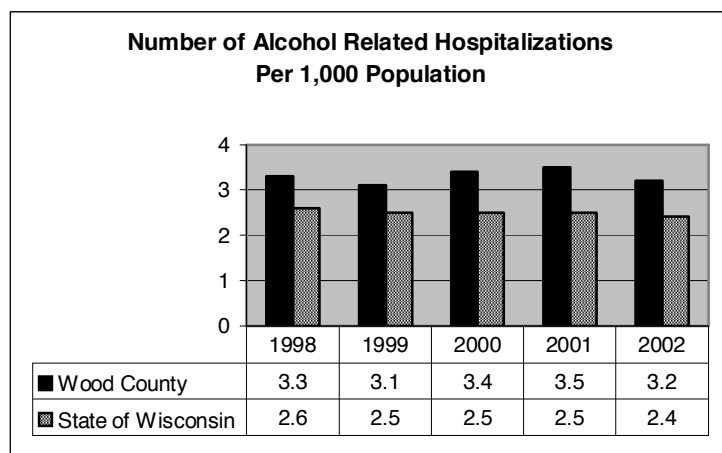


**Alcohol Abuse Impacts a Community’s Health, Economy and Quality of Life**



**Key Facts**

- In 2002, 246 hospitalizations in Wood County were alcohol related.
- Each year, an average of 6 deaths in Wood County are attributed to alcohol.
- In 2000, binge drinking in Wisconsin decreased to 23.5% from 27% in 1999. (below the state average)
- In 2003, 12% less students reported experimenting with alcohol before the age of 13 than in 1993.

**Why is this Information Important?**

Alcohol abuse is a major cause of premature death and illness. Misuse of alcohol has a negative long-term impact on the health, economy and overall quality of life in a community. For the past 20 years, about 1 in 3 adult drinkers in the United States report past-month “binge drinking”—(having 5 or more drinks on one occasion).

**Alcohol Use**

The abuse of alcoholic beverages increases the likelihood of virtually all types of injuries. Significant numbers of adults and teenagers are killed in motor vehicle crashes, drowning, fire, assault and suicide involving blood alcohol levels from moderate to above the legal limit.

Long-term alcohol misuse is associated with liver disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease and neurological damage. Dependence on alcohol is also associated with psychiatric problems such as depression, anxiety and antisocial personality disorder.

*Sources: Division of Public Health; Department of Health and Family Services*