

Lawrence Township Health Department 2015 Annual Report

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lawrence Township Health Department provides professional, competent and efficient environmental and public health services to the residents of this community. Under the mandates of the Public Health Practice Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health and the ordinances and policies of the Board of Health, the health department promotes and protects the public's health by the use of disease prevention, health promotion and education, inspections and enforcement activities.

The Health Department responds quickly and effectively to the ever-changing priorities of the public health field in order to meet the needs of the community.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The health department's primary responsibility is to protect the health of the residents and to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. The Public Health Practice Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health, N.J.A.C. 8:52, designates activities to be conducted by Local Boards of Health. The three core public health functions include the following shared services:

- Assess and monitor the health of the community and at-risk populations to identify health problems and priorities.
- Formulate public policies with community and government leaders to address local and national public health problems and priorities.
- Provide populations with access to appropriate and cost-effective care including health promotion, disease prevention and follow-up evaluation.

The required activities are conducted by the health department staff which consists of five full-time staff, one part-time nurse, one per diem nurse and one per diem animal control officer. The Township has a professional service contract for pediatric services. In addition, private contractors are hired for veterinarian services, animal shelter services and deer recovery services.

FULL-TIME STAFF

Carol Chamberlain, B.S., M.Ed.Director
Licensed Health Officer A-100515
Licensed Registered Environmental Health Specialist B-100515

Kathryn Korwin, B.S.N.Public Health Nurse
Registered Professional Nurse
Lead Inspector / Risk Assessor – Permit Number 024726

Aimee Landau, B.S.Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Licensed R.E.H.S., Reg #B-2176
Lead Inspector / Risk Assessor – Permit Number 022657
Certified Pool / Spa Operator – Reg. No. 19-293722
Commercial Pesticide Applicator License #28855B
Retail Food Specialist certified by NJDOH Food Inspection Standardization Program

Carmela Warne, B.A., M.P.H.Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Licensed R.E.H.S. – Reg. No. B-2349
Certified Pool / Spa Operator – Reg. No. 08-268801

Christine BuckAnimal Control Officer
Certified Animal Control Officer No. 516
Certified Animal Cruelty Investigator No. 010

Linda CiosekRegistrar of Vital Statistics
Certified Municipal Registrar CMR #1216

PER DIEM STAFF

Lisa PetersonAssistant Animal Control Officer
Certified Animal Control Officer No. 02433
Certified Cruelty Investigator No. 437

Carol NicholasPublic Health Nurse
Registered Professional Nurse

2015 DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- The health department successfully completed active monitoring for Ebola with four individuals arriving to Lawrence Township from one of the Ebola-affected countries. Each individual had their temperature monitored twice daily for twenty-one days. Their temperatures were reported to the New Jersey Department of Health each day. Thankfully, none of the individuals became symptomatic during the twenty-one day incubation period.

In relation to this activity, a grant of \$2,100 was received from the New Jersey Health Officer's Association to assist with the cost of the monitoring.

- The health department participated in a county-wide community health needs assessment project in 2015. The Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership led the community health needs assessment and a community health improvement plan has been drafted as a result of the findings in the needs assessment. Over 100 agencies, including healthcare facilities, public health agencies, social service agencies, and other health related groups as well as county residents participated in the development of the Community Health Improvement Plan. A presentation to the Mercer County community is to be scheduled in early 2016.
- As part of the health department's continuing efforts in emergency preparedness, a trailer has been purchased for the temporary sheltering of domestic animals. As we have seen in previous emergencies, residents need to know their pets will be safely sheltered in the event of an evacuation. The health department appreciates the assistance of the public works department with this project.

The next step is to begin to stock the trailer with necessary supplies and to develop a protocol for use of the trailer.

SHARED SERVICES

Below is a list of shared services in which the health department currently participates.

Health Service

- Child Health Services – Provider
- Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic-Receiver
- Nurse Case Manager for Childhood Lead-Poisoning-Receiver
- Emergency Public Health Shared Services
- Drug and Alcohol Prevention Services
- Deer Carcass Removal

- Disposing of Animals
- Tuberculosis Services – Receiver

Partner

- Hopewell Township Shared Service Agreement
- Hamilton Township Shared Service Agreement

- City of Trenton Memorandum of Understanding

- Mercer County Shared Agreement

- Mercer County Shared Service Agreement
- Mercer County Cooperative Purchasing Agreement

- Hopewell Township Shared Service
- Trenton Health Team-Grant for Mercer County

PARTNERSHIPS

The role of the local board of health includes assuring access to prevention services. The health department works in conjunction with healthcare providers and community agencies to assure residents have access to health education and health promotion programs as well as to health screenings. The health department works cooperatively with the following agencies:

- St. Lawrence Rehabilitation Center
- Capital Health System – Hopewell Campus
- Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton
- Princeton Healthcare System
- Mercer Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Mercer County Prevention Coalition
- Lawrence Township Board of Education
- The College of New Jersey School of Nursing
- Homefront
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- Hunterdon/Mercer County Regional Chronic Disease Coalition
- Mercer County Nutrition Program
- Rider University
- Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership
- Lawrence Senior Center
- Lawrence Township Recreation Department

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- Regulate and Inspect Retail Food Establishments (inspections and plan reviews)
- Regulate and Inspect Public Bathing Places
- Regulate and Inspect Tanning Facilities
- Regulate and Inspect Body Art Facilities
- Regulate and Inspect Massage Therapy Establishments
- Regulate and Inspect Youth Camps
- Vermin Control Investigations
- Weeds and Obnoxious Growth Investigations
- Non-Residential Property Maintenance Complaint Investigations
- Public Health Nuisance Complaint Investigations
- Litter and Debris Investigations
- Tobacco Age of Sale Enforcement and Inspections
- Foodborne Illness Investigations
- Child Care Center Inspections
- Enforcement of State and Local Regulations

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Public Health Emergency Response
- Public Health Emergency Planning and Exercise

HEALTH EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND ADVOCACY

- Community Health Assessment
- Community Health Partnership Development
- Community Health Planning
- Smoking Prevention Education
- Nutrition and Exercise Education
- Counseling and Referral Services
- Emergency Preparedness Promotion and Education
- Community Health Fairs
- Management of Lawrence Alcohol and Drug Alliance Grant
- Senior Center Health Education Programs and Health Screenings
- Substance Abuse Prevention Programs

ADULT HEALTH PROMOTION

- Cancer Screening and Counseling
- Diabetes Screening and Counseling
- Cardiovascular Screening and Counseling (blood pressure screening)
- Vision and Hearing Screening

AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION CONTROL

- Air Pollution and Odor Complaint Investigations
- Noise Complaint Investigations
- Enforce Smoking Regulations
- Radon Testing and Education

SERVICES WE PROVIDE

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

- Infectious Disease Reporting and Investigation
- Investigate Disease Outbreaks
- Immunization Services for Uninsured Infants and Children
- School and Day Care Immunization Audits
- Tuberculosis Screening and Treatment Monitoring
- Sexually Transmitted Disease Testing, Counseling and Treatment
- Influenza Vaccinations

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROMOTION

- Nutrition Counseling Services
- Child Health Conferences
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program
- Childhood Lead Poisoning Risk Assessments
- Blood Lead Screening for Children
- Childhood Lead Poisoning Investigations and Abatement Enforcement
- Prenatal and Postpartum Home Visits
- Vision and Hearing Screenings
- NJ Family Care Information and Referral

RABIES AND ANIMAL CONTROL

- Animal Bite Investigations and Quarantine Enforcement
- Control of Stray Animals
- Assistance with Wildlife Conflicts
- Rabies Vaccination Clinics
- Inspections of Kennels, Shelters and Pounds
- Coordination of Deer Recovery
- Testing of Crows for West Nile Virus
- Pet Shop and Kennel Inspections

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

- Well Installation and Well Sealing Inspections
- Septic System Regulation and Inspections
- Private Well Testing Act Notification
- Soil Testing and Site Evaluation for Septic Systems

VITAL STATISTICS

- Marriage Licenses, Domestic Partnership and Civil Union Licenses
- Certified Copies of Marriage, Birth and Death Certificates

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Issuance of Permits and Licenses
- Review of Zoning Board and Planning Board Applications
- Coordination of Partnerships and Shared Services
- Coordinates Financial Activities Including Revenue Collection

HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

VITAL STATISTICS

The Registrar of Vital Statistics maintains all records of the marriages, domestic partnerships, civil unions, births and deaths, which occur in Lawrence Township. The services provided including handling burial permits, issuing marriage licenses and certified copies of vital records.

- **In 2015, 120 marriage licenses were issued and a total of 264 certified copies of vital records were issued.**

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER HEALTH SERVICES

The environmental and consumer health inspections are conducted by the Registered Environmental Health Specialists (inspectors). Inspections, education and enforcement activities are conducted to ensure businesses are in compliance with public health regulations. Residential and commercial properties are inspected to assure they are maintained in compliance with local ordinances.

RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

Routine inspections of all retail food establishments located within the township are conducted annually. Based on the risk level of the establishment, which is determined by the extent of food preparation performed, inspections may be conducted more frequently than once per year. Inspections are conducted to ensure establishments are clean, safe and are operated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:24 "Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments". The inspectors also respond to complaints and monitor recalled food products to ensure the food sold and served is safe for consumption by the public.

- **In 2015, there were 351 establishments licensed in Lawrence Township.**
- **There were 414 routine inspections conducted and 46 re-inspections were conducted.**
- **Plan reviews were conducted for 19 new or renovated food establishments.**
- **There were 26 pre-operational inspections of food establishments conducted in 2015.**
- **In addition, there were a total of 54 non-routine emergency and or complaint-related investigations completed.**

PUBLIC BATHING PLACES

The inspectors monitor and inspect public bathing places throughout the municipality. This includes pools at schools, health clubs and housing complexes. Water quality is monitored and pools checked for the required safety equipment and personnel as required by N.J.A.C. 8:26 "Public Recreational Bathing".

- **In 2015 there were 28 licensed public bathing places.**
- **There were a total of 56 public bathing place inspections completed.**
- **A total of 16 re-inspections of bathing places were conducted.**

YOUTH CAMPS

The New Jersey Department of Health requires youth camps to be inspected by the local health department prior to opening each year and there may be follow-up inspections conducted at the request of the State Health Department. Inspections are conducted to ensure that camps are in compliance with sanitation and safety standards as required by N.J.A.C. 8:25.

- **In 2015 there were 14 youth camps licensed by the state, which were located in Lawrence Township.**
- **There were a total of 9 pre-opening inspections performed.**

PUBLIC HEALTH NUISANCES

The health department receives requests for investigations of public health nuisances concerning weeds, insects, rodents, garbage, trash, yard waste, odors and general unsanitary conditions. Inspections, owner notification, follow-up and enforcement are conducted for abatement of the violations. Local ordinances are enforced to assure the abatement of the various public health nuisances.

- **In 2015 there were 284 inspections performed and 583 re-inspections conducted.**
- **These inspections were completed by the Registered Environmental Health Specialists and the Health Officer.**
- **There were 29 enforcement actions taken by the inspection staff for non-compliance.**

INDIVIDUAL WATER SUPPLIES (WELLS)

The health department monitors the installation of wells and the sealing of abandoned wells as per N.J.D.E.P. requirements. In addition, the results of water testing conducted in accordance with the N.J.D.E.P. Private Well Testing Act are reviewed by the health department staff. Property owners are notified by the health department when testing standards are exceeded.

- **There were 3 well installation inspections completed and 2 well abandonment inspections performed in 2015.**

INDIVIDUAL SEWAGE DISPOSAL (SEPTIC SYSTEMS)

The design, construction and operation of individual sewage disposal systems are monitored to assure the proper treatment and disposal of sewage on individual properties.

- **Plan reviews were completed for 15 septic systems. The work on these systems consists mostly of the replacement of disposal fields or significant repair to existing septic systems which have been identified as malfunctioning. Most of the malfunctioning systems have been identified during real estate transfers.**
- **Permits were issued for minor repairs for septic system on 7 properties.**
- **A total of 85 installation inspections were conducted**
- **49 Soil tests were witnessed by the health department.**

TANNING FACILITIES

N.J.A.C. 8:28, Tanning Facilities regulations were adopted in 2009. Currently the NJDHSS does not mandate these facilities be inspected. The state collects a registration fee for tanning facilities. There is a reimbursement process by which the municipality receives a reimbursement of \$200.00 to conduct an inspection of a tanning facility.

- **One tanning salon in Lawrence Township was registered with the state health department in 2015.**
- **This facility was inspected by the Lawrence Township Health Department and the state health department reimbursed the township \$200.00 for completing the inspection.**

BODY ART ESTABLISHMENTS

The NDHSS currently does not require body art establishments to be inspected according to the Public Health Practice Standards. The township does have an ordinance that requires body art establishments to be licensed.

- **Currently there are no body art establishments located in the township.**

MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENTS

In 2015 eight massage establishments were licensed in Lawrence Township. The inspection of the establishment includes a review of the credentials of each therapist to ensure they are properly licensed. In addition, the establishments are inspected in order to assure they are in compliance with the local ordinance.

- **There were 8 inspections of massage establishments in 2015.**

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICES

The public health nurse is responsible for the following programs within the health department; Maternal/Child Health, Communicable Disease, Chronic Disease/Adult Health, Health Promotion, and Public Health Emergency Planning. Services are provided to residents of all ages including infants, pre-school and school age children, adults and older adults. These services are provided by one part-time Public Health Nurse with the assistance of a per diem nurse. The health department works in conjunction with area physicians, school nurses, hospitals, long-term care facilities and state and county health department staff to assure these activities are completed in a timely and accurate manner.

CHILD HEALTH CONFERENCE(S)

The health department provides childhood immunizations and well-baby visits to children ages two months to eighteen years who reside in Lawrence who are uninsured or underinsured. The vaccine is provided to the health department by the federal Vaccine for Children program. The clinic is staffed by the two public health nurses and a pediatrician. Many of these families have needs beyond clinical needs for which the nurses provide information, resources and referrals to the families.

- **There were 12 child health conferences conducted.**
- **A total of 133 children were seen at the clinics with 261 immunizations being administered.**

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING

Chapter 13 of the State Sanitary Code states all children under the age of six years should have a blood test to determine their blood level. The parents of the children who attend the child health conference are educated on the importance of blood lead testing and are offered the testing at the clinic. Parents are also provided with information on how to reduce their child's potential exposure to lead. Currently, Lawrence Township has a shared service agreement with the City of Trenton for the Nurse Case Management portion of the elevated lead investigations.

- **Two children were screened for elevated blood levels in 2015.**

IMMUNIZATIONS

The public health nurse conducts immunization audits at pre-schools and private and public schools in Lawrence Township. In 2015, there were twenty-one pre-schools and fourteen schools in Lawrence Township. The audits consist of reviewing immunization records to assure children are age-appropriately vaccinated.

- **There were 20 pre-schools and 6 elementary schools that were audited in 2015.**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

REPORTABLE DISEASES

N.J.A.C. 8:57-1 "Reportable Diseases" requires the reporting and investigation of specific diseases where the individual resides. Investigation and follow-up is completed for all reportable disease and for outbreaks of respiratory illness or gastro-intestinal illness in any institution or long-term care facility. Institutional outbreaks require immediate attention as well as coordination and communication with the staff of the facility.

All reportable diseases are reported through the N.J.D.H.S.S. Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System (CDRSS). Upon receipt of reportable disease, the public health nurse investigates the case, inputs the details of the case into the CDRSS including laboratory test results, the case management details from the physician and the diagnosis analysis.

- **In 2015 there were 122 communicable diseases reported and investigated.**
- **Of those, 98 cases were confirmed positive while others were deemed not to be a case, based on the case definition as determined by the New Jersey Department of Health.**

TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL

Testing for exposure to Tuberculosis is conducted on specific high-risk individuals within the community. The individuals include teachers, pre-school staff, contacts of individuals who have tested positive for tuberculosis and health care professionals.

- **There were 19 people screened for tuberculosis exposure in 2015.**
- **The City of Trenton and the Trenton Health Team are working cooperatively to provide case management for Mercer County residents who test positive for tuberculosis.**
- **The Lawrence Township Public Health Nurse conducts Direct Observed Therapy (D.O.T.) to residents who test positive for Tuberculosis and are on long-term medication treatment. The nurse provided at-home observation of medication administration for two residents in 2015. A total of 151 home visits were conducted for the two patients.**

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

This service is provided to residents through a shared service agreement with the Hamilton Township Health Department. The agreement includes the patient assessment, diagnosis, treatment and contact follow-up.

- **There were 22 Lawrence residents who received services for sexually transmitted diseases in 2015.**

ADULT HEALTH SERVICES

The health department provides screenings and education for chronic diseases including blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. In addition, the health department works with local providers to provide cancer screenings and for referrals for health screenings.

DIABETES AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

The public health nurse offers blood sugar and blood pressure screenings monthly at the Lawrence Township Municipal building. In addition, local providers will periodically offer screenings at the Lawrence Senior Center during the monthly health program.

- **In 2015 the public health nurse provided 30 diabetes risk assessments and 123 blood pressure screenings.**
- **Additional screenings were offered by local providers throughout the year for a total of 374 screenings conducted.**

INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

Mass immunization clinics are offered annually by the health department and home visits are conducted by the public health nurses for homebound residents. Influenza vaccinations are initially offered to high-risk residents, such as individuals over the age of 65 years and those with chronic illness. Upon completion of those at high risk, the remaining vaccine is offered to residents and township employees.

- **In 2015 three seasonal influenza immunization clinics were conducted.**
- **There were a total of 298 immunizations administered.**
- **A fee of \$15.00 was charged for a flu vaccination for those who were not over 60 years of age or chronically ill.**
- **Medicare reimbursement will be sought for vaccinations given to individuals over 65 years of age.**

HEALTH PROMOTION

Throughout the year, health promotion activities are conducted by the health department staff. Some programs are health education programs for a specific group such as summer camp children or seniors, while other health promotion programs are integrated with other activities such as the St. Lawrence Bike Rodeo. The health department regularly works with local health providers, hospitals and area agencies to provide a variety of health promotion activities.

- **The health department participated in 20 health promotion activities reaching approximately 1420 individuals.**

PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

Local health officials respond to both man-made and natural disasters. The health department staff responds to power outages, water service disruptions, fires at restaurants as well as communicable disease issues.

In 2015, the health department responded to a water leak in a long-term care facility during a snow storm, power outages affecting food establishments and both fires or suppression system releases at restaurants. In addition, the inspection staff updated the emergency contact information for all retail food establishments for use in the Nixle system.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Lawrence Township has one full-time Animal Control Officer and a part-time back-up Assistant Animal Control Officer for emergencies. The Animal Control Officer is responsible for picking up stray and injured animals and for investigating and reporting animal bites which occur in the Township. The investigation of complaints and the enforcement of all state and local regulations pertaining to animals are performed by the Animal Control Officer. Kennels and pet shops are inspected annually by the Animal Control Officer to ensure compliance with state regulations. Rabies clinics are also coordinated by this office.

- **In 2015, 53 stray dogs and 121 stray cats were picked up by the Animal Control Officer.**
- **There were 31 dog bite investigations completed.**
- **4 kennels and pet shops were inspected.**
- **There were a total of 1740 calls for services addressed by the Animal Control Officer.**
- **In the Rabies Control Program, the township conducted 2 rabies vaccination clinics.**
- **A total of 374 dogs and cats were vaccinated at the clinics.**
- **There were 14 specimens submitted to the NJ State Laboratory for rabies testing in 2015. None of the specimens tested positive for rabies.**
- **Deer removal is a coordinated effort with the state, county, and a private contractor. The police department also assists with reporting dead deer for removal after hours. A total of 125 deer were removed from roadsides in 2015.**

LAWRENCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG ALLIANCE

The Municipal Alliance Committee is comprised of citizens and professionals from Lawrence Township. This group works together to develop a comprehensive, coordinated plan to provide substance abuse awareness activities to the residents of Lawrence. This work is done through the completion of a community needs assessment every few years. The results of the needs assessment are then used to develop a strategic plan.

Activities supported by the Alliance include Project Graduation at Lawrence High School, substance abuse and mental health programming on the BRONC Radio 107.7 at Rider University, Camp Fire NJ programs in the elementary schools and peer leadership activities at the high school. Health education programs are also conducted by the Alliance at the Lawrence Senior Center and at community events.

Funding for the Lawrence Alcohol and Drug Alliance is provided through a grant from the Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. In 2015, the funding amount was \$21,708.00.

2015 Lawrence Alcohol and Drug Alliance Committee

Carol Chamberlain, Health Officer

Lt. Timothy Drew, Lawrence Township Police Department

Ann Degennaro, Superintendent of School Designee

Sue Varga, Community Representative

Susan Stahley, Rider University

Kelly Nitti, Community Representative

FUTURE INITIATIVES

- * The health department will continue to participate in the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership. At this time, action plans are being created based on the recently drafted Community Health Improvement Plan. The health department is working with two of the priority groups to develop plans to address the health needs identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment.

- * The health department consumer health staff is working toward the implementation of a digital inspection program. The initial program will be for food inspections and then will expand to be used for pools and youth camps.

- * The health department will continue to work on emergency preparedness efforts. Staff members have started participating in the planning activities of the Central West Region which includes health departments from Mercer, Hunterdon, and Somerset counties. These preparedness activities include reviewing shelter concerns, distribution plans for medications in emergencies and participating in planning exercises.

- * Develop quality improvement plans for various program areas.

HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Mary Baird, Chairperson

Leo Brummel

Anthony Brickman, MD

Darlene Hanley

Maureen Adams

Kevin McGuigan, MD

Cathleen Lewis, Council Liaison

Carol Chamberlain, Health Officer, Staff Liaison