



# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Serving the towns of:

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

Population: 79,696    Service Area: Approximately 208 Square Miles

## Health District Staff

Robert L. Miller, MPH, RS ..... Director of Health  
 Kenneth Dardick, MD ..... Medical Advisor  
 Andrew Abbagnaro ..... Environmental Health Inspector  
 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  
 Holly Hood, MPH, RS ..... Sanitarian II  
 Thad King, MPH, REHS, RS ..... Sanitarian II  
 Courtney LeBlanc, BSN, RN ..... Public Health Nurse  
 Mia Mitoma ..... Vaccine Program Administrative Assistant  
 Lynette Swanson, RS ..... Chief Sanitarian  
 Cecile Serazo, BSN, RN ..... Community Health and Wellness  
 Coordinator  
 Nishel Thompson, MS ..... Public Health Emergency  
 Preparedness Coordinator



Back Row left to right: Christopher Buter, Christine Grulke, Andrew Abbagnaro, Cecile Serazo, Courtney LeBlanc, Lynette Swanson, Nishel Thompson, Glenn Bagdoian  
 Front Row left to right: Mia Mitoma, Holly Hood, Millie Brosseau, 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  
 M. Deborah Walsh ..... Town of Coventry  
 Ryan Aylesworth ..... Town of Mansfield  
 Heather Evans ..... Town of Mansfield  
 William Kaufold ..... Town of Mansfield  
 Susan Powers ..... Town of Scotland  
 Brian Foley ..... Town of Tolland  
 Tammy Nuccio ..... Town of Tolland  
 Erica Wicencski ..... Town of Willington

## 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

## Back to Normalcy

With COVID-19 case counts finally down our agency was able to catch its collective breath and jump back into the fray of providing a full scope of quality local public health services to our partners, families, and community members. Below is a rundown of some of those items and other highlighted activities for Fiscal Year 2023.

**Environmental Health** – The new Cosmetology Sanitary Code was fully implemented with 97 businesses inspected and approved. We continued to build out the OpenGov online platform by fully transitioning our complaint investigation, and enforcement workflows to the new system. The transition from the old state food safety regulations to the new FDA Food Code was completed. That involved a significant outlay of resources to train staff, update workflows, and work with the regulated community on the code changes. Finally, this agency executed a memorandum of understanding establishing licensing reciprocity for itinerant food vendors with other participating jurisdiction, thereby reducing costs and other redundancies on those small businesses.

**Community Health** – The Health District continued to expand its scope of clinical services during fiscal year 2023. We hosted 10 flu clinics at which 234 shots were administered, and 95 COVID-19 clinics where 918 shots were administered. Our public health nurses also engaged in a number of community outreach and public health messaging efforts in the areas of vector disease prevention, Stop The Bleed trainings, and continued infectious respiratory disease prevention. We completed 5 Active Living Projects, which are special projects implanting environmental or policy changes that promote healthy life styles. We completed projects in the Towns of Ashford, Bolton, Columbia, Mansfield, and Tolland. In partnership with a sister health district we have been hosting a number harm reduction events providing NARCAN training, kit distribution, and other harm reduction materials as part of our efforts to prevent opioid mis-use, and associated fatalities in our local community.

**Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response** – Our Medical Reserve Corps has been very busy this past year. Over 160 volunteers were activated in support of multiple clinics, drills, and trainings. Staff participated in a number of drills and exercises including an Anthrax and Post Pandemic table top exercise. We also completed the most recent updates to our agency's Public Health Emergency Response Plan.

Reestablishing normalcy within our agency was not about returning to the way things were, but rather about leveraging our experiences to make a better Health District. The above described Health District initiatives and projects have not only helped regain that sense of normalcy but also represent important steps towards new public health successes in the future.

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 are provided 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

This year Eastern Highland Health District's Emergency Preparedness program concluded its emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. EHHD closely monitored positive cases in efforts to support and guide local schools and businesses with any concerns they may have. With the support of the CT Department of Public Health, EHHD provided thousands of COVID-19 home tests kits to the community. EHHD delivered more than 13,386 vaccinations against COVID-19 through the end of June 2023. EHHD continued conducting weekly on-site COVID-19 vaccinations and seasonal flu clinics at their local health and fire departments, farmers market, libraries and 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.



All-hazards emergency preparedness cannot be addressed by one agency working alone. Eastern Highlands Health District continues to build partnerships and link services to prepare for a successful community response to any emergency or disaster. On April 13, 2023, EHHD assisted in the coordination and training for the Region 4 Anthrax Tabletop Exercise in efforts to stay informed and equipped for a potential bioterrorism crisis. April 25th, 2023 EHHD was also in attendance for the CT Emergency Management Symposium in Prospect, CT, a conference that brought awareness to the different government levels and partners available for emergency management resources. EHHD also partnered with Region 4 Health Districts and Yale New Haven Hospital to host the COVID-19 After Action Tabletop Exercise. This virtual debrief allowed our partners to share their experiences of the pandemic and discuss possible improvements for the future.

EHHD will continue to keep its partners and constituents informed of any necessary COVID-19 information. For continued information and announcements in regards to any COVID-19 updates please visit our social media pages or website [www.ehhd.org](http://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. EHHD continued to provide information on the prevention of acquiring Lyme disease, and other tick-borne illness as the use of outdoor spaces increased. EHHD continued to promote the importance of keeping up-to-date on immunizations and provided Covid-19 vaccines to the community. EHHD promoted awareness about

opioid overdose prevention, equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and resources to save lives. 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.

**Tobacco Free Living** – EHHD continues to focus 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. EHHD continues to assist the Town of Mansfield with implementation of its smoke free workplaces policy. 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. The resources include web, phone, text, and nicotine replacement therapy cessation methods.



**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 is provided as a fully contracted service to the Town of Tolland. Basic Be Well initiatives are also provided to member towns, school employees and private sector businesses through the State of Connecticut Preventive Health Block Grant (to focus on policy and environmental changes to reduce the incidence of obesity in worksites). 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 aren't 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](http://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](mailto: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.



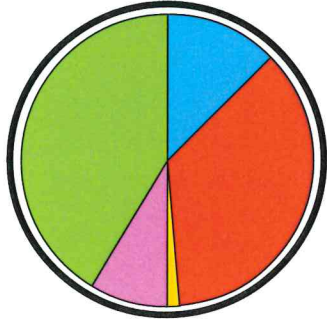
**Plan4Health Initiative:** Anchored by the American Planning Association (APA) and the American Public Health Association (APHA), the Plan4Health grant funded EHHD and the Community Health Action Response Team (CHART) to implement strategies to increase physical activity and access to healthy food for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



# EHHD

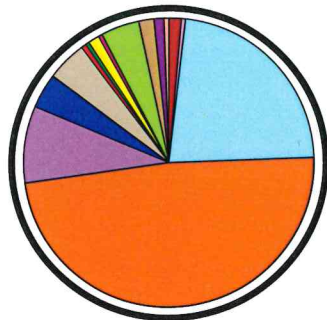
Budget Fiscal Year  
2022/2023\*

## FY23 TOTAL REVENUE



Licensure Fees	\$160,636
Local Funds	\$459,745
Other	\$9,250
Program Fees	\$107,662
State	\$516,850
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,254,143</b>

## FY23 TOTAL EXPENDITURE



Personnel: Administrative/Management	\$306,167
Personnel: Environmental Health	\$601,132
Personnel: Community Health	\$105,576
Automobile	\$47,917
Administrative Overhead	\$57,303
Communications	\$5,920
Educational/Training	\$1,150
Equipment	\$3,074
Insurance	\$14,001
Legal	\$760
Other	\$3,000
Purchased Services	\$55,887
Supplies&Materials	\$19,639
Vehicle&Travel	\$15,120
Miscellaneous	\$4,691
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,241,337</b>

\* Figures not audited at the time of this publication.

## EHHD Service and Activities Data by Town

	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Scotland	Tolland	Willington	District Totals
<b>COMPLAINTS</b>											
AIR QUALITY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
ANIMALS/ANIMAL WASTE	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
ACTIVITY WITHOUT PROPER PERMITS	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
FOOD PROTECTION	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	7
HOUSING ISSUES	3	10	0	0	0	3	13	0	8	4	41
EMERGENCY RESPONSE	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
REFUSE/GARBAGE	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	2	8
RODENTS/INSECTS	2	1	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	13
SEPTIC/SEWAGE	0	7	0	2	0	1	3	0	6	1	20
OTHER	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	2	11
WATER QUALITY	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	1	13
COVID-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>HEALTH INSPECTION</b>											
GROUP HOMES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DAY CARE	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	5
CAMPS	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	5
PUBLIC POOL	0	2	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	3	15
OTHER	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
SCHOOLS	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	6
MORTGAGE, FHA, VA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BATHING AREAS	3	0	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	11
COSMETOLOGY	0	7	3	0	7	8	34	0	32	3	94
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL</b>											
SITE INSPECTION -- ALL SITE VISITS	33	67	56	29	103	159	159	7	160	57	830
DEEP HOLE TESTS -- NUMBER OF HOLES	22	57	45	11	61	95	90	35	153	66	635
PERCOLATION TESTS -- NUMBER OF HOLES	6	14	15	4	11	23	32	9	35	14	163
PERMITS ISSUED, NEW	2	5	6	5	4	13	19	2	18	7	81
PERMITS ISSUED, REPAIR	12	12	23	6	25	34	52	7	65	23	259
SITE PLANS REVIEWED	11	24	25	4	27	48	47	14	71	29	300
PUBLIC HEALTH REVIEWS	41	42	30	20	35	116	63	9	117	41	514
<b>WELLS</b>											
WELL SITES INSPECTED	3	4	5	5	21	22	16	3	3	2	84
WELL PERMITS ISSUED	3	4	4	8	8	24	23	6	22	11	113
<b>LABORATORY ACTIVITIES (SAMPLES TAKEN)</b>											
POTABLE WATER	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	5
SURFACE WATER	19	17	30	0	39	129	20	0	30	25	309
GROUND WATER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RABIES	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
LEAD	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10
OTHER	2	2	2	3	2	6	9	0	2	1	29
<b>FOOD PROTECTION</b>											
INSPECTIONS	19	30	31	19	26	64	189	5	47	32	462
REINSPECTIONS	1	8	2	5	4	11	43	1	10	4	89
TEMPORARY PERMITS	5	14	24	4	9	58	6	11	21	6	158
TEMPORARY INSPECTIONS	0	6	3	0	0	88	3	9	8	2	119
PLAN REVIEWS	0	2	0	0	1	3	8	0	3	1	18
PRE-OPERATIONAL INSPECTIONS	0	2	1	1	2	2	9	0	9	5	31
<b>TOTAL INSPECTIONS AND OTHER</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>840</b>
<b>LEAD ACTIVITIES</b>											
HOUSING INSPECTION	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
ABATE PLAN REVIEWED	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES</b>											
PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
SUBDIVISION REVIEWED (PER LOT)	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	6

## Selected Reportable Diseases by Town\*

	Andover	Ashford	Bolton	Chaplin	Columbia	Coventry	Mansfield	Scotland	Tolland	Wilmington	District Totals
Babesiosis	0	1	0	2	1	0	3	0	0	1	8
Campylobacter	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
COVID-19	127	145	182	72	231	510	681	20	450	190	2608
Cryptosporidium	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Cyclospora	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Coli 0157/STEC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ehrlichiosis/Anaplasmosis	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Giardia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Group A Streptococcus	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Group B Streptococcus	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	0	1	0	7
Haemophilus Influenzae	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
Hepatitis A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hepatitis B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hepatitis C	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
Influenza	6	22	18	19	34	64	192	5	83	34	477
Lead-Elevated Blood Lead Levels in children up to age 6 (3.5-9.9 ug/dl)	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	1	2	9
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	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Listeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	14	5	7	9	7	23	31	2	5	5	108
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	0	2	1	1	4	6	2	0	2	2	20
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	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salmonella	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
Shigella	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Streptococcus Pneumoniae	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
Varicella	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vibrio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yersinia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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



4 South Eagleville Road  
Mansfield, CT 06268