

# Colts Neck Township Community Health Status 2017 Annual Report



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(Presented at the Colts Neck Board of Health meeting on November 6, 2018)

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## **Board of Health Mission Statement**

*"The mission of the Colts Neck Board of Health is to be an advocate for the health of the community. This is accomplished through the provision of appropriate services and the enforcement of applicable codes in an effort to maintain the health, safety and comfort of all residents."*

## **Health Officer Statement**

In 2017, the Colts Neck Health Department was involved in a wide range of public health activities, some of which are described within the scope of this document.

This year, as in previous years, the Colts Neck Health Department provided assistance and/or guidance to the general public and medical staff during a few communicable disease outbreaks in our community. They were all handled professionally and timely to control the spread of disease transmission.

Food surveillance inspections were also conducted throughout the year with increased activity at special events where temporary food vendors were present. These events generally require more vigilant attention by our inspectors when evaluating food safety controls.

There was a steady stream of septic system installations and repairs this year. In addition, the Health Department performed just under 100 soil profiles with professional engineers to evaluate site conditions in order to design a septic system.

The new septic system regulations that came out a few years ago by the NJDEP are now main stream and will have a positive impact on the life of residents' systems.

Also, newly developed educational materials are being distributed directly to residents after a repair or alteration to a system. The materials describe how a septic system works as well as proper care and maintenance of the systems components.

This year we were able to update many emergency management plans and some shared service agreements with neighboring health departments. We also began the process of placing key Health Department information on an excel spread sheet by block and lot. The objective is to be more efficient by having the information electronically available and not having to search for a paper file(s). Currently, when there is a request for information our staff needs to physically search for paper files which may be stored in 2-3 different locations for a given property.

The Health Officer continues to be a member of the NJ Local Board of Health Association. He also still actively participates in the County Governmental Public Health partnership (GPHP) and is on the Health Improvement Coalition of Monmouth County. He also attends and/or is represented at regular public health meetings such as the New Jersey Environmental Association, Health Homes Coalition, and at Monmouth County Infection Control meetings.

## **2017 Summary in Numbers**

### ***Health Department Staffing***

Full Time Health Officer /Register Environmental Specialist/Health Educator-1(Tom Frank)  
Part Time Registered Environmental Health Specialist- 2  
Part Time Administration Support- 2 (includes Certified Municipal Registrar)  
Part Time Health Educator-1  
Animal Control Officer-1

### ***Food Safety Program***

Number of Retail Food Inspections Performed: **51**

### ***Septic Systems***

Number of Septic Inspections: **177**  
Number of Soil Logs Performed: **98**  
Number of Septic System Permits Issued: **68**  
Number of Septic Repairs: **24**

### ***Water Wells***

Number of Water Well Permits Issued: **48**  
Number of Water Well Inspections: **40**

### ***Rabies Control***

Number of Dog Licenses Issued: **394**  
Number of Animal Bites Investigated: **8**  
Number of Specimens Sent to Lab for Rabies Testing: **3**  
Number of Rabies Vaccination Clinics Held: **1**

### ***Public Pools (Recreational Bathing)***

Number of Inspections Performed: **4** (two pools)

### ***Flu Vaccination Clinics***

Number of Seasonal Flu Clinics Performed: **2**

### ***Child Immunization Record Audits***

Number of Audits Performed: **5**

### ***Infectious Disease Control and Surveillance***

Number of Communicable Disease Reports Investigated: **117**

### ***Vital Statistics***

Number of Marriage/Domestic Union Licenses Issued: **40**  
Number of Reported Deaths: **0**  
Number of Births: **0**

## **Food Safety Program**

A total of 51 retail food inspections were conducted by the Health Department in 2017. Thirty of them were permanent commercial businesses and 21 were approved temporary vendors that provided food at various special events throughout the year. Of these, one permanent commercial business received a conditionally satisfactory rating while all the remaining received satisfactory ratings.

The focus of our food safety program is to educate our food vendors on the key factors that contribute to foodborne illnesses. During our inspections there is a focus on foods that are categorized as potentially hazardous. These are foods that are either natural or synthetic and that require temperature control because it is in a form capable of supporting specific pathogenic organisms. Some of the more common types of food in this category include animal food (of animal origin) that is raw or heat treated such as beef, poultry and fish products. But also less commonly known in this category includes foods of plant origin that is heat treated or consists of bean sprouts, cut melons, and certain garlic and oil mixtures.

Education is also an important element during each inspection since there may be employee turnover and/or changes in management. Our inspectors are always observing food handling practices and asking questions to probe food managers' knowledge regarding food safety standards. We check that all establishments carrying and/or preparing more sensitive type foods are certified in food safety through a nationally accredited food protection training course.

## **Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems**

During 2017, 177 septic system inspections were conducted. A total of 68 permits were issued to install a septic system. A total of 98 soil logs were also conducted with an engineer to determine the type of system most suitable for a particular site.

This has been an active year for the installation of either an alteration and/or repair to an existing septic system. Many of these alterations/repairs were initiated after a septic inspection was conducted by a third party for the sale of a residential home. The Health Department involvement is limited and is essentially involved only when the system is malfunctioning as defined in the State Code. Many of the conditions found to be "unsatisfactory" on these inspection reports are negotiable between the buyer and the seller. The only other exception regarding Health Department involvement would be if the home has an existing cesspool used for sanitary wastewater. The State Code changed in 2012 to prohibit their use and must be upgraded before a residential home can be granted a change in ownership.

After any septic repair or alteration is completed the Health Department also provides the homeowner with educational documents on how a septic system functions, proper maintenance of the system, and an informational folder to store any documents that relate to their system. Also included is a document that explains how an effluent filter works as well as maintenance and care of the filter.

## **Water Wells**

In 2017, 48 well permits were issued and a total of 40 well inspections performed.

Groundwater is used for drinking water by 44% of the people in the United States. Groundwater is a renewable, reliable source of cool, pure water.

The groundwater from deep, drilled wells are naturally cleansed and less likely to be contaminated than surface water in lakes and streams.

The residents of Colts Neck primarily depend on local aquifers (i.e. Mt. Laurel and Englishtown Sands) for their water source. The Health Department always recommends that residents conserve water whenever possible. The township has had droughty type conditions a few times over the past few decades. Since we are dependent on this valuable resource, conservation can be as simple as limiting watering the lawn, fixing leaking faucets, toilets and pipes, running washing machines and dishwashers only when full, turning off the faucet while brushing teeth and shaving etc.

Another new educational tool provided to residents that have just replaced their existing water well is a document called: Well Owner's Manual. It was written and produced by the Water Systems Council and includes excellent information on: How aquifers form; How a well works; Types of wells available; How to select a contractor; Protecting your wellhead, and how to read/understand your water well test results.

## Ambient Surface Water Quality Project

The Health Department continued its ambient surface water quality program for its eighth consecutive year, focusing on sensitive locations in town. This data has helped to develop a data base of information which creates an ongoing snap shot of water quality in our local watersheds. The program helps to identify potential environmental issues like malfunctioning septic systems or storm run-off concerns. The test sites still include Mine Brook, Yellow Brook; Big Brook and Willow Brook which all discharge in to Swimming River Reservoir. The Health Department has now included Hockhockson Brook into the program. The stream samples are tested for both E. Coli and nitrites.



Retrieving stream water samples

## Rabies Control

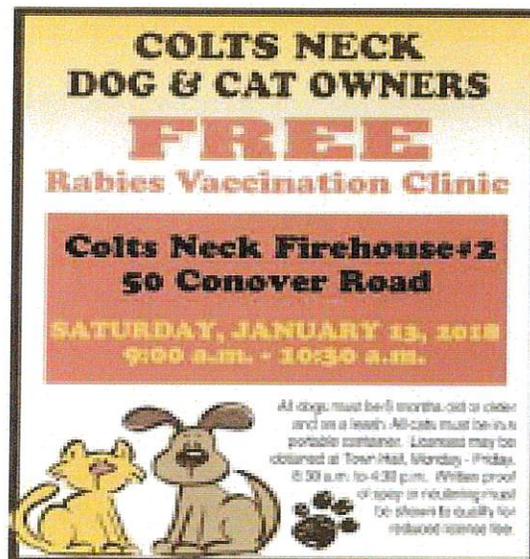
394 dog licenses were issued in 2017. A total of 8 animal bites (dogs and cats) were investigated requiring confinement and observation of the animal for 10 days before being evaluated and released by the Health Department.

Each person bitten was notified of the pet owner's obligation to confine/observe the animal. The bite victims were contacted again following the 10 day period, providing them with the status of the animal, as well as, any other follow-up action required. Three animals were also submitted to the state laboratory for rabies testing due to potential human exposure to the virus. All three specimens were found negative for the virus.

The Colts Neck annual rabies vaccination clinic was held in January 2017 at Fire House #2 on Conover Road in Colts Neck. A total of 53 dogs and 4 cats were vaccinated. As in the past years flyers were posted promoting the clinic and were displayed in numerous areas of the business district. It was also advertised for two months in The Journal and on our township web site.

The Colts Neck Health Department continues to educate our residents regarding the benefits of licensing their pet. The license tag helps to quickly identify the pet if it were lost. Also, if the license is current, it would help to verify that the pet is up to date on its rabies vaccination.

Dog licensing fees have held steady for the last 10 years due to maintaining a streamline approach. The process has worked well over the years however we are always looking for opportunities to improve services for our community.



Sample Rabies Vaccination Clinic Ad

## Public Pools (Recreational Bathing)

Our two public pools were inspected at least twice throughout the summer season. Both pools are outdoor facilities and only operate from Memorial Day to Labor Day. A pre-operational inspection was first conducted with the pool management supervisor followed by an unannounced inspection after the facility was up and running.

Weekly water analyses were provided to the Health Department by a State certified lab indicating that both pool facilities were in substantial compliance throughout the season.

Starting in January of 2018, some new regulations will take effect that will impact pool operators to include the presence of a defibrillator, additional lifeguards at certain pool facilities; stricter rules on lifeguards utilizing cell phones; additional first aid supplies and additional signage.

## Influenza Control

As we have provided in the past, two Colts Neck Senior's Flu Clinics were conducted in 2017. The first was conducted at the Colts Neck Inn Restaurant on October 3, 2017. The second clinic was held on October 17, 2017 at the Colts Neck Court House. A total of 124 residents were vaccinated. The latter clinic was advertised in The Journal two months prior to the event, as well as on the township website.



**FLU SHOT CLINIC FOR SENIORS**

**Wednesday, October 11, 2017**  
**9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.**  
**at Municipal Courtroom**

*Flu Shots will be provided to Medicare cardholders at no cost and all others will be \$10.00 per person*

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**OPEN ONLY TO COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP SENIORS**

Senior Citizens (62 and older) ONLY  
Direct any questions to Township Health Officer,  
Thomas Frank at 732-462-5470

Senior Flu Clinic Ad



## **Child Immunization Record Audits**

As required by NJAC 8:57- Immunization of Pupils in School, 5 immunization audits were conducted in 2017. The locations included the Colts Neck Primary School, Colts Neck High School, Country Day Care, Colts Neck Reformed Church Nursery School and St Mary's preschool. The ratings for all locations were found to be in compliance.

The main purpose of these audits are to assist schools, with emphasis on preschool facilities, in implementing and enforcing the immunization requirements contained in Chapter 14, of the State Sanitary Code.

## **Public Health Nursing**

The Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey continues to provide nursing services for qualified residents within Colts Neck Township. Many of these services are mandated through the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services under Performance Standards for Health Departments. As in the past, qualified residents can obtain services that include but not limited to:

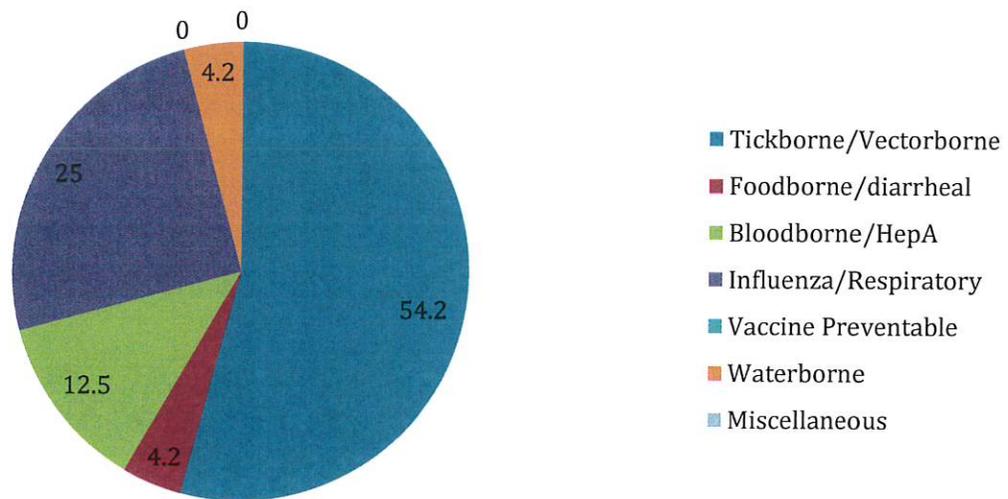
- health promotion for infants and preschool children.
- aid in detection of lead poisoning in children.
- home visits by public health nurses as follow-ups to educational needs and health management problems.
- reduction of infant mortality/morbidity by improving pregnancy outcomes by conducting pregnancy monitoring, pregnancy counseling and education; referrals to services. such as WIC, Teen Services; Medicaid, Family Planning and Family Care.
- assist in prevention and control of communicable diseases
- home health services to those unable to pay any portion of the Visiting Nurse Service Health Group fees.

## Infectious Disease Control and Surveillance

A total of 117 communicable disease reports were investigated between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017 by the Colts Neck Health Department.

Lyme disease continues to be the number one disease impacting Colts Neck residents. A total of 12 confirmed cases were documented by our Epi Investigator and verified by the NJ Department of Health. Since there is no approved vaccine to prevent the disease practicing avoiding common tick habitats, use of tick repellents, wearing long sleeve shirts and pants properly tucked in place, are just a few tips to guard against ticks.

**Fig. 1- Percentage (%) of Confirmed Cases for Colts Neck Township, 2017**



- The above chart describes the percentage of Confirmed communicable and vectorborne illnesses for Colts Neck, for the year 2017.
- The largest number of confirmed cases were in the category of Tickborne/Vectorborne illnesses. There were 13 confirmed Tickborne cases (54.2%) out of 24 total confirmed cases of illness for Colts Neck in 2017.
- There were 6 Influenza/Respiratory cases out of the total, or 25% Influenza/Respiratory illnesses for 2017.
- There were 3 Bloodborne (Hepatitis) illness cases, or 12.5% for 2017.

- There was 1 case of Foodborne illness, and 1 case of Waterborne illness (Legionellosis) confirmed for 2017. This is 4.2% for each.
- There were no Vaccine preventable or Miscellaneous illness cases confirmed for Colts Neck in 2017.

\*\* Vaccine preventable illnesses include Varicella, Measles, Mumps and Pertussis. Miscellaneous illness cases include any illness outside of main categories, infectious illnesses such as Brucellosis, Streptococcus pyogenes Group A, Streptococcus pneumoniae and others.

## **Emergency Management, Response and Preparedness**

In 2017, we were able to review and upgrade some of our emergency management documents to include our Mass Prophylaxis/Immunization POD Manual, All-Hazard Preparedness Manual, Response and Recovery Plan, Pandemic Influenza Plan, Indoor Air Quality Program Plan and our Hazard Communication Plan.

Fortunately spared from a devastating hurricane in our area this year, our area was somewhat impacted with heavy rains from both Hurricane Harvey and Jose. The township was prepared to assist residents that may need alternate shelter by setting up a comfort station at a central location in town.

The township also made available a method to communicate with people with special needs. The program is called Register Ready and includes anyone who may find it difficult to self-evacuate because of a physical or cognitive limitation, language barrier, or lack of transportation, particularly if family or caregivers are unavailable to help them in a crisis. It is designed to help emergency responders locate and safely evacuate people who could find it difficult to help themselves in the event of a major disaster. The Colts Neck Health Department recognizes the value of assisting our residents in any way we can during such events.

## **Vital Statistics**

A total of 40 marriage/ domestic union licenses were issued in 2017. There were also 0 reported deaths (Colts Neck residents) and no reported births in Colts Neck.

## **Colts Neck Health Department**

### **2017 Completed**

#### **Goals, Projects**

- Updated numerous emergency management plans as well as some shared services agreements with neighboring health departments.
- All new and replacement water well homeowners are now issued a document entitled: Well Owner's Manual that explains how a well works and proper maintenance.
- The Hockhockson Brook was added to our ambient water quality project since it leads directly into the Navesink water shed.
- Developed flow charts that formally document the process of how to handle resident complaints.
- Developed flow charts which formally describes the process of how our rabies clinic functions as well as our dog licensing process.
- Updated the "Community Health Educational Center" display in the Colts Neck library to cover new, timely health information.

## **Colts Neck Health Department**

### **2018 Projected**

### **Goals, Projects**

- Develop and implement educational tools residents can utilize to understand how a septic system functions and its proper care and maintenance.
- Develop and implement an ongoing preventative maintenance plan for our public buildings with specific focus on activities that may create a public health condition if not properly serviced.
- Develop a excel data base of septic and water well information currently only available in our "hard files." This information will easily assess whether there are any records requested by residents.
- Develop and implement a communication strategy to educate the public regarding what is required (upfront) in order to reduce health department approvals for resident through our Building Dept.
- Continue to provide Board of Health members opportunities, via the internet, to be further educated on local health department topics such as water wells, septic systems, seasonal flu, and Lyme disease.

