

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO MAYOR 2009 - 2010

The Milford Health Department (MHD) has had one of the most challenging years in decades. In addition to providing the core services in communicable disease control, environmental, school and community health services, the MHD provided vigorous and comprehensive community H1N1 influenza immunization services. In addition, the MHD fully implemented the Anti-Blight ordinance. The MHD has challenged the opening of a water-pipe and tobacco smoking (Hookah) establishment. The MHD continued to lead the New Haven region in public health preparedness with particular concern for man made disasters (e.g. bioterrorism) and all hazard disasters (e.g. nor'easter storms; climate change).

The MHD instituted an innovative and effective H1N1 immunization campaign. The Milford School Nurses practiced early detection of influenza like illness (ILI) in the students. The Milford practice was subsequently adapted by many other school districts. Sick students were quickly screened out of school and directed for care.

Direct H1N1 immunization services were provided to over 3500 vulnerable people (80% Milford residents). The MHD converted its offices to a mass immunization site; provided focus school immunization to vulnerable and needy students; and offered a regional mass immunization site at the Westfield Shopping Mall. In addition, MHD immunized seniors, school, city employees, including school nurses, first responders, police and firefighters.

Because of concern about blighted properties, Mayor Richetelli and the Board of Aldermen designated the MHD to enforce an Anti-Blight ordinance. The public response has been vigorous. The MHD responds to every complaint and provides feed back to the complainants. In coordination with other city agencies, the MHD has developed an efficient and effective program to fight blighted properties.

The MHD is taking action to prevent the introduction of water-pipe smoking (hookah) public establishment into Milford. Because of communicable disease risk and the hazard of hookah smoking, the MHD ordered the closure of a hookah smoking establishment. The MHD maintains that hookah smoking at the establishment is a communicable disease risk to the public and that hookah smoking at the establishment is a particular threat to the health of the community, especially young people.

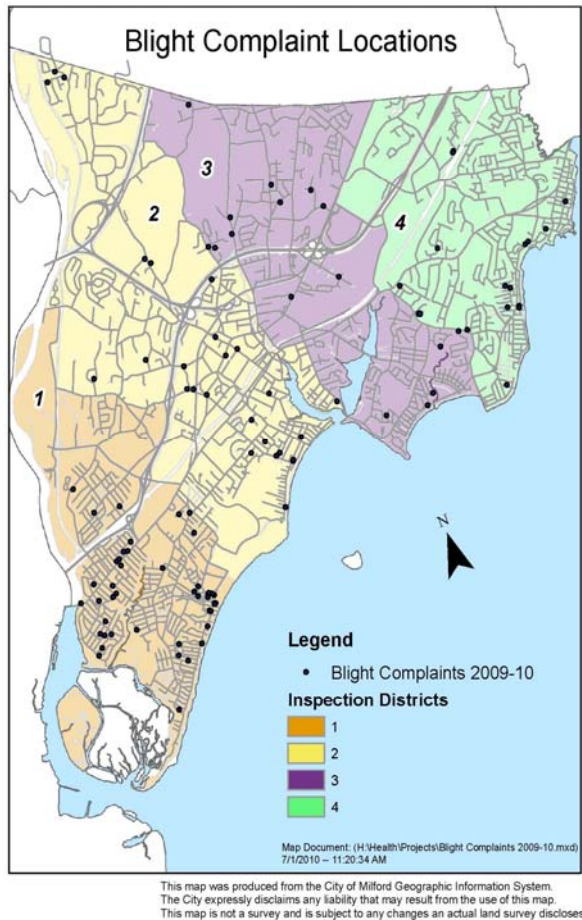
The MHD is devoted to continuing to keep Milford prepared for public health disasters. The Milford Coalition for Preparedness continues to marshal a substantial group of local residents to volunteer. MHD included Milford high school and college students to work in clerkships.

In all, in spite of difficult financial times and challenging health issues the MHD has had a productive year. The MHD continues its prevention mission to protect and promote the health of the Milford residents.

Environmental Health Services

Anti-Blight Enforcement. As of September 30, 2009, the Board of Alderman charged the Milford Health Department to enforce the Anti-Blight Ordinance. The anti-blight program is a complaint driven program. With the institution of this ordinance, the Health Department now has several options when citing violations pertaining to blight, and situations resulting in blight. Each regulation can be cited separately, or, in certain situations, in concert with each other.

- Milford Housing Code, Chapter 11 - Carries criminal penalties.
- CT Public Health Code – Carries criminal penalties.
- Milford code – 11-141 - Show cause hearing with the Director of Health, repair or demolish hazardous building– Carries criminal penalties.
- Milford Anti-Blight Ordinance – Carries civil penalties, fines (\$100 per day) can be applied.



To determine if a property is blighted, sanitarians often have to make several inspections/site visits to the property in order to establish the grounds in which to issue a notice of violation (NOV) to the property owner. The NOV describes the violations and a time frame in which compliance must happen. Sanitarians not only establish if a blight condition exists or is being created but to also ascertain if the condition is being remedied and maintained in good condition.

The MHD coordinates efforts with the Planning & Zoning Office, Fire Department, Police Department, Building Department, Tax Office, Assessor's Office, City Clerk, Human Service Department, and the Law Department. Many conditions and situations can be remedied by

an informal process that includes communication with the property owner or other responsible person, and development of an abatement plan, and monitoring. However, if responsible parties are not responsive or have abandoned their property the Health Department moves forward with

legal enforcement. Sanitarians conduct inspections and monitor situations and use as a first step in enforcement a warning letter that offers property owners the opportunity to correct situations prior to issuing a Notice of Violation. The Health Department uses the Notice of Violation as the second step in enforcement. If there is non-compliance with an NOV, the Law Department is notified via a cover letter and copies of all pertinent information requesting that the \$100 fine be initiated.

Since the blight ordinance became effective in September 2009, the Health Department received 149 complaints of blight. Each complaint is in various stages of the process – some properties do not meet the criteria set up in the ordinance and are being investigated under the Housing or General Public Health codes. Others are in compliance and show no cause for enforcement action, while others are still in progress or under investigation. After several inspections, reviews, and discussions with owners, property owners are issued notices that detail violations. Open NOV's are currently within the specified date for compliance.

Twelve properties failed to comply with the orders defined in the Notice of Violation and have been referred to the City Attorney's office for enforcement action. The owners of these properties may be fined \$100 for each day the violation(s) continue to exist after the compliance date specified in the notice of violation. The Director of Health placed liens on these properties.

Total # of blight complaints	Submitted by anti-blight complaint form	Submitted by other	Repeat complaints	Notice of Violation issued	Under Investigation	Abated/remedied/closed	No cause for enforcement action	Referred to City Attorney
149	83	66	27	13	11	65	23	12

When the locations of the complaints received are put on a map, one can see that the complaints are evenly dispersed throughout the City. The number of complaints in each area coincides with the population density. In other words, areas that have more dwellings per square mile may not necessarily have more blight; there may be more complaints because there are a greater number of properties in a given geographic area.

Pandemic H1N1 Influenza. The everyday role of the Environmental Health Division is to anticipate, identify and respond to environmental public health hazards within the City of Milford. This is done through the enforcement of local, state and federal rules and regulations. As part of the Milford Health Department crisis response plan during an emergency, the Environmental Health Specialist focuses on monitoring, reporting, and providing education to residents regarding issues concerning public food, water supplies, sewage disposal and sanitation to prevent the spread of disease.

Beginning in the spring of 2009 into the winter of 2010, a major focus of the Environmental Health Division was the H1N1 influenza pandemic. In the beginning stages of the H1N1 Pandemic, before any vaccine was produced or supplied to Milford, the Health Department focused to environmentally manage the potential for H1N1 influenza outbreaks. The focus was primarily in institutional settings, due to how H1N1 is transmitted between people. The members of the Environmental Health Division and the Community Health Nursing visited various Child Daycare centers and preschools. The purpose of conducting site visits was to raise awareness, and to discuss proper sanitizing of environmental surfaces, proper cleaning solutions that are effective against the H1N1 flu virus and hand washing education. Additionally, social distancing was discussed. What it is, how to employ it and why it is important. Day care directors and head staff were provided written materials along with physical contacts at the Health Department. The importance of monitoring all influenza like illnesses (ILI) in their agency was discussed and information was provided about the Health Departments ILI Program that monitors school absenteeism. The information is used to identify trends and implement solutions. The day care centers were advised to revisit their sick policies and devise ways to encourage child care staff and parents to have a child care plan for children too sick to be in daycare.

The Environmental Health Division staff focused on planning and implementing logistics at each of the H1N1 flu vaccination clinics. Environmental Health staff:

- created maps detailing the floor plan of each clinic held at the Health Department offices, the Westfield Mall, and Parsons Government Center;
- coordinated with City Departments and outside vendors to secure tables, chairs, privacy screens, wheel chairs, and heaters;
- set-up & broke down each of the clinics;
- create and post signs in and around the clinics;
- provided information, education and direction to patients;
- transports information, forms and goods between different health department clinic locations;
- cleaned and sanitizes all surfaces, (i.e. table tops and all other horizontal surfaces, chairs, door knobs, etc.) where injections are given to patients and the physical space the clinics are held in.

Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly (C.R.I.D.E.). The Collaborative for Residential Integrity of the Disabled and Elderly (C.R.I.D.E.) continues to serve as an integral part of the social service network and as a model program for other communities. The Community Housing Inspector, and Case Manager and Health Department Sanitarians work as a team to conduct in-home assessments, develop remediation plans, provide support, and make referrals to effectively address the needs of elderly and disabled persons in troubled housing. Since July 1, 2009, the Housing Inspector in conjunction with the Case Manager has responded to 31 new requests/complaints, 8 of which involved hoarding, 5 involved severe housekeeping problems, and 12 involved property neglect. Eighteen of these new cases involved elderly and/or disabled persons.

Hookah Lounge Closure. On June 27, 2009 the Milford Health Department (MHD) ordered the closure of the Olive Tree Hookah Lounge (OTHL), an establishment for tobacco water-pipe smoking. The MHD found the OTHL to be a communicable disease risk and was a public health nuisance for the untoward health effects of and addiction to tobacco. Hookah smoking has been a very attractive for young people. A Connecticut Department of Public Health hearing officer ruled unfavorably. With the assistance for the American Cancer Society and public health consultants, the MHD appealed the hearing officer's decision.

Food Protection Program. The Milford Health Department licensed approximately 386 Food Service Establishments in FY 09/10. This number fluctuates throughout the year depending on the economy and the closing and opening of businesses in Milford. The Environmental Health Division offers a comprehensive food protection program. All new establishments go through our plan review process. Sanitarians conduct new and renovated establishment plan reviews, construction inspections and pre-operational inspections. Additionally, all establishments are routinely inspected. Through this process, we are able to enforce the public health code, and provide services that include education and identification of food borne disease risk factors. This helps prevent illness and improves the service practices of the food handlers working with the food that is served to the public.

Ill Food Worker Campaign. The Chief of the Environmental Health Division collaborated with a workgroup of representatives from 10 local health departments to develop an educational campaign focused on increasing the knowledge of food workers and managers regarding the symptoms that are most often linked to the spread of food borne diseases. The CT Ill Food Worker Workgroup developed materials that include 2 laminated 11" x 17" posters, (one geared toward the food worker and one for the Qualified Food Operator/Manager), a pamphlet geared toward upper level management, and a Talking Point Guide for distributors of the materials. The materials were developed to: inform food workers of the need to report illness; assist management in promoting open communication with food workers; provide a resource for additional information on employee health policies; increase reporting of illness by food workers to management; and increase the required reporting of ill food workers by management to the local health department. The materials are available in English, Spanish, and Chinese. In an effort to highlight the educational aspect of the materials, Milford Environmental Health Sanitarians conducted site visits separate from and in addition to routine inspections of each establishment. Sanitarians were able to open up an educational dialogue with managers and distribute the materials and hang the posters in prominent locations.

Coordination of Food and Product Recalls. The Environmental Health Division receives notices from Federal and State agencies whenever there is a food or consumer product recall. In FY 09/10 we worked on 7 major food recalls. Quite frequently this office receives information at the same time as licensed food service establishments, retail food stores, retail stores and the media. Our procedure is generally the same for all recall events. Disseminate accurate information regarding the products involved in a recall via blast fax to at risk food service establishments, retail food stores, retail stores, daycare centers, physicians/health care centers, and long-term care facilities. Additionally, we post information about the recall on the Milford Health Department website. Milford Sanitarians, along with the Department of Consumer

Protection, conduct random on-site follow-up visits in order to provide information and guidance while ensuring that the products involved have been removed from service or sale.

Temporary Events. Our goal at the Environmental Health Division is to keep temporary events free from the risk of food borne illness. From July 2009 – June 2010, there were 67 temporary events in Milford. Each event has multiple vendors that required licensing and inspections by this office. During the fiscal year, the Environmental Health Division issued 234 temporary event food licenses to individual food vendors. This increase over last year can be attributed to the success of two farmers markets in Milford where food is prepared and served to the public, along with the need for non-profit groups to raise money due to the poor economic climate. Each vendor is required to submit an application detailing the booth set-up and the menu. Sanitarians review each application and meet with each vendor. Once the application is approved, a license is issued and is valid only on the day of the event if the vendor passes inspection.

Bedbug control. The MHD has successfully conducted investigations and instituted pest control measures in various multifamily units and residential establishments.

Rabies Control. At least once but sometimes several times a month the MHD manages human contact with potential or actual cases of rabies. The MHD works closely with Milford Animal Control for the notification of the patients, care givers and, in cases of domestic animal, owners.

Volunteer Food Handler Training. Our food service training program, instituted by the Health Department to ensure that food service volunteers have completed training on safe food handling procedures, continues to grow. This year 97 volunteers were trained. The Environmental Health Division offers training to volunteers in order to ensure proper food handling techniques are being implemented during temporary food events. Persons that volunteer their time at ball field concession stands and at Oyster Festival food booths are strongly encouraged to attend the Health Department basic training. The training program is specific to issues encountered during our inspections of food service booths.

Mosquito Control. All Habitat Services, LLC continues to provide mosquito control services for Milford. From early spring into fall, at least 101 known established mosquito-breeding sites are monitored for breeding activities. These areas are routinely treated with biological larvicide in addition to catch basins and dozens of stagnant breeding pools. Throughout the year Sanitarians monitor and investigate complaints and conduct mosquito surveillance stemming from public concern. The primary focus of the mosquito management program is on preventive efforts through mosquito breeding site reduction, especially in densely populated areas, and education about personal protection.

Bathing and Swimming Place Inspection. Sanitarians routinely inspect public and semipublic swimming pools and spas, as well as the Milford beaches to evaluate whether these facilities are operated so that they prevent the spread of disease. There were 25 public and semipublic swimming pools and spas and 23 sampling sites along the Milford coastline in FY 09/10. Sanitarians conducted inspections and collected water samples throughout the season.

Lodging. Sanitarians routinely inspect public accommodations such as hotels, motels, boarding houses and bed & breakfast establishments. The inspections focus primarily on general sanitation although most recently there has been emphasis placed on integrated pest management due to the resurgence of bed bugs in the United States. In FY 09/10, the Environmental Health Division conducted inspections at 21 different hotels/motels/bed & breakfasts in Milford.

Education. In addition to our regulatory responsibilities, this year the Chief of the Environmental Health Division staffed a booth at the Foran High School Health Fair, the Milford Senior Center and the Wildemere Beach Safety Day. Information on various health related issues was distributed, including West Nile Virus and how to protect yourself; Lyme disease, identification and prevention; sun safety; nutrition and physical activity education and food protection at home.

HazWaste Central – Regional Water Authority. The Environmental Health Division along with Milford volunteers, including some members of the Connecticut Emergency Response Team (CERT), participated in the satellite household hazardous waste collection at the Public Works garage on Ford St. The collection was a huge success. In total 472 households worth of waste was collected as opposed to 230 last year.

It should be noted that there are many other vital environmental issues affecting Milford residents not specifically outlined here. In FY 09/10 we received and responded to 501 requests for information, assistance and complaints. The Environmental Division works with other State and City Departments to address resident requests, complaints and concerns about indoor and outdoor air quality, lead paint, rabies, underground storage tanks, septic systems, radon, pesticides, occupational health, pest control, and a multitude of other environmental public health concerns.

School Health Services and Public Health Nursing

More than 25% of Milford school children experience health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, food allergies or a myriad of other conditions. These conditions require the presence of a school nurse to assure that medical services are properly rendered at school. This assures optimal health services, school attendance and the ability to learn. Throughout the school year, school nurses provided over 5,000 specialized treatments such as blood glucose monitoring for diabetic students, gastric tube feedings for students unable to swallow, respiratory assessment and medications. Over 10,000 medications were administered to students during the 2009-10 school year. Approximately 90% of the medications administered were prescription medications.

School Health Services-Public Health Nursing The goal of the school nurse in the Milford public and parochial schools is to provide care for their students and return children to class, ready to learn; 92% of children attended to by the school nurse, returned to class within thirty minutes, allowing them to continue learning in class. The professional nursing staff of the Milford Health Department provided school health services for over 8200 school students in pre-school through grade 12 at our 19 public and parochial/private schools in Milford. The school nurses provided health services including health assessment, treatment for illness or injury, psychosocial interventions and referral, development of plans of care and emergency plans for students with

health care needs and state mandated annual screenings. The school health offices logged over 40,000 visits from students, with the school nurse often being the initial link to medical care.

School Health Services – Oral Health Program Parents of children in our public and parochial schools continue to utilize the services of our dental hygienists in the schools. Over 1600 students, with parental permission, in grades K-5 received oral examinations and/or prophylaxis from our two dental hygienists in the school environment. Of those students examined, over 270 students were referred to a local dentist or dental clinic for follow-up care and treatment. The dental hygienists also provided oral health education in the preschools, elementary schools and at the high school health fair.

H1N1 Influenza Pandemic The H1N1 Influenza Pandemic was the leading health issue that the Milford Health Department addressed this year. Throughout the summer and fall of 2009 and into the winter months of 2010 every division of the Health Department was involved in the planning and execution of plans for the H1N1 influenza pandemic. The school health services and public health nursing division focused primarily on non-pharmaceutical mitigation activities in the schools, school located vaccination programs and community vaccination programs.

School Response and School Located Clinics for H1N1 Influenza Pandemic Recognizing that the school community and school age children in particular are vehicles for transmission of the novel H1N1 influenza virus, the Milford Health Department and school nurses worked collaboratively with the Milford Public Schools to ensure that non-pharmaceutical measures were taken in the school setting to inform students, families and staff with correct health information and to control the spread of disease in the school setting.

The school nurses are well aware of the chronic and acute health conditions of their students and have a trusted rapport with their students' families. The nurses monitored attendance and provided the Health Department with daily reports of influenza like illness (ILI) in their students.

The Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) case definition for ILI: fever ($\geq 100^{\circ} F$ plus cough, sore throat or both in the absence of another known cause of disease.

Students observed to have ILI were promptly excluded from school for a prescribed number of days (defined by CDC and the Connecticut Department of Public Health [CT DPH]) and referred to their primary care provider, especially those at greatest risk from complications of H1N1 influenza.

Some pediatric providers in the community provided the H1N1 vaccine for their patients. For other children, the Milford Health Department in collaboration with the South Central CT Visiting Nurses Association (SCCVNA), provided school located H1N1 vaccination clinics. Over 1000 school children were pre-registered for the immunization and over 600 received the vaccine; by the time the priority groups were opened to include all children, many had received their immunization elsewhere, which may account for the lower number of school located vaccinations.

Community H1N1 Vaccination Programs Over 35 H1N1 vaccination clinics were held by the Milford Health Department within the city of Milford. The clinics were held at The Milford Health Department, the Milford Public Schools, The Parson's Government Center and the Westfield CT Post Mall. Over 3,500 individuals were vaccinated at the clinics, with the vast majority being Milford residents. The clinics, which were held on weekdays, evenings and weekends, were staffed primarily by our public health/school nurses. When the clinics were scheduled as daytime weekday clinics, they were staffed by the SCCVNA nurses. Initially, priority groups designated by the CT DPH limited the individuals eligible for immunization. As vaccine supply increased, the priority groups expanded to soon include all individuals. Adhering to the priority groups in the early days of the vaccination effort was one of the many challenges encountered in the H1N1 Pandemic.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program The seasonal influenza vaccine campaign was impacted by the H1N1 Influenza Pandemic in several ways. Because the seasonal influenza vaccine and the H1N1 vaccine are each separate and distinct vaccinations, and because initially, the H1N1 vaccine was restricted to priority groups of individuals, separate immunization clinics were held. The Health Department annually offers a series of vaccine clinics held in a variety of settings to offer seasonal flu vaccine to our residents. This was accomplished this year as well, although the clinics were held earlier in the flu season. Flu clinics were offered throughout September and October. Clinics were held at the Milford Senior Center, Parson's Government Center, The Milford Health Department and other areas. The Health Department also shared vaccine with Milford physicians and other health departments in our region as many had a small supply of seasonal flu vaccine. The Milford Health Department provided over 4,400 doses of seasonal influenza vaccine during the 2009-10 flu season.

Immunization Clinics The Milford Health Department continues to provide opportunities for residents, both children and adults, to obtain necessary immunizations for disease prevention. All licensed immunizations for children and many immunizations available for adults are offered at the monthly Immunization Clinic. The Immunization Clinics continue to be well attended and the clinic staff works in collaboration with primary care providers and the State of Connecticut Central Immunization Registry (CIRTS) program to provide continuity of health services for individuals.

Immunizations required for school entry are offered both at the monthly clinics and also as needed for entry to school. The school nurses provide required immunizations for children within 24-48 hours of the request, therefore, facilitating their entry to school.

School Based Cigarette Smoking Cessation Program Cigarette smoking among adolescents nationwide remains a public health problem as one in five high school students are still smoking. Despite a sharp decline in smoking among adolescents from 1997-2003, the rate of decline slowed or leveled off from 2003-present. Milford has observed adolescent cigarette smoking at our high schools as well, especially in the student population at The Academy where several years ago, estimates noted 90% of students were currently smoking cigarettes. For the past several years, Yale University researchers have offered a smoking cessation program at each of our three Milford High Schools. The Yale research program, which is held over a four week period, includes three components: contingency management in which participants are

rewarded for not smoking; one-on-one counseling at school to help students through the quitting process; and nicotine replacement therapy, in which students (with parental permission) may or may not receive a nicotine patch.

The Yale program has collaborated with fourteen Connecticut public high schools and they have been successful in assisting teens to quit smoking. The Yale researchers have noted that the collaboration and support of the Milford schools and parents have contributed to the success of the program.

Community Health

Disease Surveillance: From July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, there were 328 cases of disease reported to the Milford health Department, an 8% decrease from the previous fiscal year. Influenza was the most reported disease, representing (50%) of all cases reported this year. Forty- one (41) of those cases were laboratory confirmed as 2009 H1N1 influenza. The attached tables list the top ten reported diseases during the 2009 – 2010 year, along with the number of cases reported by month with October and November having the highest number of cases reported for the year. The significant increase during October and November is attributed to 80% influenza cases. The final quarter (March 2010 – June 2010) did not reflect any additional cases of influenza.

In light of the novel H1N1 pandemic, the Community Health Coordinator and Community Health Nurse continued to be deeply involved in increased surveillance, monitoring and case investigation activities throughout the 2009–2010 fiscal year. Enhanced Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) surveillance efforts allow for early detection of cases of pandemic influenza through monitoring student/employee absenteeism. The goal of ILI surveillance is also to track trends in influenza disease activity and identify populations that are severely affected on a local level. Epidemiological case investigation includes a review of all reports of ILI in daycare, school, occupational or other settings to determine whether a cluster of influenza-like illness is present.

Tuberculosis. One of Milford cases of active tuberculosis involved a school aged child. The MHD coordinated and monitored tuberculosis care with the child's physician and family. In addition, the MHD conducted an extensive investigation of school and community contacts. MHD did not find any spread of tuberculosis in the school or community.

In order to prevent the spread of tuberculosis within Milford, The Milford Health Department continues our aggressive policy of tracking and monitoring tuberculosis cases by conducting case/contact investigation, case management and direct observed therapy (DOT). DOT involves, at a minimum, monthly visits with patients to monitor medications and progress. Direct observed therapy was provided to 2 patients in Milford this fiscal year. The Community Health Nurse continues to monitor these two patients, who are scheduled to complete treatment in the upcoming fiscal year. In addition to the DOT cases, we have been actively monitoring one other case of active tuberculosis and cases of latent tuberculosis.

Lead surveillance this year involved monitoring the lead levels of eight children. Lead abatement is being conducted on two properties that involved children identified with lead

poisoning. The Milford Health Department continues to conduct voluntary inspections of lead in homes of residents whose children have a lead level above 10 µg/dl.

Increased monitoring of food borne illnesses and follow up investigation/education continues to be a function of the Health Department. There were 17 confirmed cases of food borne illness reported this year, including reports of salmonellosis, campylobacteriosis, giardiasis, cyclosporiasis and vibrio (see attached chart). For cases of food borne illness involving a food establishment worker, day care attendee, and /or health care worker, the Community Health Coordinator conducted epidemiological investigations and worked with the Environmental Health Division to ensure appropriate control measures were implemented to successfully prevent an outbreak. Safe food handling measures and proper hand washing techniques were stressed with these individuals as well.

Grants Management. The Community Health Coordinator applies for grants for funding for several projects throughout the year by submitting written applications to various national, state, and local organizations. In addition, the Community Health Coordinator is responsible for the management of all grants received by the Health Department, totaling over \$460,000 this fiscal year. The Community Health Coordinator has written applications for funding or continued funding for the grants listed below. The following is a list of the grants that the Health Department has received during this fiscal year:

- Asthma Initiatives (\$23,750)
- Preventive Health (\$7,109)
- Community Development Block Grant (\$35,000)
- Per Capita Grant (\$63,343.58)
- Local Public Health Preparedness Planning (\$86,199)
- Regional Public Health Preparedness Planning (\$80,000)
- Cities Readiness Initiative Grant (\$160,000)
- National Association of City & County Health Officials Medical Reserve Corps Grant (\$5,000)
- Lead Poisoning & Prevention Program (\$4,924)

Community Health Programs & Projects. This year the Community Health Coordinator implemented the following health initiatives.

- *Neighbor – to – Neighbor Lifeline Grant.* The Milford Health Department continues to provide residents with emergency food vouchers funded through a grant provided by the United Way of Greater New Haven and the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven. From July 09 – June 2010 the Health Department assisted twenty six (26) families composed of ninety (90) individuals with emergency food assistance. The Milford Health Department worked in collaboration with multiple city agencies including the Family Resource Center, the Department of Human Services and the Milford Senior Center to address these critical needs.

- *Milford Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI):* Over the past two years the Health Department has received funding from the State of Connecticut Children's Trust Fund to implement the Parent Leadership Training Institute in Milford. PLTI enables parents to become leading advocates for children in their community. Milford has graduated thirty seven (37) PLTI participants, most of who continue to take active leadership roles in the community. PLTI graduates now serve on the Board of Directors of the United Way, Milford's Promise, Kids Count and the Milford Board of Education. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints at the State level the PLTI grant was not available this year. We remain hopeful that funding will become available for the 2010 – 2011 year.
- *Putting on AIRS.* This regional home environmental risk assessment program is designed to improve environmental conditions for asthmatic children in order to decrease asthma-related adverse events. This program is funded by a grant through the CT Department of Public Health, with the Milford Health Department as the lead agency. Participating towns within the region include Branford, East Haven, Hamden, Meriden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Woodbridge, Wallingford, and West Haven. Our relationship with pediatric providers in our region continues to be strengthened, as our Program Coordinator has been able to convey the value of this program to providers by working so closely with them.

The program received 100 referrals for the 2009 calendar year with 63% of the referrals accepting the program's services. This number represents an increase from 82 referrals and a 61% acceptance rate of the programs services during the 2008 calendar year.

For the past two years each month the third year pediatric resident working at the primary care centers at Yale and St. Raphael Hospitals when acting as chief have completed their Community Rotation with the program. As part of this program, residents have spent a half-day with the Putting on AIRS program learning about the value of working with public health officials to manage asthma within the community. During the 2009 program year one of the residents chose the POA program to be highlighted at the Pediatric Grand Rounds Presentation at the Hospital of St. Raphael's.

Region 6 successfully navigated a new system with Community Health Network (CHN). When a referral has CHN as their primary health insurance, CHN will cover the cost of non-allergen mattress and pillow covers. During the course of the 2009 year 6 referral families were able to receive these which allows the program to reserve coves for more families who do not have CHN as their insurance carries.

Emergency Preparedness

The Milford Health Department continues to manage several preparedness-focused grants: two regionally based grants from the CT Department of Public Health (DPH) & and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to continue our efforts in planning for the Strategic National Stockpile and the Cities Readiness Initiative; one local grant from DPH and CDC supporting local public health and pandemic influenza planning; and two grants from the

National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) to enrich the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), under the umbrella of the Milford Coalition for Community Preparedness.

The Health Department has taken an active leadership role in preparedness education and awareness associated with climate change adaptation both in the state and nationally. In addition, the Health Department has taken an active leadership role in preparedness education and awareness associated with Novel Influenza A H1N1 Virus both locally and regionally.

Milford Coalition for Community Preparedness Volunteers in the Coalition have had opportunities to participate in exercises and specialized training this year. With the addition of a new volunteer coordinator, efforts to streamline volunteer management have been successful. More trainings that are specialized and seminars for issues such as animal emergency response, shelter management, etc. will be offered for volunteers who have an interest to focus in certain areas. New attempts at recruitment for the Milford Coalition/MRC include an advertisement in the Chamber of Commerce Directory for 2009-2010 and attendance at local and regional community events such as the Milford Oyster Festival. Milford Fire Department has worked closely with the Health Department on incorporating the cities volunteers into the Code RED call-back system, creating call lists for the Medical Reserve Corps and additional lists for the Community Emergency Response Teams. Volunteers participated in the H1N1 Influenza response from the start of the pandemic in April 2009.

Training Milford Health Department staff and/or Milford Coalition for Community Preparedness volunteers participated in several training sessions throughout the year regarding topics such as the National Incident Management System, RealOpt (POD management software), Animal Response Teams, Red Cross shelter management, N-95 respirator fit testing, media management and pandemic influenza preparedness and CPR. Training sessions were conducted by Milford Health Department staff as well as by various agencies including the CDC, the American Medical Response, DPH, the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and Yale University. Milford Health Department continues to develop exercises using the HSEEP model in compliance with DEMHS and DPH protocol for training and exercises.

Local Exercises The following exercises were conducted to evaluate the current public health preparedness and emergency response plans for the City of Milford. Please note: Although all local and regional efforts this grant year were focused on the H1N1 influenza pandemic, all of Milford's emergency response plans were successfully tested.

- *Milford Health Department Novel H1N1 Influenza Clinic:* Milford Health Department hosted regular vaccination clinics in the office at 82 New Haven Avenue. The clinics were held by appointment only for the duration. The two CERT groups and the Medical Reserve Corps volunteers answered phones and assisted staff with scheduling appointments.
- *Milford Health Department Vaccination Clinic, Westfield Connecticut Post Mall:* The Health Department began hosting clinics at the CT Post Mall to close the gap on reaching

vulnerable populations and people underserved to receive vaccine. The H1N1 clinic at the Mall continued to be by appointment for priority groups. Milford Health Department opened up vaccine availability in accordance with CDC recommendations. The clinic site was an excellent venue to boost exposure of the local health department and provided vital health education. The partnership with Westfield continues to be positive and operational.

The third year for CRI Technical Assistant Reviews is underway for Region 2. The reviews began in 2008 as a way to evaluate local mass dispensing plans, determine strengths and gap, and outline areas for improvement as they relate to Points of Dispensing (POD) set-up, security, resources, etc. TAR scores in Region 2 increased by 24% from 2008 to 2009. Milford Health assists the eight [8] Mass Dispensing Areas (MDAs) participating in the reviews by coordinating trainings and providing materials to support local plans.

Regional/CRI Exercises: The following exercises are scheduled or were conducted to evaluate current public health preparedness and emergency response plans for DEMHS Region 2.

- *Regional Tabletop Exercise:* The New Haven Health Department took the lead for a Regional Tabletop exercise regarded alternative dispensing methods. With guidance from Milford Health and other regional partners, outreach was made to faith-based organizations to stand as Closed-PODs during an emergency event.
- *Regional Sheltering Exercise:* A full-scale sheltering exercise coordinated by New Haven Emergency Management Directors is scheduled for July 31st. The exercise planning team is comprised of a diverse group including public health representatives, the DEMHS Region 2 Coordinator, Police, Fire, and Board of Education representatives. A tabletop exercise was coordinated for cities and towns throughout Region 2 to critically examine their shelter operations plans.

Regional/CRI Activities: This past year, H1N1 influenza was the main focus for Health Departments and Districts throughout Region 2. Although clinics were managed at the local levels, Regional collaboration was coordinated through an H1N1 Coordinating Committee. The committee was divided into three taskforces including 1) Antiviral and Vaccine 2) Mitigation and 3) Risk Communication. The committee represented the diverse partnerships needed in preparedness planning and exemplified Milford Health Department's ability to coordinate regional planning in an emergency event. A Continuity of Operations Guide for Businesses during pandemic influenza, compiled by the Milford Health Department in 2007, was tailored for businesses throughout Region 2 to utilize for H1N1 Influenza.

The CT Department of Public Health appointed the Milford Health Department to lead Region 2 in the Vulnerable Populations Identification and Outreach Initiative for Emergency Planning and Response. The Oasis database was developed which identifies vulnerable populations in cities and towns throughout Connecticut. In March 2010, a workshop was coordinated to review the database and provide guidance documents to assist locals in refining emergency response plans.

The Milford Health Department coordinated a Youth Clerkship Program throughout Region 2. The program is an opportunity for students to intern at public health organizations such as health departments/districts and community-based health centers. A total of four [4] clerks work throughout the Region assisting with various projects including the development of public education materials and conducting presentations on public health preparedness. Youth Clerks are currently recording a video for the 3 Days 3 Ways emergency preparedness campaign to demonstrate the importance of being self-sufficient during an emergency.

Regional Training: Milford Health coordinated a Regional workshop on Real-Opt software, a program measuring throughput data for PODs. A representative from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) led the training session at the University of New Haven. Two emergency preparedness coordinators in Region 2 attended the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Prep Course at the CDC. Representatives throughout the United States attended the week long course that covers Mass Dispensing planning and operations at the local, state, and federal levels.

Regional Equipment: Funding from the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) was allocated to Region 2 ESF-8 for the purchase of audio visual equipment. The Milford Health Department purchased five [5] cameras and two [2] video cameras from Milford Photo. This equipment is a Regional asset and can be used by all Health Departments and Districts in the Region for trainings, exercises, drills, etc.

2010-2011 Anticipated Emergency Preparedness Activities: The Milford Health Department has applied for 3 years of funding to continue as the lead department for public health preparedness strategies in Region 2. Funding has been allocated for local preparedness planning in the City of Milford for the 2010 – 2011 grant year. The Health Department is planning to exercise their Drive-through POD model in the upcoming year, and will continue to update local emergency plans annually.

Emergency Preparedness planning encompasses the All-Hazards planning approach. The purpose of this is to establish methods and procedures to be used in response to public health emergencies and incidents. Milford is vulnerable to disasters caused by extreme weather events including hurricanes, windstorms, blizzards, floods, and extreme heat. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP) coordinated a subcommittee to determine Connecticut's vulnerabilities to climate change and adaptation strategies for local jurisdictions to utilize in preparedness planning. The Milford Health Department recognizes the threat of extreme weather events on its community. The health department is an active participant on the CT DEP Adaptation Subcommittee, and continues to outline strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change on the public's health. Milford has plans in place for extreme weather events, and continues to review and test these plans through drills and exercises.