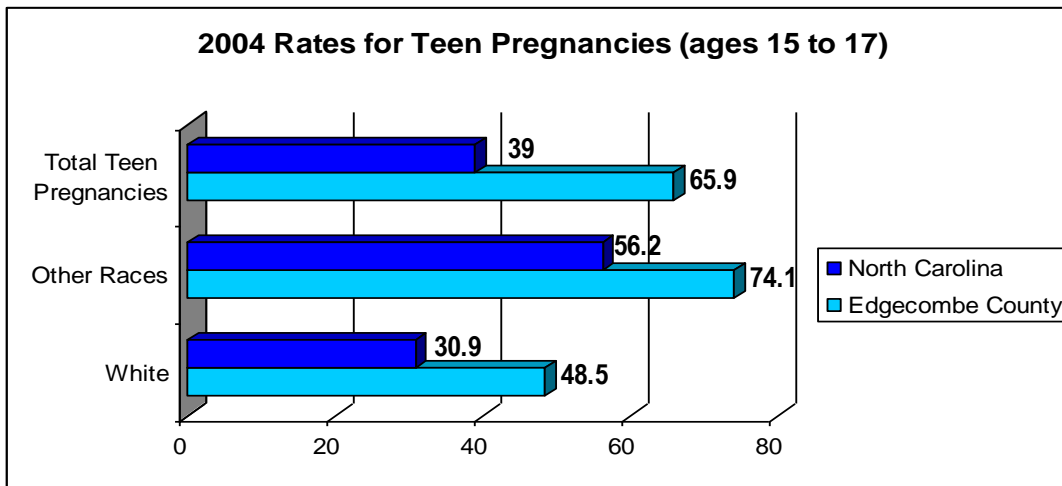


Pregnancy and Birth Data

During 2004, there were 1,032 pregnancies (91.3 per 100,000 women) in Edgecombe County. The pregnancy rate is similar for white women and women of other races.



In 2004, there were 76 teen pregnancies in Edgecombe County. The teen pregnancy rate is 1.7 times the state rate. The teen pregnancy rate for non-white girls is higher than the rate for white girls.



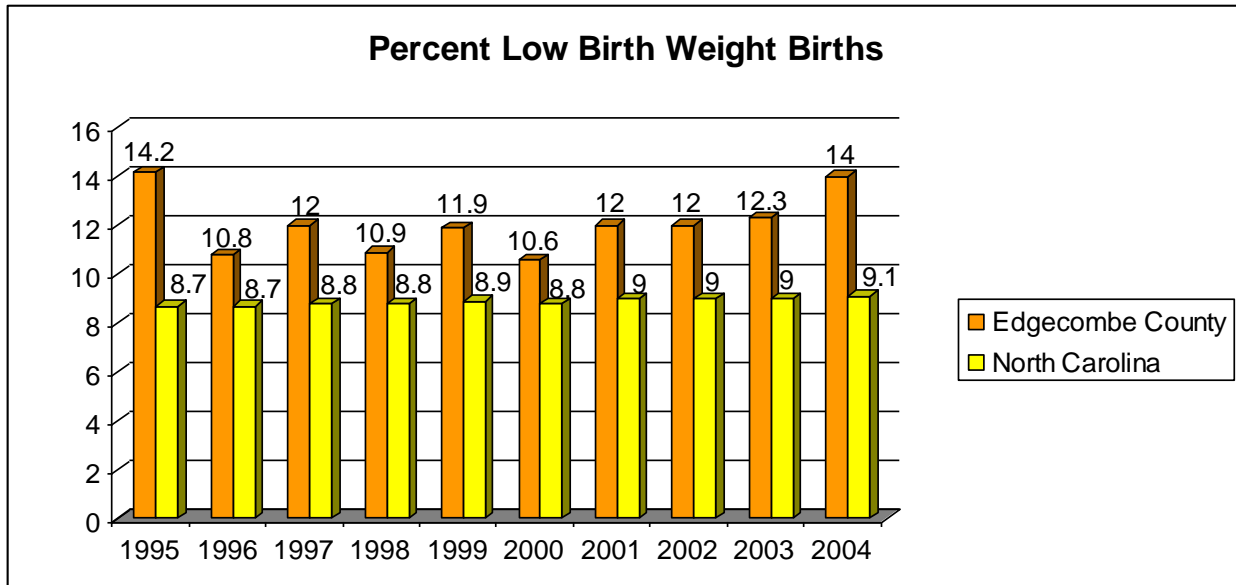
Births

During 2004, there were 784 births in Edgecombe County (14.3 per 100,000 women). The Edgecombe County birthrate is similar to the state rate, and has tended to decrease since 1995.

Year	Edgecombe		North Carolina	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
1995	878	15.4	101,555	13.8
1996	849	14.9	104,428	13.9
1997	817	14.4	106,949	14.0
1998	823	14.6	111,631	14.3
1999	814	14.5	113,755	14.3
2000	856	15.5	120,247	14.9
2001	808	14.6	118,112	14.4
2002	747	13.6	117,307	14.1
2003	710	12.9	118,292	14.0
2004	784	14.3	119,773	14.0

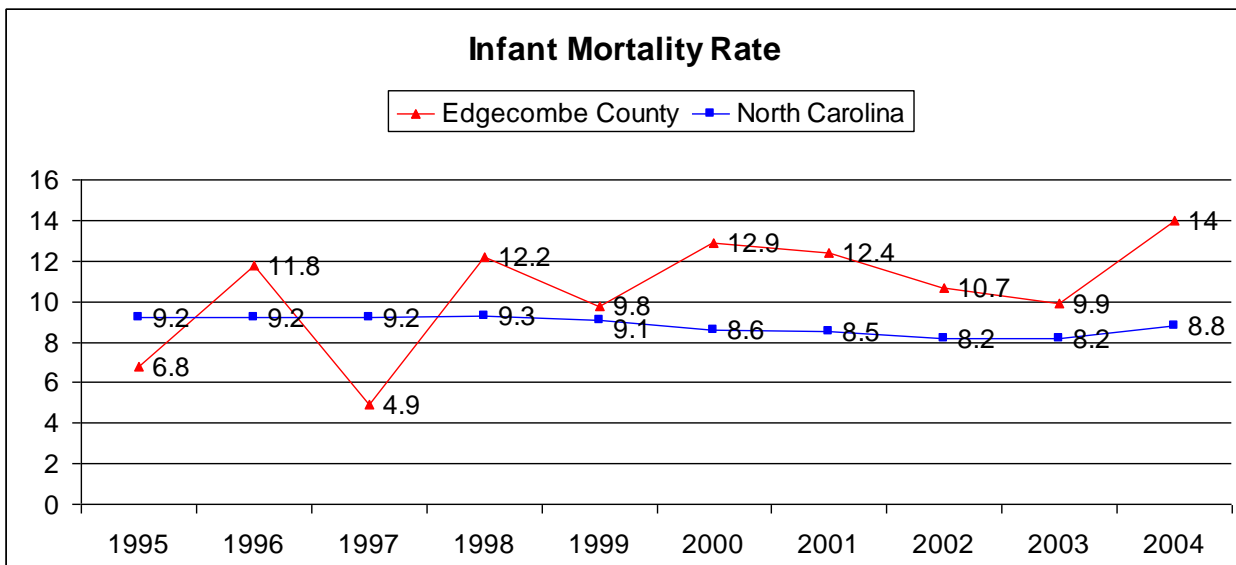


The incidence of low birth weight births in Edgecombe County is 1.5 times (14% in 2004) the state rate of 9.1. Edgecombe County's rates have continued to exceed the state rates since 1995. The graph below compares Edgecombe County and North Carolina's percent of low birth weight births from 1995 to 2004.



Infant Mortality

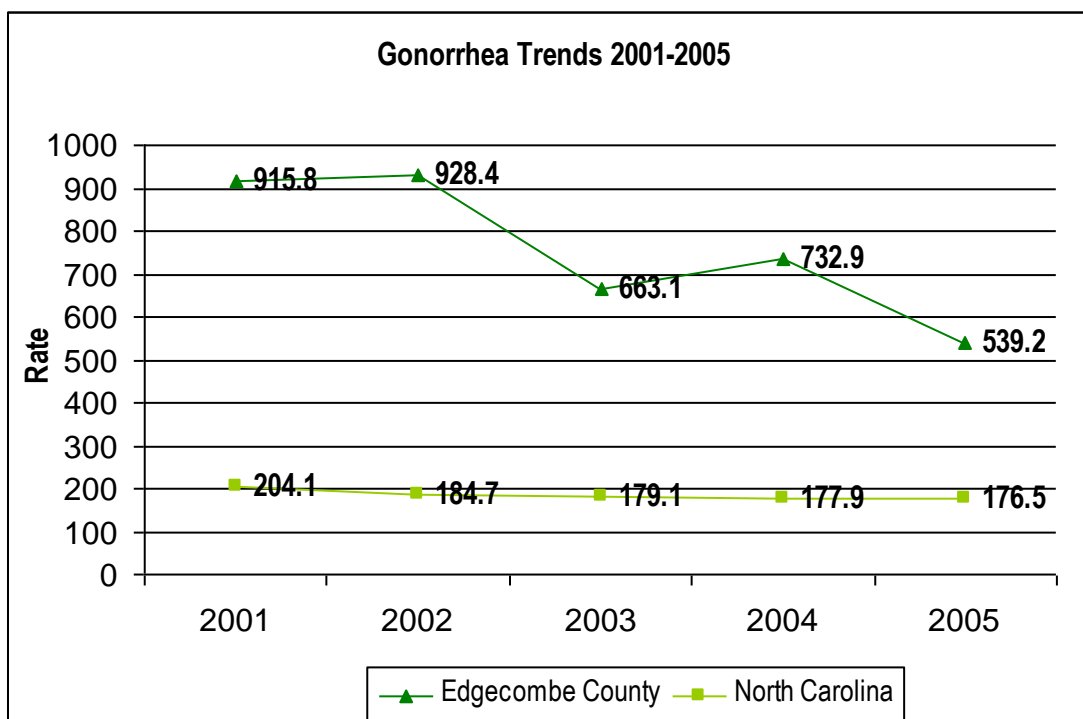
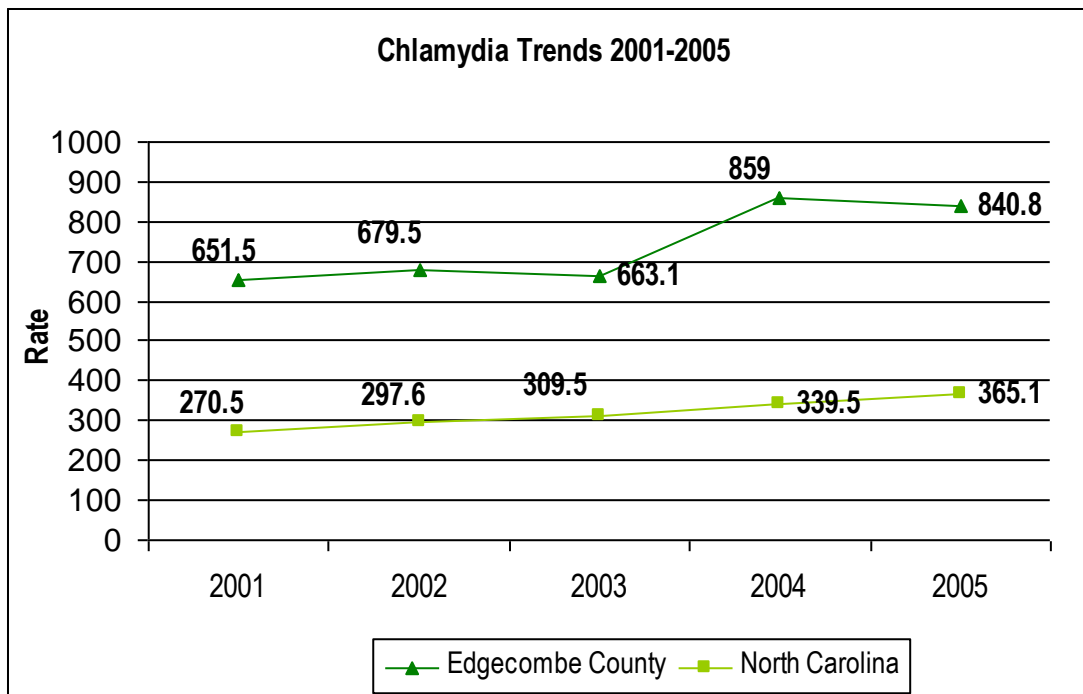
The average infant mortality rate from 2000 to 2004 in Edgecombe County was greater than the state rate; 12 versus 8.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate in Edgecombe County increased from 9.1 (1995-1999) to 12.0 (2000-2004). There were 11 infant deaths in 2004.





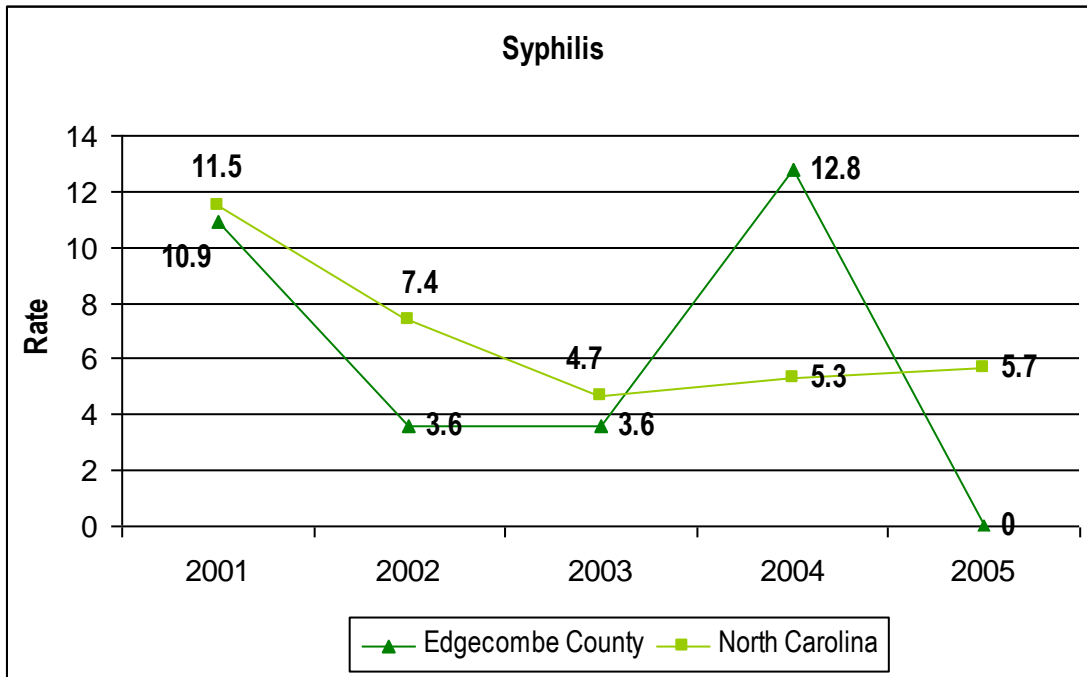
Communicable Diseases

Sexually Transmitted Diseases continues to be a health concern for Edgecombe County. In 2005 there were 460 cases of Chlamydia, 295 Cases of Gonorrhea, 0 cases of Syphilis, and 17 cases of HIV Disease. The incidence rates for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and HIV are greater for Edgecombe County compared to the state. The graphs below demonstrate the trend of STD's in Edgecombe County compared to North Carolina from 2001 to 2005.

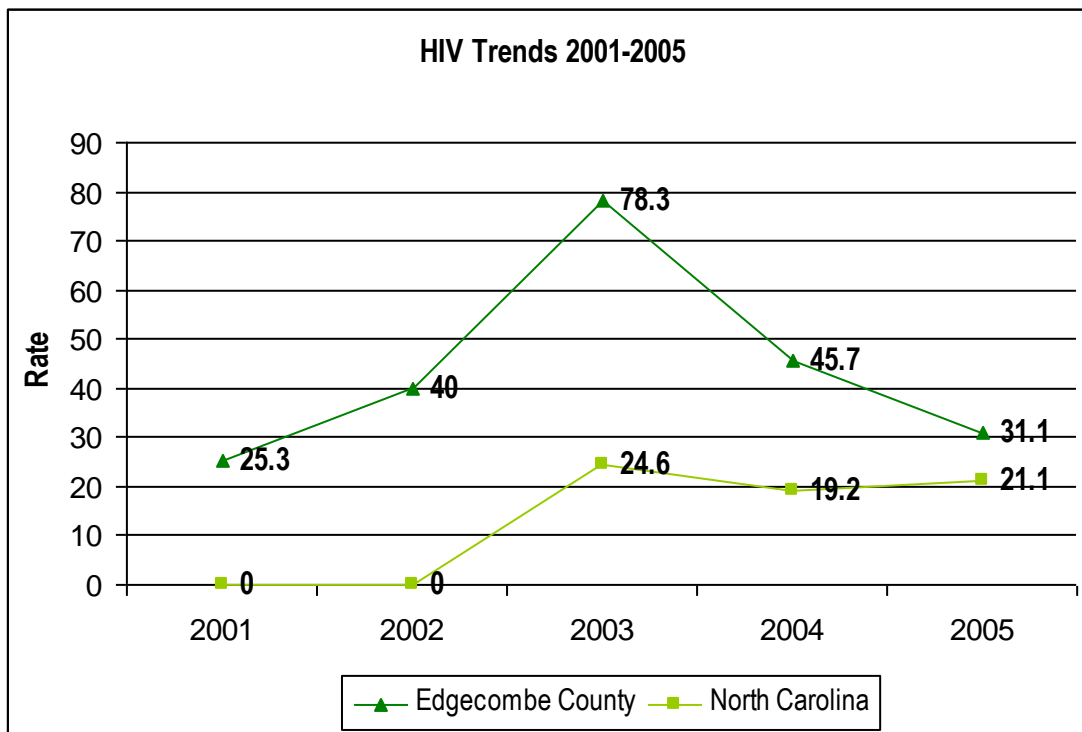




Edgecombe County Syphilis rates have remained under North Carolina's rates with the exception of 2004.



North Carolina data was not available for 2001 and 2002. Since 2003, Edgecombe County HIV Rates have exceeded North Carolina's rates.





Child Health Data

Weight

From 2001 to 2005, 17% of children in Edgecombe County were overweight and 15% were at-risk of being overweight. This is slightly higher than the overall state rate of 15%. The prevalence of overweight among children in Edgecombe County increases with age.

Prevalence of At-Risk and Overweight for Children age 2-18 (2001-2005)

Age	At-Risk Edgecombe	At-Risk North Carolina	Overweight Edgecombe	Overweight North Carolina
2 to 4	15.24%	14.90%	16.25%	13.90%
5 to 11	17.05%	15.70%	22.15%	22.40%
12 to 18	15.07%	17.4%	21.23%	26.70%
2 to 18	15.49%	15.22%	17.21%	14.90%

Asthma

The asthma hospitalization rate for ages 0 to 14 in Edgecombe County was 2.7 times the state rate. There were 143 asthma-related hospitalizations in 2004; of these, 55 were children ages 0 to 14. The asthma hospitalization rate for all ages in Edgecombe County was 2.1 times the state rate.

Asthma Hospitalization Discharge Rate (2004)

	Edgecombe		North Carolina	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Ages 0 to 14	55	483.8	3,121	180.2
Total	143	265.2	10,753	125.9

In the 2005/2006, Edgecombe County Public Schools had approximately 412 children (186 elementary, 143 Middle, 83 high school) with Asthma. There were 18 cases where EMS had to be called to the school due to asthma.

Lead

In 2005, 1,098 children ages 1 to 2 were tested for blood lead levels (73% of the target population was tested). Of the children tested, 2.6% had elevated blood lead test results, this higher than the state average of 0.9%. Blood lead levels between 10 and 19 micrograms per deciliter were confirmed on 13 (out of 1,486) children ages 6 months to 6 years.

In 2005/2006 the Edgecombe County Environmental Health Specialists conducted 10 lead investigations. In addition, the Edgecombe County Prevent Maintenance Program conducted 32 presentations on lead (246 adult and 309 children participated); conducted 6 HUD approved lead-safe training workshops, and distributed lead educational material throughout Edgecombe County.



IV. Community Concerns/Priorities

A community survey was conducted July through October 2006, in order to provide residents an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns about the quality of life in Edgecombe County. The survey contained questions about the economy, education, environment, health, housing, leisure, safety, social issues, and transportation. Survey participants were asked to assess a variety of community issues and to score them as either major problems, moderate problems, minor problems or not a problem.

Surveys were distributed at strategic sites throughout the county in order to reach a variety of residents. A total of 534 surveys were collected. The age range of citizens answering the survey was fairly even – respondent's age ranged from under 18 to over 65 years old. Both female (67.4%) and males (32.6%) participated in the survey. Citizen's race was primarily black (52.8%) and white (43.5%). Thirty percent of respondents were high school graduates, 24.9% had some college, and 17.9% had less than a high school diploma.

In addition to the community survey, a key informant survey was sent out to 63 local business owners/leaders, agency directors, board of health members, county commissioners, town officials, health care providers, leaders from county departments, churches, civic groups, law enforcement, and fire and rescue. Key informants were asked questions on community strengths in addition to the community survey questions. Fifty-three surveys were returned. The majority of respondents were white (74.5%; black 23.5%), age 40 to 54 (48.1%), and female 64.6% (male 35.4%).

Based on the findings from the community and key informant surveys, combined with the health data, the Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment Advisory Group identified 15 chief health and social concerns for the county. The top health and community concerns are as follows: Cancer, Diabetes, Drug Abuse, HIV/Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Homicide, Infant Mortality, Lack of Affordable Medical Care, Lack of Jobs, Lead Exposure, Liver Disease, Overweight, Poverty, Teen Pregnancy, Tobacco, and Unemployment.

After reviewing and discussing this information, the Edgecombe County Advisory Group members participated in rating the top 4 out of 15 community concerns using a Prioritization Worksheet. The worksheet asked that each of the issues be ranked according to three criteria: Magnitude of the Problem, Seriousness of the Consequences, and Feasibility of Correcting the Problem. Results of these worksheets were calculated to come up with the top 4 priorities, which are as follows:

Selected Priority Issues

- 1. HIV/Sexually Transmitted Diseases**
- 2. Teen Pregnancy**
- 3. Overweight**
- 4. Lack of Affordable Medical Care**

In addition, the community health assessment advisory team recognized that Poverty is an issue that the community was very concerned about and is an overarching issue that affected each of the 4 selected priority themes.



Although many concerns have been identified through the community health assessment, positive strengths were identified as well. One of the questions asked of the community was “What do you like about where you live?” The following answers were provided by the citizens of Edgecombe County.

- **Access to most places:** close to work; close to city, plenty of food, affordable rent.
- **Community:** feel safe; people stick together; comfortable; country living; child friendly; get along with others; friendly people; clean; adequate sidewalks; good neighborhoods; quite; private; low crime; no crime; great churches; enough room; slow pace of life; small town; little traffic; pride of the people; good mix of people; Reverend Walston; parks for children; low traffic; not crowded; people go to church; no prejudice; good place to raise a family; love the old people.
- **Close to family:** home town/family here; friends; know most of the people.
- **Economy:** based on income; property values are staying; consistent; my job.
- **Services:** love fire protection given by Tarboro Fire Department.
- **History**
- **Education:** good teachers; good schools; being educated by our local health department
- **Environment:** lots of shade; the old trees; good climate; little air pollution.
- **Freedom to express oneself**