

BOARD OF HEALTH

What Boards of Health Do

- 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

Your Board 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.

Board Duties and Additional Powers and Authority

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

Board Activities

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

The primary function of the 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 hhampson@lancasterma.net.

Complaints

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

Bill Brookings consults in person at the BOH 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 20 septic system plans were reviewed in 2016, and that 21 Title 5 septic permits were issued by the LBOH.

Wells

The NABH reported that 6 well plans were reviewed in 2016, and that 6 well permits were issued by the LBOH.

The Board updated the Well regulations in the LBOH regulations in order to allow for residential use of irrigation wells for potable water. These cases will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Miscellaneous Permits

A variety of other permits were issued in 2016, including permits for porta-potties, collection containers and retail sales of tobacco.

Tobacco permits were issued to the following establishments in 2016:

- 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 new 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 2016:

- 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 BOH web page on the town web site (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 ten other 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.devenshhw.com for hours of operation, materials accepted and disposal costs.

Unattended Collection Containers

The Lancaster Board of Health passed new regulations this year for unattended collection containers. The Unattended Collection Container Regulations can be found on the BOH web page on the town web site (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 patients, families and open communication, as well as crisis intervention and support to high-risk individuals.

NABH Rabies Clinic

29 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 69 Burial Permits, of which 15 were interred in Lancaster, 54 were interred elsewhere, and 30 were cremated.

Recombinant DNA (rDNA) Regulations

The LBOH passed Recombinant DNA (rDNA) regulations in order to allow for biotechnology companies to conduct DNA research and development within the Town. The Life Sciences industry is rapidly growing around the globe, and adopting these regulations prepares Lancaster for becoming a host to these companies.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Piazza, *Chairman*
David Dunn, *Clerk*
Richard Belanger, *Member*

