

BOARD OF HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT – 2019

STAFF

Director of Public Health – James M. White, Jr.
 Senior Environmental Health Specialist – Michael K. Boudreau
 Environmental Health Agent – Jane M. Anderson
 Sanitarian – Jessica R. Cliff
 Public Health Nurse – Leila J. Mercer
 Substance Prevention & Outreach Program Manager – Catherine Sugarman
 Executive Assistant – Jean M. Cotter
 Administrative Assistant – Ingrid C. Fosberg

The Natick Health Department continues to be a resource for the community by meeting the diverse health needs of the Town. This includes communicable disease, environmental contamination, substance use disorder, prevention strategies and state mandated responsibilities.

Communicable and reportable diseases reported in 2019:

Babesiosis	3	Lyme Disease	54
Borrelia Miyomotoi	5	Mumps	1
Campylobacteriosis	7	Norovirus	4
Cryptosporidiosis	1	Pertussis	1
Cyclospora	2	Salmonellosis	5
Dengue Fever	3	Shiga Toxin-prod E. Coli	1
Enterovirus	1	Shigellosis	2
Giardiasis	1	Varicella (Chicken Pox)	4
Group A Strep Invasive	3	Influenza (Lab Confirmed)	
Group B Strep Invasive	1	Type A	98
Hepatitis B	13	Type B	17
Hepatitis C	18		
Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis	6	TOTAL	251

During the flu clinic season, the Public Health Nurse, volunteers and School Nurses administered 1,506 doses of flu vaccine. This included the Annual Board of Health Clinics held for the residents of the community, Town Employees, Town Retirees, as well as school based clinics held at Natick High School, Wilson Middle School, Kennedy Middle School and a family based clinic at the High School on October 29. The immunization program also included 290 other various additional pediatric and adult vaccinations in 2019.

The Public Health Nurse reported a total of 533 office visits for services, evaluations and blood pressure checks, conducted 303 home and field visits for contagion or community health assessments; resulting in 118 referrals to private physicians and/or state agencies. Included within the services noted above was a very noticeable increase in the Tuberculosis Control Program. Whereas in 2018 there were few cases requiring minimal oversight compared to a 75% increase in active or latent cases requiring an increase in monitoring from 6 home visits to 168.

The Environmental staff conducted 1,170 inspections on 453 various permitted food establishments and 4392 other inspections, investigations, plan reviews and consultations relevant to environmental sanitation for a total of 5562. The additional 34 food permits and 11% rise in inspections represents the largest single year increase above any previous year for the Environmental Inspectional Program. Though we continue to meet the state mandate for food service type inspections for the third consecutive year, the rise in demands in other areas of responsibility of the staff is making it increasingly more difficult to meet those state mandates.

The department reviewed 920 reports for asbestos removal, pre-demolition pest control inspections, Title 5 inspections, building applications, grease trap and septic system pump outs; reviewed and corresponded on 92 Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals cases; issued 11 wildlife and mosquito emergency waivers and 70 quarantine notices by the Animal Inspector. In addition, the staff issued and/or approved 1,771 various permits.

On May 4, 2019, we hosted our 33rd Annual Household Hazardous Waste Day where 260 residential households took part in disposing of their materials in an effort to protect our environment. Natick continues to participate in the multi-community reciprocal collection program sponsored by Department of Environmental Protection. We did have several residents from other communities' dispose of

their waste during our collection day and it was reported many Natick residents were able to attend other community's events as well. This past year there were 11 participating communities registered in the program allowing additional options for their residents. As mentioned in previous annual reports, building projects both large and small continues moving at a torrid pace. Several large projects have been completed in 2019 including The Avenu and Residence Inn on Speen Street and Exponent on Route 9. The townhouse development at West Central and Stacey Streets, where DeRosa's Florist was once located, is in the final stages of completion. Other projects, Kennedy Middle School, West Natick Fire Station, Subdivisions at McHugh Farm and Windy Lo are currently under construction. The process of demolition and re-construction of single-family homes has not showed signs of slowing down. We will continue oversight of the drainage, aquifer protection and recharge of these sites when applicable.

Annual receipts to the department totaled \$257,741.76. From that total, \$226,078.75 was deposited into the Town's General Fund; the remaining \$31,663.01 was deposited into the following designated Board of Health Accounts: Immunization Revolving \$22,263.01, Tobacco Revolving \$4,600, Prevention & Outreach Gift Fund \$4,800.

An issue of epidemic proportions that has risen to the forefront of public health is the sharp increase in vaping of tobacco and marijuana products, especially with our youth. Every community and school system is struggling with this problem. With the addictive nature of the products, it has been documented that vaping can cause lung and respiratory distress and in some cases death even with minimal and short term use. Governor Baker and the Department of Public Health have taken a hard stance to protect our youth in regards to vaping, which we fully support. Natick has been chosen to participate in a piloted vaping cessation training program for school and public health personnel provided by UMass Medical Center Worcester. If successful, this may become the model program for Massachusetts. With the assistance of the MetroWest Health Foundation, we also have been collaborating with neighboring communities in an attempt to approach this from a regional standpoint.

With funds provided through the Federal Drug Free Community Grant, the Board of Health has added two positions to the Substance Prevention & Outreach Program: Nina Levine, Associate Project Coordinator and Astrid Dretler, Assistant Project Coordinator. The program has continued to expand services and resources into areas with the greatest needs. The Program originally consisted of two entities, Natick Together for Youth and the Opioid Task Force. Over the past year, the two entities have been merged into one and re-branded as Natick 180. With the assistance of a web design consultant, a new Natick 180 website has been developed which provides an abundance of resources to a wide range of viewers seeking information on substance use, outreach, treatment and group support. A complete report can be found under the Substance Prevention and Outreach Program annual report.

Senate President Karen Spilka has again provided the Town of Natick with a generous Earmark grant to assist in funding all aspects of substance prevention, public health and veteran services. These funds will be utilized to offset some of our annual services such as the used pharmaceutical and sharps kiosks, Narcan supplies for our first responders and the Health Department's Narcan distribution program, adult and student speaker series, youth substance diversion sessions, vaping session programs and veteran support.

The Board of Health has drafted and approved several new local regulations over the last several years to address emerging public health concerns and community needs. Beginning in 2020, the Department will start the process of reviewing our existing local Board of Health Regulations to determine which are antiquated or in need of revisions and take the appropriate steps to update the regulations accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian L. Wong, MSPH, Chairman
Peter A. Delli Colli, DMD, Vice Chairman
Donald J. Breda, P.E., Clerk
Paige Meisheid, MD, Physician to the Board
James M. White, Jr., RS/REHS, Director of Public Health