

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. The 2015-2016 year proved to be a productive year for the Milford Health Department (MHD). The MHD continues its mission to protect and promote the health of Milford residents by providing core services in the areas of school health, environmental health, community health, and public health emergency preparedness. With the recent consolidation with the Department of Human Services and Employment & Training, the Health Department looks forward to continuing to enhance and streamline services provided in order to continue to protect the health and safety of the residents of the city of Milford.

The MHD continues to enforce the *anti-bligh ordinance, public health code, and housing code* in the city of Milford and address the needs of individuals living in troubled housing conditions. The Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly (C.R.I.D.E.) serves as an integral part of the Milford social service network and as a model program for other communities. The Environmental Health Division staff 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 living in troubled housing. As the economic climate continues to change, the MHD anticipates the need for increased services to bridge the gap to address social service needs of individuals thereby allowing them the resources to bring properties into compliance with state and local codes.

The MHD investigated multiple *foodborne illness outbreaks* in Milford in conjunction with CT Department of Public Health this year. Foodborne illness investigations are conducted whenever gastrointestinal disease is suspected to be associated with the consumption of a food at a particular establishment. These investigations are extensive in nature, requiring a significant number of resources in terms of personnel and time in order to protect the public from further illness. Often, such local foodborne outbreak investigations are the impetus to product recalls on a national level.

The MHD continues to provide immunization clinics and vaccinations to the community on a routine basis. The department has also continued its collaboration efforts with the Visiting Nurses Association which has lead to increase in services this year. With each year, nursing staff continue to observe increased cases of medical complexity within the Milford school population. Nursing staff are working diligently to meet the medical needs of students and families to promote a safe and healthy learning environment for those at risk.

The MHD continues to support *local public health preparedness planning* and to enrich the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). MHD staff work to plan for and adapt to new and emerging threats. This past year MHD staff participated in a regional table top exercise and a full scale statewide exercise to test infectious disease response plans and our capacity to receive assets in the event of an emergency. Local collaboration is completed through quarterly Emergency Management meetings with Milford City department leads, as well as the Local Emergency Planning Committee and participation on the City's Hazard Mitigation Committee. MHD continues to manage preparedness-focused grants through CT DPH and CDC to sustain preparedness initiatives and continue our efforts in planning on a regional level and support local public health operations.

The MHD has continued to aggressively pursue *grant funding* garnering over \$485,000 in new or continued funding this fiscal year. Many of the grants obtained are programmatic in nature and allow the MHD to focus on chronic diseases, environmental health in residences, and parent leadership training. As a result of the MHD successfully meeting and/or exceeding contract expectations, the MHD has been able to obtain increases in funding relative to previous years. In the coming year, the Director of Health aims to have a particular focus on grant funding to assist with national public health accreditation efforts for the MHD.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Environmental Health Division

The Milford Environmental Health Division (MEHD) works to preserve and promote the health of the public and the physical environment. The MEHD enforces local ordinances, state laws, regulations and codes that are in place to protect residents from environmental hazards. Individuals that carry out the provisions of the program must be licensed as a Registered Sanitarian in the State of Connecticut. Throughout the fiscal year, the Division focuses on protecting the community and enforcing laws in the areas of food protection, housing, blight, land use, recreational swimming areas and waters, public swimming pool inspection, healthy homes assessments, onsite septic systems, land division/subdivision review and approval, mosquito/vector control, public and private drinking water quality, surface water quality, groundwater protection, childhood lead poisoning prevention, childcare facility inspections; emergency preparedness and response, and hotel/motel inspections.

The follow highlights MEHD activities that took place throughout the 2015-2016 fiscal year:

Food Protection Program. There were 9 complaints of foodborne illness received. In conjunction with the CT Department of Public Health Food Protection Program, MEHD investigated 4 foodborne illness outbreaks in Milford. Foodborne illness investigations are conducted whenever gastrointestinal disease is suspected to be associated with the consumption of a food at a particular establishment. Whenever an association between foodborne illnesses and a food establishment is made, a detailed investigation is conducted to evaluate all potential sources of the disease and to identify contributing factors. According to the CDC's 2014 Foodborne Disease Outbreak annual report, 65% of foods associated with an outbreak were prepared in a restaurant.

Hoarding and Troubled Housing. The Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly (C.R.I.D.E.) continues to serve as an integral part of the Milford social service network and as a model program for other communities. The Environmental Health Division staff, including the Case Manager and 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/or disabled persons and families living in troubled housing. The Health Department has established strong partnerships with Elderly Protective Services, the Dept. of Children and Families, Bridges, Animal Control, Probate Court and Home Front in an effort to enable residents to continue to live independently in a safe and healthy manner in their own homes. There were 15 new troubled housing cases this fiscal year (see Table 1).

The Chief of the Environmental Division and the Case Manager continue to participate in the statewide CT Hoarding Work group. As a result of the work of this group, in May 2016 the CT General Assembly passed "An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Hoarding."

Healthy Homes Program. The Milford Health Department has received funding through the CT Department of Public Health (DPH) to implement a Healthy Homes assessment program for a fifth year. Rather than taking a single issue approach to assessing health and safety hazards in the home, a Healthy Homes assessment uses a comprehensive approach, looking at the dwelling as a whole system. A wide variety of environmental health and safety concerns are examined including mold, lead, allergens, carbon monoxide, fire safety and pesticides. At the conclusion of each assessment residents are provided with education and guidance to remedy any potentially unhealthy living conditions. As one of only two health departments in the state implementing this program, the Milford Health Department made 18 home visits to families wanting their home environment evaluated for environmental hazards.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Anti-Blight Enforcement . The City Anti-blight ordinance was established in 2009 “for the betterment of the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Citizens of Milford.” Since September 2009 the health department has been charged with enforcement of the City’s anti-blight ordinance (see Table 2). Over the last six years it has been the experience of this office that many conditions and situations can be remedied by an informal process that includes communication with the property owner or other responsible parties and development of an abatement plan, and continued monitoring. However, if responsible parties are not responsive or have abandoned their property, the Health Department will move forward with a legal enforcement process. This process is initiated by the issuance of a Notice of Violation (NOV) to all property owners as well as all lien holders listed on the City Clerk records. The NOV describes the violations and a time frame in which compliance must occur. During this period of compliance, the property owner may request an extension of the prescribed compliance date; based on the merit of the request, extensions are most often granted. If the property owner does not comply with the NOV within the period of compliance and has not made any contact with this office, a blight lien is placed on the property record for the penalty fine of \$100 for each day the violation continues to exist. After 6 months of fine accrual, the City Attorney’s office will commence foreclosure action on the property. At the close of this fiscal year, twenty-six properties are currently undergoing enforcement action. The City is actively foreclosing on five blighted properties.

Bathing Places/Beach Monitoring Program. Public and semi-public swimming pools and spas are routinely inspected by Department Sanitarians to evaluate compliance with applicable regulations, particularly those associated with the prevention of waterborne illnesses. A swimming pool is “public” if it is open to members of the general public, regardless of whether a fee is charged for admission. A swimming pool is “semi-public” if it is operated in conjunction with lodging such as a hotel, motel, resort, apartment, townhouse or condominium complex, or community pool facilities operated by, and exclusively for, a residential development. There were 25 public and semi-public swimming pools and spas in Milford in FY 15/16. MHD Sanitarians conducted 27 swimming pool and spa inspections (see Table 3).

The Beach Monitoring Program continues to provide weekly beach water quality data from 25 sample sites along the Milford coastline. Environmental Health Division Sanitarians collected 224 water samples that were sent to the CT State laboratory and tested for the presence of disease causing bacteria. When collecting sea water samples, Sanitarians also inspect the tide line to identify potential hazards such as medical waste and/or syringes. If there is something suspicious, the Police Department is promptly notified. Last summer, there was one instance in which certain sections of the Milford coastline had to be closed to swimming due to high bacteria levels; the closure lasted four days. The pollution that causes beach closures and illness in humans comes from many different places on land, but ultimately gets into the water through fast heavy rains over two inches and discharges from storm water drains.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Table 1. Housing Matters

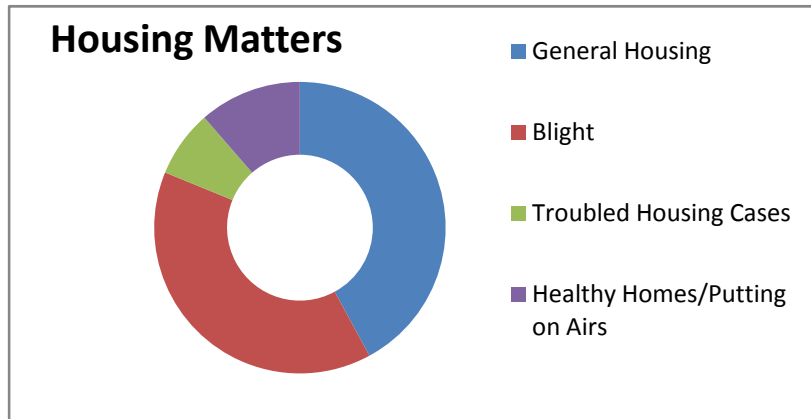
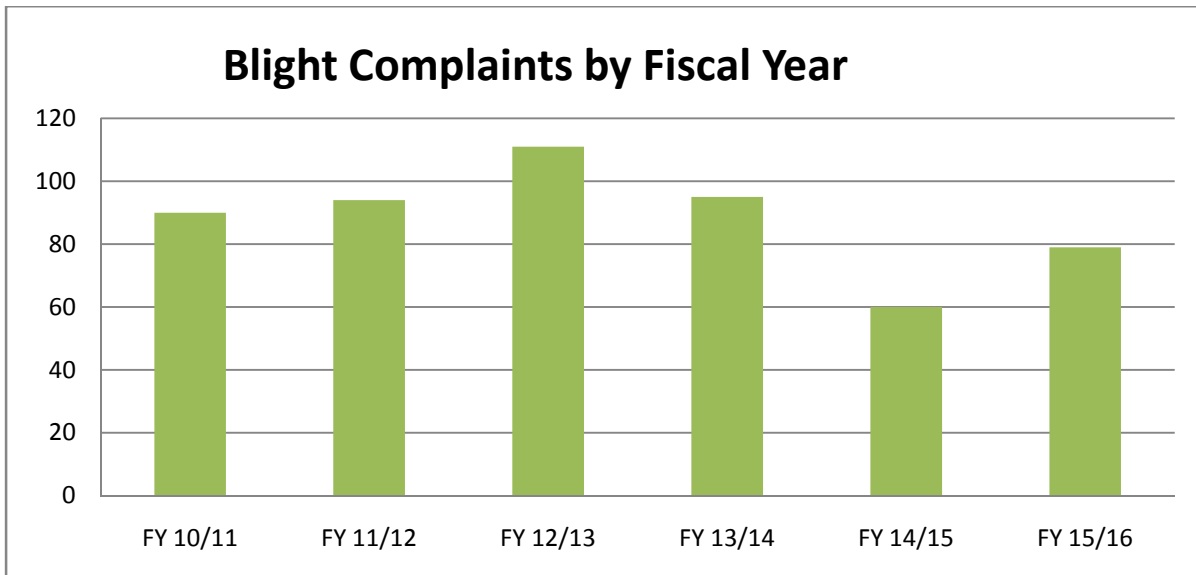


Table 2. Blight Complaints



HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Table 3. Environmental Health Numbers

<i>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BY THE NUMBERS</i>	<u>FY 15/16</u> <u>TOTALS</u>
Food Protection Program:	
Annual Licenses Issued	416
Routine Inspections	1073
Plan Review for new or remodeled establishments	53
Temporary Event Licenses Issued	356
Temporary Event Inspections	329
Legal Orders/Notice of Violation issued	74
Environmental Health Complaint Investigations:	420
Air Quality	36
Blight	79
Environmental Hazards	19
Food-borne Illness	9
Food Protection	27
Housing	85
Lead	3
Public Health Nuisance/General	101
Salons (Hair, tattoo, nail, massage)	4
Sewage	5
Vectors (Mosquitoes, bed bugs, rabies, vermin, rodents, etc.)	52
Legal Orders/Notice of Violation issued	43
Land Use:	
Planning & Zoning project reviews	6
Subsurface sewage disposal (soil testing/ new and repair permits)	5
Building addition reviews/approvals for homes served by septic systems	8
Building additions/pool reviews for homes served by sanitary sewers	24
Septic system abandonment inspections	34
Beach Monitoring:	
Samples collected	224
Complaint investigations/Sanitary survey	16
Public Swimming Pool Operation and Inspection:	
Inspections	27
Plan reviews	0
Complaint Investigations	2
Lodging (Hotels/Motels):	
Annual permits issued	20
Routine Inspections	22
Schools & Daycare Centers:	
Daycare Center Inspections	17
Private School Inspections	3
In home Environmental Assessments:	
Lead poisoning prevention inspections	3
Healthy Homes Assessment	18
Putting on Airs asthma visits	5

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly. (C.R.I.D.E.)	
New troubled housing cases	15
On-going cases	12
Closed cases	1
Other Activities:	
Tick specimen delivery to CT Agricultural Experiment Station and resident follow-up	92
Public Education Presentations	4
Assistance to Fire, Police & State Agencies	19
Freedom of Information Requests (property & establishment record reviews)	186

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Public Health Nursing & School Health Services

Immunization Clinics. The Milford Health Department continues to provide monthly Immunization Clinics for the residents of Milford. The immunization clinics at the Milford Health Department are typically held on the second Tuesday of the month from 2:30 – 4:30 pm. Routine immunizations to prevent communicable disease are available for both children and adults. The Milford Health Department utilizes the Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking System (CIRTS) to review the previous vaccination data on children as a method to ensure that each child is getting the required and necessary vaccinations. Immunizations given at the Milford Health Department are then entered in the CIRTS database which will allow other medical providers to see the most up to date information on the vaccination status of their clients.

The Health Department also participates in the Connecticut State Department of Public Health “Cocoon Program”. Public health officials recommend pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination for all persons who have close contact with infants. The Tdap vaccine is available free of charge for expectant or new parents, grandparents and other caregivers of infants under one year of age. This strategy is known as “cocooning” thereby forming a “cocoon” of protection against pertussis. The Milford Health Department administered 67 doses of Tdap this year.

Over 70 children received at least one vaccination (excluding influenza and TB testing) at the Milford Health Department this year, and several adults also received immunizations (excluding influenza, TB testing and Cocoon Program). Local veterinary providers continue to refer their new employees to the Milford Health Department for prophylactic rabies vaccination.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program. The seasonal influenza vaccine program was successfully implemented, with 962 doses of the influenza vaccine administered to residents and employees in Milford. The Milford Health Department offered a variety of settings for residents and employees of the city to receive their annual influenza vaccination. Clinics were held at the Milford Senior Center, the City of Milford Health & Wellness Fair, the Parson’s Building, Boys and Girls Village, as well as a general public clinic at the Health Department. The majority of clinics were held during the month of October.

The Health Department continues to provide a high dose influenza vaccine, Fluzone, which is recommended for individuals over 65 years of age. Fluzone was offered at the Senior Center clinics and at all community clinics. The Health Department administered 344 doses of high dose flu vaccine this season. Regular flu vaccinations were also administered to approximately 200 City employees and approximately 310 Board of Education employees. The Milford Health Department provided nursing services which enabled three homebound residents of Milford to receive the flu vaccine in the comfort of their own home. Community education regarding the importance of receiving an annual influenza vaccine continues to be an important aspect of the Milford Health Department Influenza prevention program.

Influenza Like Illness Surveillance. Following the H1N1 pandemic of 2009-10, the Health Department has continued to monitor our school population for evidence of influenza like illness (ILI) which is described to be fever over 100° plus cough, sore throat or both in the absence of another known cause of disease. Two elementary schools showed an uptick in ILI in early spring which fortunately was short lived. In general, ILI trends this fiscal year were relatively stable among Milford students. Due to the invaluable information that the ILI monitoring provides, we will continue this surveillance activity in the year ahead.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Well Child Clinic. The Well Child Clinics for newborns through 18 years of age are offered free of charge to residents on select Tuesdays at the Milford Health Department. This service is in collaboration with the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut. Well children can receive physical exams, immunizations, health screenings, lead screening, developmental screening, school physicals and camp physicals. Twelve Well Child Clinics were held this year. A total of 36 patients were seen for any of the above mentioned services which represents an increase in clients from last year.

School Health Services-Public Health Nursing. The Milford Public Health Nurses continued to provide school nursing services in all of our public and private schools for approximately 7,000 students in grades Pre-K through grade 12 and post graduate programs. Dr. Andrew Carlson continues to serve as our school/community medical advisor.

The goal of school nursing is to have children in school, in class and ready to learn; to that end, the Milford school nurses report that students return to class 90% of the time within 30 minutes of visiting the Health Office, being assessed and treated by the school nurse. The school nurses had approximately 46,000 health office visits by the students in Milford this year for illness, injury or other health management issues.

Approximately 2500 of our students have a health condition that requires health management by the school nurse to ensure a safe environment for the student. Many of these children require special treatments or procedures to be done during the school day. These procedures may include gastrointestinal tube feedings for students unable to swallow, blood glucose monitoring for diabetic students, respiratory management for asthmatic students or those children unable to cough or clear respiratory secretions by themselves. During the course of this past year, the Milford school nurses administered 16,214 medications or procedures to the students in Milford.

Mandated health screenings (vision, hearing, posture) are conducted at designated grade levels each year to check for abnormalities. These health screenings are also conducted at the request of a parent or teacher. The Milford school nurses performed close to 15,000 health screenings during the 2015-2016 school year and referrals were made to the appropriate provider if an abnormality was noted.

In addition to caring for students, all Milford Public Health Nurses administer emergency care to staff and visitors of the school buildings. They are all trained in the Incident Command System and are ready to assist if needed with emergency shelters, warming centers and mass vaccination clinics for the City of Milford.

School Health Services – Oral Health Program. Over 1,200 students in grades kindergarten through five received oral health services at school this school year with parental permission. Services were provided by two dental hygienists who work under the direction of the Director of Nursing and in consultation with a local dentist. These services are designed to augment, not replace, the children's routine dental health care. Students received oral exams, prophylaxis and sealants as needed. Of the children examined, 110 were referred to a local dentist or dental clinic for follow-up care and treatment.

Bloodborne Pathogen Training. The Director of Nursing provided Bloodborne Pathogen Training to City of Milford employees as requested by department heads throughout the year. The training involved reviewing important aspects of the Milford Bloodborne Pathogen Policy including the guidelines for exposure control measures and post exposure protocol. This training is provided to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standards and must be done upon hiring and on an annual basis.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Public Health Nursing & School Health Services July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

	Current Year	Previous Year
July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016		
	7/2015-6/2016	7/2014-6/2015
Dental Hygienists (2)		
Permission Slips sent out	3613	2905
#Oral Screenings Kindergarten	226	167
#Oral exams, cleanings	1038	1192
#Students receiving sealants	268	418
#Sealants applied	816	1336
#Students w/primary decay	76	91
#Students w/permanent decay	25	21
#Students w/ fistulas	6	8
#Referrals made	110	125
Dental Education in Class	72	96
Immunizations Clinics	40	41
DTaP	11	8
Hepatitis A	12	12
Hepatitis B	11	25
HIB	1	2
HPV	2	2
Influenza (IMMUNIZATION)	962	1187
Mantoux (PPD) Tuberculin Test	184	221
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	15	14
Meningococcal	20	14
Pneumonia Vaccine	3	3
Polio (IPV)	16	15
Rabies	3	9
TD	4	5
Tdap	14	18
Tdap (Cocoon Program)	67	91
Varicella Vaccine	32	26
Visiting Nurse Association		
Well Child Clinic	12	12
Patients	36	33
Physicals Completed	36	33
Immunizations	24	22

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Community Health Division

Disease Surveillance. From July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, there were 595 cases of disease reported to the Milford Health Department. Influenza was the most reported disease, with nearly thirty-nine percent (39%) of all cases reported this year. The attached table lists the top ten reported diseases during the 2015-2016 year (see Table 1), along with the number of cases reported by month (see Table 3) with March 2016 having the highest number of cases reported for the year.

In order to prevent the spread of tuberculosis within Milford, the Director of Health and Community Health Nurse track and monitor tuberculosis cases by conducting case/contact investigation and direct observed therapy (DOT). DOT involves, at a minimum, monthly monitoring and visits with patients to provide medications and discuss progress. This fiscal year the MHD coordinated and monitored tuberculosis care for at least four cases of active tuberculosis. This service has doubled compared to last year with some cases requiring extensive coordination with hospitals, infectious disease physicians, family members, and monitoring with the CT Department of Public Health. The MHD continues to work closely with patients, the CT Department of Public Health, and providers to ensure positive outcomes through consistent medical care and education regarding the importance of treatment adherence.

Increased monitoring of food borne illnesses and follow up investigation/education continues to be a core function of the Health Department. There were 49 cases of foodborne illness reported this year, with reports of salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis being the most prevalent (See Table 2). Additionally, the Director of Health conducted follow-up investigation and education in conjunction with the Environmental Health Division at multiple facilities that experienced outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness during the year. The MHD was involved in four major foodborne illness outbreak investigations this year that involved multiple food service establishments. The investigation includes epidemiological surveys, collection of stool specimens, coordination with the CT Department of Public Health, as well as neighboring local health departments. This is one of the first steps that can potentially lead to the involvement of the Centers for Disease and Control. Their involvement in an outbreak would ultimately bring awareness to product recalls on a national level. For all cases of food borne illness involving a food establishment worker, day care attendee, and/or health care worker, the Director of Health works 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 Director of Health applies for grants for funding for several projects throughout the year by submitting written applications to various national, state, and local organizations. The growth of grants for the Department has nearly doubled since last year totaling over \$485,000. The Director has written and submitted several grant applications over the past year in addition to applications for funding or continued funding for the grants listed below. The following is a list of the new or renewed grants that the Health Department has received during this fiscal year:

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Grants Management	Amount
Asthma Initiatives	\$51,795
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Ebola	\$184,000
Public Health Emergency Preparedness HPP Ebola	\$30,467
Lead Poisoning and Prevention	\$5,062
CT DPH Medical Reserve Corps	\$3,000
Local Public Health Preparedness Planning	\$101,471
National Association of City and County Health Officials Medical Reserve Corps	\$15,000
Parent Leadership Training Institute	\$24,691.75
Per Capita	\$57,841.28
Preventive Health/Healthy Homes Initiative	\$12,059
	Total
	\$485,387.03

Community Health Programs & Projects. This year, the Milford Health Department implemented the following health initiatives.

- **Putting on AIRS (POA).** 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 for Asthma Region 6. Participating towns within the region include Branford, East Haven, Hamden, Meriden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Woodbridge, Wallingford, and West Haven. The program’s goal is to improve an individual’s asthma control thus decreasing asthma-related adverse events through home-based education regarding environmental triggers, understanding asthma path physiology, medications and tools (i.e. Asthma Action Plans). Education is provided in either the home or classroom setting by a public health nurse or asthma educator and a sanitarian. All Milford referrals are offered a Healthy Homes assessment as well. The Putting on AIRS asthma program received 107 total referrals for this contract year, with 61 home visits completed. The medical community continues to be the primary referral source for POA. Program staff continues to meet and discuss funding and revising the program for asthma in the upcoming year with DPH.

Milford Health Department chairs the Greater New Haven Area Asthma Coalition.

Region 6 remains active in several partnerships through-out Greater New Haven that allows clients to be served additional benefits without financial gain from the grant. The partnerships are as follows:

- Yale New Haven Hospitals Resident Education in Advocacy and Community Health (REACH) - This collaboration is designed to provide the continuous rotation of pediatric residents and interns with opportunities to understand and experience how community circumstances influence the health and well- being of children in the Greater New Haven community. During their rotation with Putting on AIRS, ideally they join staff on a home visit. Although there are no direct services provided, the doctors are provided a firsthand look at what is covered during the home visit. This in turn, gives them the additional education to better describe the program to their patients, fostering trust between a family and their

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

medical provider. This collaboration then translates into more referrals accepting the programs services.

- *Access to Epic-* Epic is Yale New Haven Hospital's and their counterparts' Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. It allows a way for information to flow in a database system that creates collaboration among physicians, providers and patients across the entire Yale New Haven Health system. One of its many purposes is to improve access to health information along with helping to standardize care. Recently, through ongoing collaboration efforts with our Program Coordinator, physicians and providers can now refer patients to Putting on AIRS using Epic. As a result of this growing partnership, we have managed to gain referrals from Yale providers by providing them easy electronic access to a referral form and the Asthma Action Plan (AAP).
- ***Parent Leadership Training Institute.*** The Milford Health Department was awarded a grant in the amount of \$24,691.75 to implement the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) in Milford. PLTI enables parents to become leading advocates for children in their community through participation in four phases of training – a one day retreat, a 10-week course on parent leadership, a 10 week course on civic engagement, and a community project to practice what participants have learned within a community context. PLTI kicked off with 18 participants who attended a one day retreat on Saturday, January 16, 2016 at the First United Church of Christ, Congregational in Milford. Several guests of honor welcomed the class at the retreat including Mayor Blake, Representative Pam Staneski, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Elizabeth Feser, Peggy Kelly Executive Director of Kids Count in Milford and Health Director Deepa Joseph. Fifteen (15) individuals graduated from the program on Monday May 23, 2016 at City Hall. Several honored guests spoke at the local graduation ceremony including Mayor Blake, Health Director Deepa Joseph, State Representative Pam Staneski and Elaine Zimmerman from the Connecticut Commission on Children. This is our 7th year implementing this training and it has truly been a success. Over half of this year's group of graduates have already joined organizations and committees in the City of Milford. The funding announcement for the 2016-2017 grant cycle has been released by the State Education Resource Center (SERC). The MHD will submit an application in the hopes of beginning recruitment for our 8th PLTI class.
- ***Have a Heart—Give Smart.*** Addressing concerns regarding panhandling has been continued by the panhandling task force in Milford. Both the Director of Health and the Health Department case manager chair the task force. The task force is comprised of representatives from municipal agencies, businesses, and nonprofit organizations in Milford that are impacted by or provide services for this population. The task force continues to bring awareness to the "Have a Heart, Give Smart," Campaign in order to address the root causes of panhandling. The focus of the campaign is to educate and encourage members of the public to find alternative ways of giving by making donations to local human service agencies that provide help for those in need, rather than giving money directly to panhandlers. Have a Heart, Give Smart campaign launched in early November 2014 with the release of a billboard in downtown Milford near Daniel Street encouraging residents and visitors to say "No" to panhandling and "Yes" to giving. Another billboard was put up in May 2016 asserting the same message. Currently, the Health Department and some members of the task force have continued to distribute educational materials throughout the community regarding panhandling and the importance of giving to local agencies that can provide lasting assistance to individuals in need, as well as speaking with panhandlers themselves to ensure they are aware of the resources available to them. Finally, as part of the campaign, six sandwich board signs, as well as larger posters for store windows, have been strategically placed around town to provide additional outreach and visibility.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Table 1. Top Ten Reportable Communicable Diseases

Disease	Total	%
Influenza	232	39%
Chlamydia	112	19%
Hepatitis C	55	9%
Lyme Disease	47	8%
Salmonellosis	26	4%
Syphilis	16	3%
Other	13	2%
Gonorrhea	12	2%
Campylobacteriosis	9	2%
Staphylococcus aureus disease, invasive methicillin-resistant	9	2%

Table 2. Food borne Illness Reports

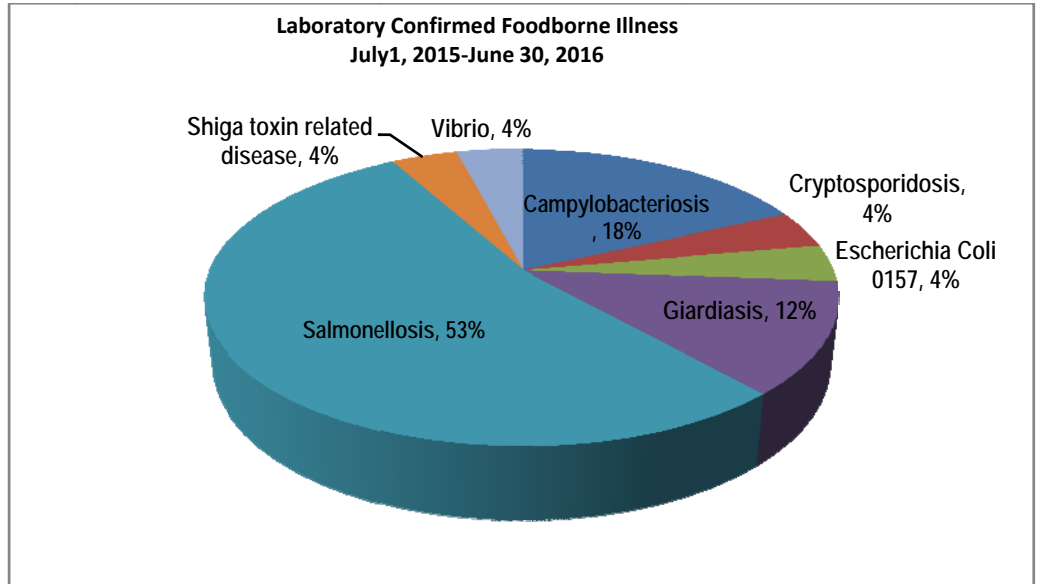
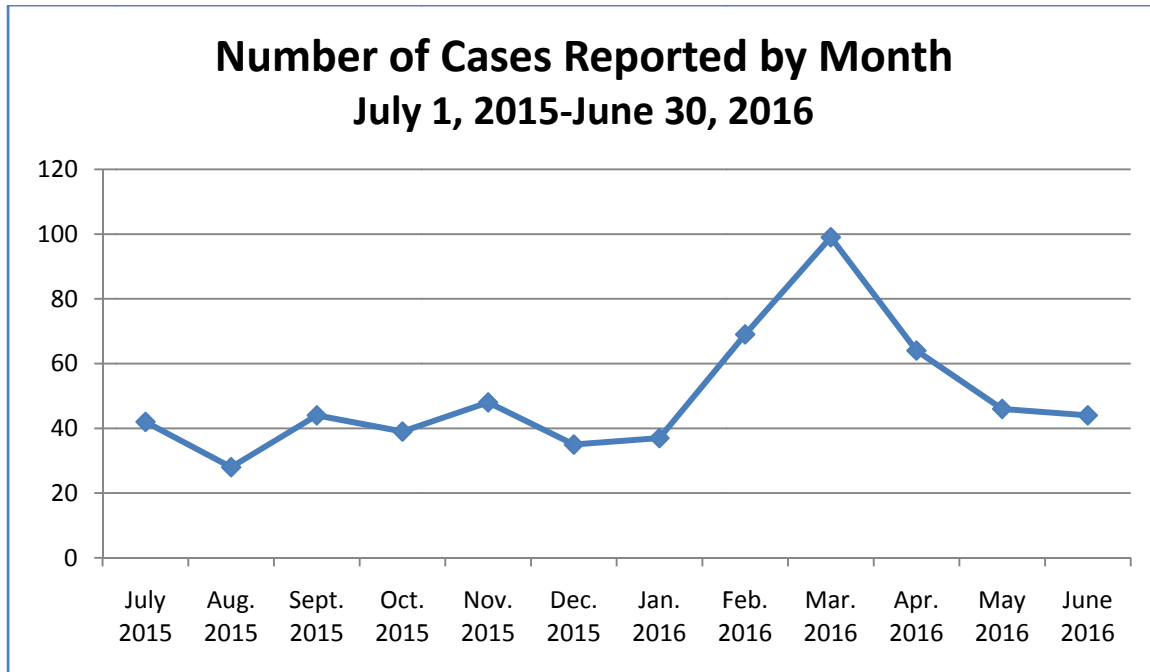


Table 3. Number of Reportable Diseases by Month



HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Division

Milford as a Regional Public Health Partner. The State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security has five regional planning districts. The Milford Health Department (MHD) as part of New Haven County is part of Region 2. MHD is an active participant and the lead health department for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8: Public Health & Medical. In the past year, MHD participated in emergency planning meetings and exercises addressing infectious disease response, planning for Family Assistance Centers and helping to coordinate for Long Term Health Care facilities to have a uniform mutual aid assistance plan throughout Connecticut.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) awarded a grant to Region 2, ESF 8 partners to plan for response to Ebola Virus (EVD) and other infectious diseases. Funds were utilized to conduct a drill. MHD staff participated in a region wide table top exercise to plan for how Milford would respond to an infectious individual(s). Participating partners were from all of Region 2, as well as Milford city agencies, Milford Hospital and private organizations. This drill was not only a test for local health authorities but also served as a venue to further develop healthcare coalition relationships.

The CT DPH organized a full scale statewide exercise in April of 2016. The focus of this 4 day drill was to test asset delivery and chain of custody from the federal level down to the local communities of Connecticut. In a real emergency, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) material would be sent to CT DPH; delivery from the state would then trickle down to the individual cities and towns. The state and local health departments are required to test all aspects of this system at least every five years. This year's exercise successfully tested delivery to all Mass Dispensing Areas (MDAs) and acute care hospitals. MHD staff participated at Region 2, Points of Dispensing (PODs) in New Haven and Wallingford. In addition to the exercise itself, MHD staff attended software training events and participated in tests of the CT DPH emergency call back system.

The CT DPH is planning for the next full scale exercise this fall with the focus being a mass causality event. In the event of a mass causality, CT DPH is tasking local health departments with the responsibility of operating a Family Assistance Center (FAC). Region 2 is working with Region 1 (Fairfield County) and Region 5 (Litchfield County) to finalize a draft operational plan. Regional collaboration is achieved through exercise participation and coordinating committees. These discussions are crucial for consistency among local health departments.

Milford Preparedness and Response Initiatives. Milford Health Department (MHD) staff work continuously to plan for and adapt to new and emerging threats. The main focus and continued goals for MHD going forward include communications with state and federal leaders, maintaining and developing appropriate response plans and working with local health and medical agencies who would be involved with response. Local collaboration is done through quarterly Emergency Management meetings with Milford City department leads, as well as, the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and participation on the city's Hazard Mitigation Committee. These committees represent the diverse partnerships needed in preparedness planning and exemplify the importance of local collaboration.

Emergency Operations Plans are reviewed at least annually by the local emergency preparedness coordinator and Director of Health plans constantly evolve. The health department maintains the *All-Hazards Public Health Emergency Response Plan* as part of the City's Local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) under Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8: Public Health & Medical Services, ESF 6: Mass Care

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

& Sheltering and ESF 11: Agriculture & Natural Resources. Additionally the CT Department of Public Health conducts a review of local health plans regarding mass dispensing events. The Medical Countermeasure Operational Readiness Review (MCM ORR) is a tool created by the CDC. The state health department uses the MCM ORR as “report card” for the health department’s emergency operation plans. All public health emergency preparedness plans are subject to review for compliance and completeness to fulfill grant requirements each year and assess the community’s level of operational readiness. The reviews evaluate local mass dispensing plans, determine strengths and gaps, and outline areas for improvement as they relate to Points of Dispensing (POD) set-up, security, resources, etc.

All MHD core staff and school nurses have training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS). In addition to educational training, all staff participates in N95 respirator fit testing in collaboration with Milford Hospital. The purpose of fit testing is to ensure all staff are physically able to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) in response to an infectious person(s). School registered nurses continue to be operational staff with the Director of Nursing as operations chief. Health Department Registered Sanitarians continue to be responsible for logistics of health department emergency management with the Chief Sanitarian as the lead for logistics for all natural and public health disaster events.

MHD staff routinely respond to public health emergency calls from the Milford Police and Fire Departments. Environmental Emergency Response includes all chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) events. In 2016, MHD responded to reports of an unknown biological agent and white powder. Once building evacuation was ordered, MHD activated the White Powder Protocol in coordination with Milford Police, Milford Fire/Emergency Management, CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), US Postal Inspection service and the FBI. MHD notified CT DPH Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response and the CT DPH laboratory. MHD provided the exposed individuals with decontamination directions for clothing and personal effects, guidance for cleaning the office space and general environmental interventions to prevent exposures in the future. No one was harmed and the response provided a dynamic test of City Emergency Protocols.

Grants Management. MHD continues to manage preparedness-focused grants: a grant from the CT Department of Public Health (DPH) through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to sustain preparedness initiatives, continue our efforts in planning on a regional level and support local public health operations; and a regional grant to plan for Ebola Virus and other infectious diseases. Milford was awarded a grant from the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) to enhance the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Milford’s volunteer group.

Milford Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) & Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). The MHD continues to focus on recruitment efforts as a volunteer priority. In addition to our website information, recruitment information is located in our Milford Health Department E-Magazine, which is distributed through direct email to volunteers as well as being posted on the MHD website. This has helped spread the word about the rewards of volunteering and has encouraged current volunteers to invite family and friends to join our membership.

Milford Health Department is currently working with Yale climate change professionals to survey volunteers and their attitudes about climate change and storm preparedness. In the past few years, Milford’s shoreline has suffered from storm surge and flooding. The MRC/CERT volunteers have been helpful with shelter operations and commodity distribution. Our goal would be towards working to develop a Neighborhood Ambassador program where Milford could use community volunteers to help

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MAYOR 2015-2016

spread the word on the importance of early evacuation. MHD is in the early stages of this plan and will hopefully be able to use this program to recruit additional volunteers and build community resiliency.