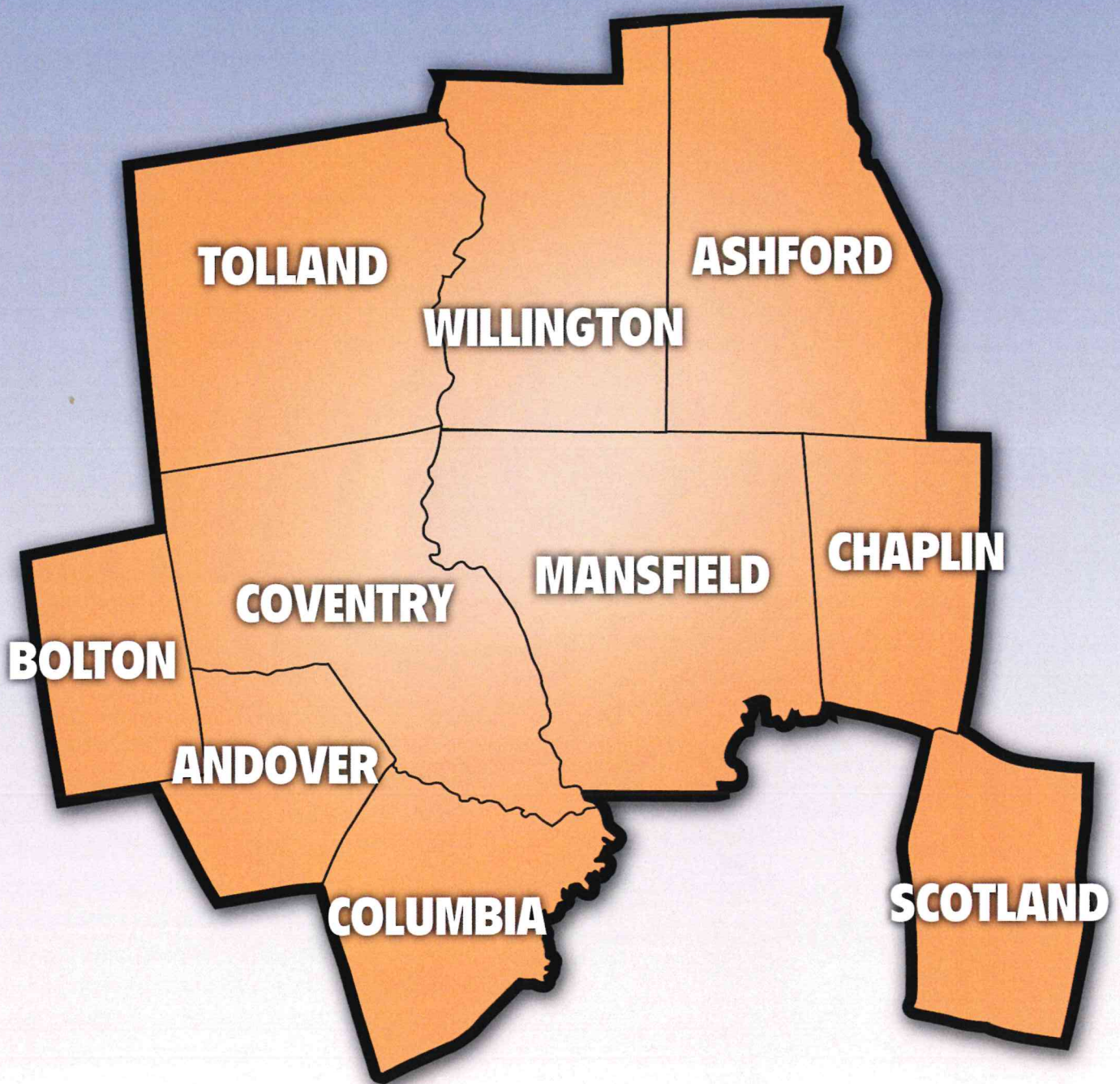




2023-2024



Serving the towns of:

Andover, Ashford, Bolton, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry,
Mansfield, Scotland, Tolland and Willington

Population: 79,045 Service Area: Approximately 208 Square Miles

HEALTH DISTRICT STAFF

- Robert L. Miller, MPH, RS Director of Health
- Kenneth Dardick, MD Medical Advisor
- Glenn Bagdoian, RS Sanitarian II
- Ande Bloom Project Specialist
- Millie Brosseau Office Manager
- Christopher Buter, MPH, REHS Sanitarian II
- Christine Grulke BSN, MSEd, RN Public Health Nurse
- Thad King, MPH, REHS, RS Sanitarian II
- Courtney LeBlanc, BSN, RN Public Health Nurse
- Mia Mitoma Environmental Health Inspector
- Lynette Swanson, RS Chief Sanitarian
- Cecile Serazo, BSN, RN Community Health and Wellness Coordinator
- Nishel Thompson, MS Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator



Front row left to right: Nishel Thompson, Christopher Buter, Millie Brosseau, Mia Mitoma
 Back row left to right: Glenn Bagdoian, Thad King, Lynette Swanson, Cecile Serazo, Robert Miller

EHHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- John Elsesser (Chair) Town of Coventry
- Mark Walter (Vice Chair) Town of Columbia
- Eric Anderson (Assistant Treasurer) Town of Andover
- Cathryn Silver-Smith Town of Ashford
- Jim Rupert Town of Bolton
- Vacant Town of Chaplin
- James Drumm Town of Coventry
- Ryan Aylesworth Town of Mansfield
- Heather Evans Town of Mansfield
- Maria Capriola Town of Mansfield
- Vacant Town of Scotland
- Brian Foley Town of Tolland
- Katherine Stargardt Town of Tolland
- Vacant Town of Willington



Chairman John Elsesser with Deb Walsh as she retires after 27 years of service on the EHHD Board of Directors.

MISSION STATEMENT -

Eastern Highlands Health District is committed to enhancing the quality of life in its communities through the prevention of illness, promotion of wellness, and protection of our human environment.

Vision - Healthy people, healthy communities ... healthier future.



Message from the Director

Another Year of Public Health Initiatives

I am delighted to present our local communities with the Eastern Highlands Health District Annual Report for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year. This past year, the Health District has implemented several innovative programs and initiatives that have significantly benefited our community. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of these accomplishments.

Community Health – The community health program was highly active this past year, supported by grant funding for two key initiatives. The first initiative focused on assessing barriers to vaccination uptake within the community. The findings from this assessment are now driving a comprehensive campaign to promote seasonal vaccinations. The second initiative is aimed at individuals at higher risk of hypertension, providing educational sessions and screening events. This five-year grant promises even more impactful programming in the coming years. Additionally, our community health staff hosted 14 pop-up vaccination clinics during the fall viral respiratory season and distributed over 7,500 COVID-19 test kits to schools, daycares, and the general public.

Environmental Health – This year saw a notable advancement in our environmental health efforts, marked by a workforce development grant that facilitated important training and professional development opportunities for our staff. Additionally, we participated in a statewide internship program for Master of Public Health candidates, further enriching the expertise of the labor market. A significant expansion of our childhood lead poisoning prevention program also took place this year. With the lowering of blood lead thresholds that trigger local health department intervention, our environmental health staff and public health nurse managed over 25 cases, providing educational and remediation support to affected parents and families.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response – Our Medical Reserve Corps was exceptionally active this past year, with over 120 volunteers mobilized to support multiple clinics, drills, and training sessions. Staff participated in various drills and exercises, including measles and pandemic flu tabletop exercises, two communication call-down drills, and the support of DEMHS Region 3’s application to NACCHO for Project Public Health Ready designation.

These accomplishments reflect our ongoing commitment to enhancing public health and ensuring the well-being of our community. We look forward to continuing this vital work in the coming year

My door is always open.

Yours in Health,

Robert L. Miller, MPH, RS
 Director of Health





Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Local health departments work across the nation to prevent disease, promote health and protect communities. The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) developed this logo to promote universal recognition of this critical work and to provide a consistent image and message for local health departments. EHHD is proud to support this national effort.

What is a Health District?

Health districts are much like full-time municipal health departments in the services they provide. They are governmental entities that carry out critical local public health functions that include: infectious disease control, code enforcement and health education. Through a binding relationship with member towns (provided for in state statutes), services are offered to a group of towns that may not have a full-time health department without district membership. Joining a health district is an attractive option for towns because they gain access to full-time public health services at minimal cost. Towns that are members of health districts provide annual per capita contributions to support health district operations. District membership increases the ability of a town to benefit from grant-funded public health programs.

Top 10 Benefits Your Community Receives as a Member of a Public Health District:

1. A professionally staffed department with fully trained and certified personnel.
2. Improved availability of services; seven days a week, 24 hours a day for emergencies.
3. Less fragmentation of services.
4. Uniform enforcement of state laws and regulations, codes and ordinances.
5. A regional approach to public health problems that cross town lines.
6. Pooling of manpower for backup services in times of need.
7. The capability to address a wider scope of public health problems and issues than your community could manage on its own.
8. Reduction of waste and maximized effectiveness through problem identification, priority setting, improved coordination and more efficient use of resources.
9. Eligibility for extensive state and federal funding, bringing services to the local level that might not otherwise be possible.
10. An opportunity for your town to network with other local health departments and state agencies.

10 Essential Services of Local Public Health:

1. **Monitor** health status to identify community health problems.
2. **Diagnose** and **investigate** health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. **Inform, educate** and **empower** people about health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. **Develop** policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Enforce** laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. **Assure** a competent public and personal health care workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. **Research** for new insights and innovative solutions to public health problems.

EHHD'S PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

We provide the community with a range of programs and services to promote and protect environmental, personal, and community health.

Emergency Preparedness

A single agency cannot address all-hazards emergency preparedness. Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD) continues to maintain partnerships to prepare for a successful community response to any emergency or disaster. EHHD is an active member of the CT DEMHS Region 4 ESF8 workgroup, which combines healthcare and community health in Eastern Connecticut. Regional activities this year included monthly meetings to discuss updating the regional medical countermeasures plan and prepare for a new budget period. EHHD provided support to Region 3 assisting with the Region 3 Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) application and served as an evaluator at their ESF-8 Flu Pandemic Tabletop exercise on September 23, 2023.

On April 23rd, 2024 EHHD attended the annual CT Emergency Management Symposium in Niantic, CT. This conference brought awareness to the different government levels and partners available for emergency management resources. May 10, 2024 EHHD staff attended the Region 3 Measles tabletop exercise; an infectious disease simulation to better prepare staff on how to mitigate possible outbreaks. May 15, 2024 EHHD staff participated in the Region 4 ESF-8 Social Media in Crisis Communication training. This training explored various ways to appropriately address the public during an emergency.



This year Eastern Highland Health District's Emergency Preparedness program continued its efforts to provide COVID-19 vaccinations and seasonal flu clinics at our office, farmers market, libraries and other community events. The EHHD Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), a unit of medical and non-medical volunteers from the community, continued to dedicate their time and effort to support all local vaccination events. EHHD preparedness provided a Point of Dispensing (POD) training to the MRC on May 16, 2024. This training provided an overview of the logistics and operations of an EHHD dispensing exercises.

EHHD will continue to keep its partners and constituents informed of any necessary COVID-19 information. We are working with federal, state, and regional partners to re-strategize and improve planning. For continued information, announcements, and updates please visit our social media pages or website www.ehhd.org

Environmental Programs



Water Quality – EHHD reviews and approves private well sites and drinking water analysis reports to assure that the drinking water supplies are free of harmful bacteria, chemicals and pollutants. Our sanitarians provide guidance and information to residents with water quality issues and concerns. The health district also inspects and monitors the water quality at public bathing areas and public swimming pools to ensure compliance with water quality and health safety standards.

Subsurface Sewage Disposal – EHHD sanitarians conduct site evaluations and soil testing, review septic system design plans, issue permits to construct, and perform site inspections during construction to verify compliance with codes and technical standards.

The health district is also required to evaluate the septic system impacts from proposed building additions, accessory structures and use changes on all properties served by on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems.

Salons – All barbershop, hairdressing, cosmetology, nail salons and spas are inspected annually for compliance with State and local laws and operating licenses are renewed annually.

Food Protection – All food service establishments are inspected frequently and operating licenses are renewed annually. Temporary and special events, including Farmers' Markets, where food is served to the public, are also permitted and inspected for food safety compliance.



Campground/Daycare/Youth Camp Inspections – EHHD conducts annual family campground inspections, biennial daycare inspections, and assists the State of Connecticut with youth camp kitchen inspections.

Complaint Investigation/Code Enforcement – EHHD staff investigate all complaints received by the department, ranging from food protection and water quality concerns to housing, sewage, vermin problems, and COVID-19. Where conditions are found that violate the Public Health Code or Connecticut General Statutes, and such conditions are not corrected voluntarily, property owners or violators are then subject to enforcement procedures.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention – EHHD receives laboratory reports of blood lead tests for children under age 6 when blood lead levels are 3.5 µg/dL or above, and tracks these cases until the child's blood lead level is confirmed below this reference level. The health district provides re-test reminder letters and educational packets to these families to help them understand the health risks associated with lead exposure and assist them in identifying and reducing lead hazards in their child's environment. Elevated blood lead levels can require additional intervention by the health district, including property inspections and lead abatement enforcement.

Communicable Disease Surveillance & Control

Disease Surveillance – EHHD conducts communicable disease surveillance to detect outbreaks. Examples of communicable diseases include but are not limited to: COVID-19, hepatitis, rabies, and foodborne illness. Statistics detailed at the end of this report represent the total number of reported disease cases that have public health significance in member towns (it is generally acknowledged that these diseases are underreported within the population).

Disease Control – Clinical laboratory and physician case reports are reviewed for possible follow-up and investigation. Outbreaks of disease are investigated, and measures to prevent and control further spread of disease are implemented when necessary. The second half of the fiscal year has been heavy on COVID-19 response efforts.



Community Health

EHHD Health Promotion initiatives focus on developing sustainable interventions and nurturing partnerships to build a healthier community. While targeted programming is utilized when appropriate, our primary focus is on policy, systems, and environmental changes to promote and encourage healthy lifestyles for all member town residents, employees, and visitors.



The Opioid Epidemic: EHHD partnered with North Central District Health Department and CT Harm Reduction Alliance to promote awareness about opioid overdose prevention, equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and resources to save lives.

Immunizations: EHHD continued to promote the importance of keeping up-to-date on immunizations and provided COVID-19 vaccines to the community. EHHD conducted an Immunization Rapid Community assessment, to increase awareness of barriers to COVID-19 and influenza vaccines

Healthy Homes: During the winter, EHHD distributed radon test kits to residents. These kits allow residents to be aware of the current radon levels in their home, and to take action if necessary.

Be Well: Developed by EHHD in 2006, this program provides comprehensive programming and promotion on a contractual basis to local employers. The goal of this employee wellness program is to improve the overall health and wellness of employees through initiatives that target risk factors for health. This program provides a fully contracted service to the Town of Tolland. Each year Be Well contributes to strong health outcomes and a significant return-on-investment for participating employers. Examples of programs and policies implemented include, but are not limited to, quarterly wellness newsletters, online wellness resources, on-site biometric health screenings, and wellness seminars. You may learn more about the program at www.ehhd.org/be_well. Find more information about having Be Well as part of your business or organization by sending an email to Be_well@ehhd.org.



Health Education: EHHD provides its member towns and residents with newsletters, social media sites and web pages for health information, and regular updates with health and wellness "hot topics." EHHD continually updates the social media pages (Facebook and Twitter). We focus "hot topic" updates on providing clear and concise information on health topics pertaining to a particular month or season. EHHD participated in several educational workshops and health fairs throughout the year focusing on topics such as COVID-19 awareness and prevention, vaccines, air quality, opioid overdose prevention, planning for care as you age, and flu prevention and treatment. EHHD continued to provide information on the prevention of acquiring Lyme disease, and other tick-borne illness as the use of outdoor spaces increased.



Plan4Health Initiative: EHHD continues to market a Toolkit to implement strategies to increase physical activity and access to healthy food for our region to the planning and zoning boards and commissions of small and rural towns in Connecticut. Anchored by the American Planning Association (APA) and the American Public Health Association (APHA), the Plan4Health grant funded EHHD and the Community Health Action Response Team (CHART) to create this toolkit. The Toolkit is maintained and updated to provide current and accurate information. The toolkit is available online at www.healthyeasternct.com

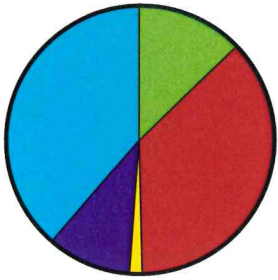


Tobacco Free Living: Focusing on policy, systems, and environmental changes, EHHD developed toolkits to encourage towns in Tolland County to adopt smoke free policies or ordinances to make their workplaces smoke free. The toolkits can be found on the EHHD website. A toolkit was developed to assist other organizations/communities to implement similar policies. In addition, EHHD continues to update a summary of smoking cessation resources. These resources include web, phone, text, and nicotine replacement therapy cessation methods.

EHHD

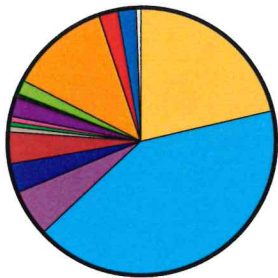
Budget Fiscal Year
2023/2024*

FY24 TOTAL REVENUE



Licensure Fees	\$159,491
Local Funds	\$474,218
Other	\$11,352
Program Fees	\$102,300
State	\$510,722
Total:	\$1,258,083

FY24 TOTAL EXPENDITURE



Personnel: Administrative/Management	\$289,663
Personnel: Environmental Health	\$558,807
Personnel: Community Health	\$92,726
Automobile	\$30,170
Administrative Overhead	\$55,619
Communications	\$4,850
Educational/Training	\$800
Equipment	\$4,145
Insurance	\$15,390
Legal	\$408
Other	\$3,000
Purchased Services	\$120,682
Supplies & Materials	\$11,481
Vehicle&Travel	\$14,784
Miscellaneous	\$5,414
Total:	\$1,207,939

EHHD Service And Activities Data By Town

	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Scotland	Tolland	Willington	District Totals
COMPLAINTS											
AIR QUALITY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ANIMALS/ANIMAL WASTE	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
ACTIVITY WITHOUT PROPER PERMITS	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	5
FOOD PROTECTION	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	0	0	1	9
HOUSING ISSUES	0	7	2	1	0	3	6	0	2	3	24
EMERGENCY RESPONSE	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	6
REFUSE/GARBAGE	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	7
RODENTS/INSECTS	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	5	10
SEPTIC/SEWAGE	0	5	1	1	0	1	3	0	14	0	25
OTHER	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	4	3	11
WATER QUALITY	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	7
COVID-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	22	4	6	0	6	28	2	23	17	108
HEALTH INSPECTION											
GROUP HOMES	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	4
DAY CARE	0	0	2	1	1	0	4	0	6	0	14
CAMPS	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	8
PUBLIC POOL	0	2	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	1	13
OTHER	2	0	1	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	14
SCHOOLS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MORTGAGE, FHA, VA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BATHING AREAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COSMETOLOGY	0	5	4	0	7	8	36	0	32	6	98
TOTAL	2	8	7	2	8	9	60	2	41	12	151
ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL											
SITE INSPECTION - ALL SITE VISITS	68	65	61	28	107	156	131	18	99	77	810
DEEP HOLE TESTS - NUMBER OF HOLES	42	90	27	37	63	140	98	27	190	70	784
PERCOLATION TESTS - NUMBER OF HOLES	12	22	9	10	16	31	26	7	38	11	182
PERMITS ISSUED, NEW	4	3	4	2	3	11	5	4	14	4	54
PERMITS ISSUED, REPAIR	19	32	22	10	36	41	36	2	53	17	268
SITE PLANS REVIEWED	21	41	28	15	32	54	35	5	89	26	346
PUBLIC HEALTH REVIEWS	28	36	29	12	40	95	65	9	96	32	442
WELLS											
WELL SITES INSPECTED	2	6	1	6	5	11	9	11	32	25	108
WELL PERMITS ISSUED	2	8	7	3	10	17	27	5	19	9	107
LABORATORY ACTIVITIES (SAMPLES TAKEN)											
POTABLE WATER	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	40	0	43
SURFACE WATER	9	21	28	0	34	156	16	0	32	37	343
GROUND WATER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RABIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
LEAD	0	16	0	0	22	15	107	0	0	0	160
OTHER	2	3	4	2	1	3	4	0	1	3	23
FOOD PROTECTION											
INSPECTIONS	8	29	27	24	38	66	171	7	78	51	499
ON SITE INSPECTION VIOLATION FOLLOW UP	3	1	0	6	1	5	36	0	22	15	89
DOCUMENTED INSPECTION VIOLATION FOLLOW UP	1	20	2	11	4	13	59	3	14	16	143
TEMPORARY PERMITS	6	19	32	4	2	74	40	16	37	12	242
TEMPORARY INSPECTIONS	0	5	0	0	0	54	25	8	4	3	99
PLAN REVIEWS	0	0	2	2	1	4	10	0	4	0	23
PRE-OPERATIONAL INSPECTIONS	0	2	1	2	2	3	10	0	3	2	25
LEAD ACTIVITIES											
HOUSING INSPECTION	0	1	1	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	9
ABATE PLAN REVIEWED	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES											
PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
SUBDIVISION REVIEWED (PER LOT)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2

* Figures not audited at the time of this publication.

SELECTED REPORTABLE DISEASES BY TOWN*

	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Scotland	Tolland	Wilmington	District Totals
Babesiosis	0	0	0	1	0	1	7	0	1	2	12
Campylobacter	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	3	1	10
COVID-19	58	49	89	24	71	190	202	13	196	61	953
Cryptosporidium	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Cyclospora	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
E. Coli 0157/STEC	0	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	6
Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Giardia	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Group A Streptococcus	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
Group B Streptococcus	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	6
Haemophilus Influenzae	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Hepatitis A	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hepatitis B	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	1	1	7
Hepatitis C	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Influenza	15	14	16	16	24	41	186	5	43	17	377
Lead-Elevated Blood Lead Levels in children up to age 6 (3.5-9.9 ug/dl)	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	11
Lead-Elevated Blood Lead Levels in children up to age 6 (10-19.9 ug/dl)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Lead-Elevated Blood Lead Levels in children up to age 6>20 ug/dl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Listeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	5	15	6	11	16	27	25	5	16	10	136
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	0	1	3	1	3	1	5	0	4	3	21
Mumps	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neisseria Meningitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pertussis	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Respiratory syncytial virus infection	2	16	6	10	12	26	29	1	13	9	124
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salmonella	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	4	0	9
Shigella	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Streptococcus Pneumoniae	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	6
Varicella	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Vibrio	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yersinia	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	5

* The case numbers above are considered to be below actual figures due to under reporting.



4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268