



**New Jersey
Local Boards of Health Association**

Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 3

www.NJLBHA.org

Summer 2011

Online Board of Health Member Training - Fall 2011

Many of you have already taken advantage of our Certified Local Board of Health Member (CBHM) program by attending the onsite trainings we have offered. These trainings are designed to give you the basic skills you will need to perform your duties and meet your responsibilities as a member of your local Board of Health. On completion of the training, you are entitled to use 'CBHM' after your name.

Realizing that many of you are unable to attend training in person, NJLBHA will offer an online certification program. The basic content will be the same as that provided in live trainings and will be available on our website. Our goal is to have this online sometime this fall. You will receive a notification of its availability.

The course content includes: core functions of Public Health, essential Public Health services, powers and authorities of local Boards of Health, functions of a Board, and mutual expectations of the Health Officer and the local Board. Upon completion of this interactive learning program, you will be able to generate a Certificate of Completion that you can print. We would like to thank the NJ Health Officers' Association for the grant that allowed us to set up this program.

Save the Date!

**NJLBHA Annual Conference
September 24, 2011**

Commissioner's Conference Set for November 3rd

The annual Commissioner's Conference for state and local health officials will be held November 3, 2011 at the Mercer County College Conference Center, from 9 am to 3 pm.

The Commissioner of Health, Mary O'Dowd, will present her State of Public Health in New Jersey message. There is no charge for attendance at this conference; however, registration through the New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association is required. Morning refreshments and a full lunch will be provided.

The program has not been finalized as of this date. If you wish to attend, please email your name, Board of Health affiliation, email address and a phone number where we can reach you to saccenti@comcast.net.

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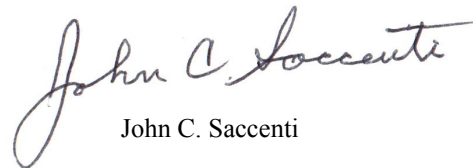
President's Message

As you can see from this newsletter, your Association has been busy with a number of projects. We continue to grow and to provide the expertise and assistance you may need in carrying out the responsibilities that you have undertaken.

In this newsletter you will find an article I authored in the June issue of *Municipalities* magazine, the official organ of the League of Municipalities, distributed to Mayors and other officials throughout the state. This article can be easily removed from the newsletter and given to your mayor and council members to read. This will help them to understand the work that you do as a Board. Please consider attending our upcoming events, including the September 24 Annual Conference in Sayreville and the November 17 presentation at the League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City.

To update you, the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) has failed to make any of the reforms we are required to make it an acceptable association. On the advice of our attorney, NJLBHA still refuses to be associated with NALBOH, lest our reputation be adversely affected by that affiliation. We continue to ask you not to join or affiliate your Board with NALBOH until they make the needed reforms.

Last, but not least, I ask you to consider serving on the NJLBHA Executive Board or on one of our committees. Please feel free to call me at 732.297.5573. I would be happy to talk with you about how you can share your knowledge and skills to have a greater statewide impact on public health.



John C. Saccenti

NJLBHA To Present at League of Municipalities Conference

If you are attending the League of Municipalities Conference in November, consider attending the NJLBHA presentation on November 17 at 3 pm. The panel will include Councilman John O'Sullivan of South Brunswick, NJLBHA Attorney Richard Lustgarten, and John Saccenti, President of NJLBHA. The panel will discuss the responsibilities of the governing body to ensure the provision of Public Health services through local Boards of Health.

GIVE THIS TO YOUR MAYOR!

Please read this and pass it on to your Mayor,
Governing Body and Municipal Administrator

By John C. Saccenti

As an average citizen I want to thank you for agreeing to help guide your communities through all the problems we face. I know you must deal with many issues including snow removal, union contracts, potholes and ball fields. But as an elected official, the major responsibility that you accepted when you took your position in the governing body of your community, is to protect the public health of your residents. Here's how you can do it.

First what is public health? It is the air we breathe, the water we drink, the prevention of disease and the provision of health care programs. In New Jersey the primary responsibility for public health lies within each of the municipalities. The legal mechanism to accomplish this task is through the powers and authority of the local Board of Health. N.J.S.A. 26:3-1 requires that there shall be a Board of Health in every municipality in the state. Here's what you need to know:

What is a Board of Health? A Board of Health is a group of appointed or elected community members who set policies, appoint the Health Officer and hire employees of the Health Department. A Board works with the Health Officer to assure that organizational activities are in alignment with the needs of the community. They should be the primary proponents of funding for public health purposes. The Board also reviews all staff reports. To be effective, the Health Department and the Board should have a purpose and a specific set of goals for

the successful performance of the agency. Board members serve as the eyes and ears of the community.

There are three types of boards of health: (1). Autonomous; (2). Advisory; and (3). Governing Body.

1. An Autonomous Board:

- Appointed by the Mayor/ Governing Body.
- Makes policy decision regarding purposes, functions, goals and activities.
- Selects, employs and evaluates the Health Officer who reports to the Board and is responsible to it.
- Passes ordinances.
- Establishes a budget based on recommendations of the Health Officer and available funds as allocated by the Governing Body.

2. Advisory Board:

- Appointed by the Mayor/ Governing Body.
- Primarily gives advice and makes recommendations on Public Health matters to the governing body, which serves as the Board of Health.
- The Advisory Board does not appoint the Health Department staff. However, the Health Officer works with the members of the Advisory Board to assist in the development of policy and program recommendations.
- Cannot pass ordinances.

3. Governing Body:

- The governing body serves as the local Board of Health, under the Faulkner Act. Certain municipalities are allowed to use this option.
- The governing body must go out of session as the municipal government, and go back into session as the local Board of Health. All Sunshine Law requirements remain the same. Powers and authority are the same as the Autonomous Board above.

You are responsible for ensuring that your Board of Health, whether it be you or an autonomous board meet the wide range of responsibilities under Public Health Practice Standards contained N.J.S.A. 26:1A-15 and 26:3A2-1 et seq. A sampling of these responsibilities include:

- Ensure that there is a mechanism that provides leadership to develop partnerships with community organizations and/or agencies which have a demonstrable affect on, or compelling interest in, the health status of the population in accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:52-9.2.
- Ensure that Public Health staff, in addition to meeting the requirements for licensure, certification, or authorization, possess or are actively pursuing training for the skills necessary to provide each of the "10 Essential Public Health

(Continued on page 4)

services” as set forth at N.J.A.C. 8:52-3.2(a)1 through 10.9

- Ensure the enforcement of the provisions of the State Sanitary Code.
- Maintain surveillance of retail food establishments, and food and beverage vending machines.
- Conduct an occupational health program.
- Conduct a Public Health nuisance program.
- Conduct a program for the surveillance, investigation and control of reportable diseases.
- Promote and provide immunizations for protection against childhood vaccine preventable diseases.
- Conduct a program for the control of rabies and other zoonoses.
- Control sexually transmitted diseases.
- Administer a planned program to prevent and control HIV infection.
- Provide health supervision for infants and preschool children.
- Provide for the prevention and control of lead poisoning in young children.
- Provide cancer prevention for populations at high risk.
- Provide for diabetes education services.
- Provide cardiovascular disease control services.
- Provide for a health program at locations selected by the health department which identifies the health needs of adults 65 and older.

How do you go about doing all of this? Local Boards of Health either create their own health department for their municipality or they can contract for services through another local or county health department. Another option is to join or form a regional health commission with several other

towns. In the process of doing this, you must be aware that it is not the responsibility of the health department or health officer to deliver these services but that of the local Board of Health. If you contract with a county or local health department from another municipality, be sure that the services you are contracting for are the services you need in your community. If, for example, you should contract with a particular county health department, you tell them what services you want them to perform above and beyond those services in the Public Health Practice Standards. For example, many municipalities have unique ordinances related to environmental issues such as grass, garbage pickup, and one of the most common, is cat licensing. Ensure that in any contractual arrangement you may have that these local ordinances are contracted for enforcement and that the special needs of your community are met based on socio-economic factors and health needs of your community’s population. Remember while you have the health department act as your agent in protecting your community’s health it is the Boards responsibility to ensure that it is done and to set the policy.

No matter what type of health department you use, it is essential that you maintain a collaborative and collegial relationship with the health officer. The health officer has the expertise to advise you on public health issues and has the administrative responsibility of the functioning of the department. You should expect that the health officer or a representative will attend all meetings of the Board of Health in order to advise and seek policy direction from the board members.

Where do you go from here?

1. The first thing I would suggest is that you make sure you have a functioning and well-educated lo-

cal Board of Health in your community if you are required to have one. Even when the governing body serves as the Board of Health it is a good policy to establish an Advisory Board of Health to assist you in meeting your responsibilities.

2. I also recommend that all members of your local Board of Health attend one of the training programs offered by the NJ Local Boards of Health Association, which are designed to give the basic skills and knowledge base for members of local boards of health to perform their responsibilities.
3. Another tool is to download a copy of the Board of Health Member Orientation Manual from www.NJLBHA.org for distribution to all local board of health members.
4. Review all of your local health ordinances with your board and health officer to ensure that they are addressing the community needs and that the fee structure is sufficient to support the work required. You also may find that it may be wise to entertain additional ordinances such as cat licensing (remember animal control and the protection of the population from zoonotic diseases such as rabies is you’re your responsibility).

You have a huge responsibility. With budget cuts, terrorist threats, possible disasters, pandemic threats, and the pressure that comes with budgetary constraints and shrinking tax dollars, you must be careful that you take whatever action is necessary to preserve and protect the public health and safety of your residents. Without that all else falls apart.

NJLBHA Annual Conference September 24, 2011

Save the date! Your annual conference will be held on September 24, 2011 at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville, NJ, from 9 am to 3 pm. This is the same site where we have held our last 3 conferences.

The theme of the conference is *Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of Health Department Staff*. Key staff members of several health departments will describe their training and responsibilities and discuss how their work meets the requirements of the Public Health Practice Standards. These presenters will include representatives from the Health Officers' Association, the Society for Public Health Education and the Animal Control Officers Association, a Registered Environmental Health Specialist, a Public Health Nurse and a Board of Health Registrar.

Too often, we members of Local Boards of Health, do not have an understanding of the training requirements and responsibilities of the professional personnel that make up the Health Department, and who assist us in fulfilling our responsibilities. Each of the presenters will allow time for a question and answer session.

The closing session will consist of a discussion on emerging issues affecting public health in New Jersey and the presentation of the annual awards (see related article).

New Jersey Local Board of Health Association

Annual Conference
Saturday, September 24, 2011
Middlesex County Fire Academy, Sayreville, NJ

**Conference Theme: Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities
of Health Department Staff**

Name _____ Local Board of Health _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Preferred Phone _____ email _____

Reg. Fee enclosed (includes lunch) _____ \$25 NJLBHA member _____ \$40 Non-member

*Make check or purchase order payable to New Jersey Association of Local Boards of Health, and mail to
NJLBHA, PO Box 5069, Kendall Park, NJ 08824.*



Call For Nominations For Annual Awards

The New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association is taking nominations for outstanding public health professionals and volunteers who have made significant contributions to the health and safety of their communities. Please consider nominating someone from your community. The award ceremony will take place on September 24th at the annual conference.

Local Board of Health Member of the Year (Christopher Saccenti Award.) This award will go to a member of a Local Board of Health who has given exceptional service to his or her community in protecting public health.

Health Officer of the Year. This award will go to the Health Officer who most exemplifies cooperation between The Local Board of Health and the professional staff and takes an active role in protection of the community, including developing innovative programs.

Health Educator of the Year. This award will recognize the Public Health Educator employed by a Local Board of Health who has created innovative education and training programs for the community.

Registered Environmental Health Specialist of the Year. This award is given to a Registered Environmental Health Specialist whose performance is recognized as outstanding by the Local Board of Health.

Public Health Nurse of the Year. This award is given to a Public Health Nurse who has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the community.

Meritorious Service Awards will be given to those persons who have rendered exceptional service to the New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association or to the community.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY SEPTEMBER 17TH

PLEASE MAIL YOUR NOMINATIONS TO
NEW JERSEY LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH ASSOCIATION
PO Box 5069
Kendall Park, NJ 08824

LARGE SHIPMENT OF SEEDS FROM EGYPT SPREADS DEADLY E.COLI

One large shipment, 15,000 kilograms of contaminated fenugreek seeds from Egypt, was widely distributed throughout the European continent two years ago. The resulting sprouts were the cause of a large scale Shiga toxin-producing E.coli 0104:H4 bacteria (STEC) outbreak since early May this year. More than 40 people died and more than 4,000 became ill, including over 800 people who contracted a type of kidney failure, hemolytic uremic syndrome. Unfortunately at this time, a recall would be almost impossible. Luckily, the current spread of STEC is slowing down according to the European CDC. The bad news is that more than likely, there will continue to be sporadic cases for the next three years which is the expiration date of the afore-

mentioned seeds. This information is according to the European Food Safety Authority or EFSA.

E.coli (*Escherichia coli*) is a normal inhabitant in the intestinal tracts of healthy humans and animals. Most varieties are harmless or might be the cause of a mild, short course of diarrhea. However, this particular strain, STEC 0104:H4, may cause severe abdominal cramps, bloody diarrhea and vomiting. Furthermore, it has been passed person to person in Germany this summer. A kitchen worker in Frankfurt infected 20 people she was cooking for after eating the contaminated sprouts. Other means of transmission can be contaminated food such as raw vegetables or undercooked ground beef or

contaminated water (the bacterium was found in a stream in Frankfurt as well). This pathogen is being referred to as a “hybrid” because it exhibits traits of two different strains of E.coli.

It is important to note, especially for those involved in Public Health, a bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives would end funding for the Microbiological Data Program which tests approximately 15,000 samples of produce every year for pathogens. Shiga toxin-producing E.coli are included on the list. The above mentioned program has been responsible for 18+ recalls of tainted products in the past 2 years as per the FDA. As yet the U.S. Senate has not tackled this bill.

HAND-FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE APPEARS IN NJ

This summer there have been reports of hand-foot-and-mouth disease (HFMD) in Hunterdon County. HFMD is a very contagious, usually mild, viral infection found most often in children under 10. The illness can occur in adults, but they are less likely to be at risk because of antibodies to some enteroviruses that they have developed during their lifetimes. It is not to be confused with foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) even though the names are similar; the conditions are not related and are the result of infection by different viruses. The latter is a disease found in animals; and people do not contract the disease from pets or farm animals and the converse is true for HFMD, which is not transmitted from humans to animals.

Symptoms of HFMD are:

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Painful red blisters found on the

tongue, gums, inside the cheeks of the mouth

- Loss of appetite
- Rash on palms of hands, soles of feet, possibly on buttocks and/or genitalia
- Feeling of being unwell, lethargy.

The cause of HFMD is most commonly the coxsackievirus A16 in the U.S. This is spread from human to human through direct contact with infectious body fluids, i.e.: saliva, fluid from open blisters, secretions from the nose or throat; virus-laden unwashed hands and contaminated surfaces and infected feces. Good hygiene practices will significantly reduce the risk of contracting HFMD. These include:

- Avoidance of close contact (kissing; sharing toys, eating utensils, drinking cups)

- WASHING HANDS OFTEN!
- Disinfecting dirty surfaces, toys, washing clothes.

Currently, management of the disease is accomplished by treating symptoms to bring relief to the patient. Medications to control fever, mouthwashes to lessen pain caused by the lesions in the mouth and plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. If moderate to severe dehydration is suspected, medical attention should be sought immediately.

HFMD occurs worldwide; in temperate climates such as we have, cases occur most frequently in the summer months and the early fall. The course of the disease is usually 7-10 days.

For more information on HFMD, please visit the CDC website.

Yes, count me (us) in as a part of the Association!

Yes, count me (us) in as a part of the Association that gives New Jersey's Boards of Health and their members a voice in Trenton, a way to communicate among ourselves, a force for progress in public health and more knowledge for board members.

Full Board, Regular Membership \$95

Board membership is open to municipal, county and regional Boards of Health. All board members are included for the calendar year.

Individual, Regular Membership \$20

Individual membership is open to current members of municipal, county or regional boards of health whose full board is not a member.

Individual, Associate Membership \$20

Associate membership is open to past Board of Health members, students, or other individuals interested in public health. This is a non-voting membership.

Institutional Membership \$95

Institutional membership is open to organizations, including environmental groups, planning boards, or other municipal or county agencies, committees, commissions, or councils. This is a non-voting membership.

Board Name: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

NEW JERSEY LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 5069

Kendall Park, New Jersey 08824