

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2018

Contact: Belinda Venters

316-293-3536 | [bventers@kumc.edu](mailto:bventers@kumc.edu)

## **KU School of Medicine-Wichita interested in opinions regarding your water and other environmental issues**

WICHITA, KAN. – Want to share your concerns and desires regarding environmental issues in Wichita, but don't know who to turn to? The Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita (KUSM-W) is conducting a de-identified community survey to determine the environmental issues of greatest concern to the Wichita community.

The project is led by KUSM-W student Derek Norrick and supervised by one of his faculty members, Elizabeth Ablah, Ph.D., M.P.H., KUSM-W associate professor. Norrick is working toward his second master's degree and this survey is part of his capstone project. This degree is in public health. He has worked as an environmental health specialist with Reno County in Hutchinson for more than two years.

"I'm not sure this is the type of topic that is top-of-mind for most people," said Norrick, "so I want to get them thinking — and talking, about it. For example, the general public may not be aware of the water scarcity in our surrounding lakes. In drought years, water restrictions are necessary since Cheney Lake can be less than half of its average depth."

Norrick has provided the survey to a number of audiences and organizations already, including the Wichita Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood and homeowner associations, YMCAs and environmental groups. He has conducted the survey at a booth at the Old Town Farmer's Market.

A water survey was conducted by KUSM-W from 2009-10 and Norrick wants to include in his project result comparisons to see if priorities and attitudes have shifted.

- continued -

KUSM-W surveys locals about environmental issues

May 10, 2018

Page 2

His project will be completed by June 12, so he wants to get as many responses as possible. He will distribute the findings to each audience and organization he contacted. In addition, Ablah will be communicating with the Health and Wellness Coalition of Wichita, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the City of Wichita Department of Environmental Health, Sedgwick County Health Department and other groups of interest.

“We plan to share the results across Wichita, which may help shape some environmental organizations’ priorities for the next 10 years,” said Ablah.

To have your views counted in Norrick’s initial assessment, please take the survey by **May 31** at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CommunityEnvironment2>.

For questions, please contact Ablah at [eablah@kumc.edu](mailto:eablah@kumc.edu) or Norrick at [derek.norrick@renogov.org](mailto:derek.norrick@renogov.org).

*The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita educates tomorrow’s physicians and health care leaders through community partnership to improve the health of Kansans. We doctor Kansas.*

###