

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Lancaster Board of Health (LBOH) consists of three Lancaster residents elected for staggered three-year terms. Members volunteer their time and expertise to make Lancaster a healthy place to live, work and raise a family through prevention and protection programs. They are responsible for ensuring the enforcement of public health laws, and to

- Prevent epidemics and the spread of diseases
- Protect against environmental hazards
- Promote physical and mental health, welfare and safety
- Assure the availability and accessibility of quality health services
- Respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery

Health Boards are responsible for over 60 areas of public health law and policy, deriving their authority directly from the Massachusetts General Court. Some of these are:

- Homeland security
- Inspections and enforcement
- Records and reports
- Noise, nuisances and complaints
- Health care and disease control
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Housing and dwellings
- Pools, beaches and camps
- Hazardous and toxic wastes
- Water purity and well permits
- Solid waste and septage
- Porta-potty and outdoor hydronic heater permits
- Collection container permits
- Rubbish and garbage
- Residential and daycare centers
- Food safety and service
- Body art, trash hauler and tobacco sales licenses
- Smoking and air quality
- Cemeteries, funeral directors, burial permits

The volume and scope of the work required to offer necessary health, sanitary and environmental services to individuals and to the community is comprehensive and continues to increase in complexity.

The primary function of the LBOH office is to assist callers and visitors by providing accurate information and/or referrals for questions, concerns and applications. The office is open Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and we can be reached at 978-365-3326 x1310 or by e-mail at ddennis@lancasterma.net.

Complaints

Identified complaints are investigated by our Nashoba Associated Board of Health (NABH) Agent, William J. Brookings, R.S., often accompanied by a Board Member.

Bill Brookings consults in person at the LBOH office each Wednesday morning from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM, and can be contacted anytime by voicemail at the NABH office at 978-772-3335 x304 or wbrookings@nashoba.org.

Septic Systems

The NABH reported that 17 septic system plans were reviewed in 2017, and that 13 Title 5 septic permits were issued by the LBOH.

Wells

The NABH reported that 3 well plans were reviewed in 2017, and that 3 well permits were issued by the LBOH.

Miscellaneous Permits

A variety of other permits were issued in 2017, including permits for porta-potties, pools, collection containers and retail sales of tobacco. Tobacco permits were issued to the following establishments in 2017:

- Cumberland Farms, High Street Extension
- Cumberland Farms, Main Street
- Main Street Auto, Main Street

The Boards of Health Tobacco Control Alliance (BOHTCA) continues to work with the LBOH in providing inspectional services regarding all tobacco-related issues, including enforcement of all youth access and environmental tobacco smoke regulations, and enforcement of the Smoke-Free Work Place Law.

Trash

The Town of Lancaster does not provide trash removal services. A private trash hauler must be contracted. The following companies were licensed to operate in Lancaster in 2017:

- E.L. Harvey & Sons, Westborough
- Fiore Trucking & Disposal, Fitchburg
- Mitrano Removal, Shirley
- Republic Services, Tyngsboro
- Sons of Kristoff, Sterling
- Tully Disposal and Recycling, Sterling
- Waste Management, West Boylston

- MT Trash Services, Westminster

The Trash Hauler Regulations can be found on the LBOH web page on the town web site at www.ci.lancaster.ma.us.

Recycling

All licensed trash haulers in the Town of Lancaster are required to provide recycling services. In addition, the Lancaster Recycling Center can be used to recycle a wide variety of items. The Lancaster Recycling Center's regular hours are 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Saturday and Sunday, weather permitting. The Recycling Center is open to Lancaster residents and also residents of surrounding towns.

Household Hazardous Waste Facility

The Town of Lancaster, along with several surrounding municipalities, has organized a regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility at Devens, at their current DPW facility. There is a small annual operating assessment from each participating community. Visit www.devenshww.com for hours of operation, materials accepted and disposal costs.

Unattended Collection Containers

The LBOH has regulations for unattended collection containers. The Unattended Collection Container Regulations can be found on the LBOH web page on the town web site at www.ci.lancaster.ma.us.

Town Health

The NABH public health team's mission is to provide high-quality public health nursing to our member towns. They provide essential (and state-mandated) services of communicable disease investigation and follow-up, high-risk maternal child services and health promotion.

NABH offers home visits and health fairs for health education and screening. The health promotion program and outreach has included monthly Wellness Clinics, which include blood pressure checks, diabetes screening, and flu and immunization protection. The primary focus of the NABH town nurse is on open communication with patients and families, as well as crisis intervention and support to high-risk individuals.

NABH Rabies Clinic

24 dogs and cats were vaccinated at the annual rabies clinic. Micro-chipping was also available. Rabies vaccination certificates for cats are kept on file at the LBOH office; rabies certificates for dogs are kept on file in the Town Clerk's Office, where dog licenses are issued.

We work closely with the local Animal Control Officer and the Town Clerk in sharing Possible Exposure to Rabies reports from veterinarians. The Animal Control Officer quarantines the wounded animal if the injury is from an unknown or unvaccinated source.

Burial Agent

The Town Clerk issued ___ Burial Permits, of which ___ were interred in Lancaster, ___ were interred elsewhere, and ___ were cremated.

Other Business

The Board welcomed John Farnsworth as a new member replacing David Dunn. The Board would like to thank David for his service to the Board and to the Town.

In October, it was with great pleasure that the Community Development and Planning and Board of Health offices welcomed our new Administrative Assistant and Office Manager, Debra Dennis. Debra brings a wealth of municipal administrative experience to the Town. She has recently worked as an Administrative Assistant in the Town of Winchendon supporting the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Appeals, Board of Health, Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Piazza, *Chairman*
Richard Belanger, *Clerk*
John Farnsworth, *Member*

