

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health is the local authority responsible for disease prevention and control, public health and environmental protection, and promoting a healthy community. The Board serves as the local arm of both the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We are charged by state laws to develop, implement, and enforce health policies, oversee inspections to maintain minimum standards for sanitation in housing and food service, and assure that the basic health needs of our community are being met.

We continue to work with the Fire and Police Chiefs on the town's emergency planning program. Since the Town is a member of a 34 town coalition, (one of 5 coalitions that were created in the state), we are eligible for grants from the Department of Homeland Security and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to establish plans and programs for dealing with natural as well as terrorist caused catastrophes. This year also saw the startup of the Medical Reserve Corps program.

Medical Reserve Corps

During the events of September 11, 2001, it became clear that volunteers showing up at disaster scenes, though well meaning, required training, credentialing, and skills enabling them to work as a team. Subsequently, it was determined that communities needed to act on a local level to promote public health and safety during emergencies and eventually the Medical Reserve Corps was formed with its mission to provide public health volunteer medical services that supplement existing resources in time of disaster.

During 2006 grant money became available enabling the Board to hold a meeting to encourage people, not only those with medical credentials, but others who would become trained and credentialed volunteers able to respond to public health emergencies and mass casualty incidents. Approximately 80 people came forward and indicated their willingness to participate and offer their skills.

The Board appointed an Executive Committee in July for the purposes of maintaining and promoting the MRC in Stow. Since then the committee has held meetings to encourage townspeople to prepare themselves and their homes for a disaster and has been able to purchase medical supplies through regional funding and a grant. A database has been established to ensure that volunteer information is accurate and updated. Ongoing tasks include: ensuring that volunteers become credentialed, offering training opportunities, recruiting new volunteers, maintaining a working relationship with Police, Fire, and Highway Departments, and educating Stow's population on matters of public health and safety.

Health Services

We still maintain a contract with Emerson Hospital Home Care and under their direction the following is provided: annual flu clinic, home health services, nursing care at home, and follow-up to communicable diseases. In 2006 we inoculated anyone over the age of 65, teachers, people at risk, and town employees/personnel. We offered pneumonia and tetanus inoculations for those who requested them. A total of 178 flu, 6 pneumonia, and 6 tetanus inoculations were given. The Department of Public Health recommended the additional shots.

Our community outreach program to senior citizens continued this year with the monthly blood pressure clinics staffed by our wonderful volunteer nurses who live in Stow. For a complete list of our services please come to or call the office and we will be happy to talk with you about any needs you might have.

Hazardous Waste and Recycling

Our Hazardous Waste Collection Day in the fall of 2006 was a huge success. We had an excellent turnout with a total of 122 vehicles equaling 202 full households and 15 half households (25 gallons/pounds = full, 10 gallons/pounds = half). We again requested a \$10.00 donation from each participant to help offset some of our expenses. The total cost for holding this event was \$13,275.69.

Mosquito Control

The Town of Stow belongs to the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project to provide control of this pest, which is a carrier of such diseases as Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus. The Project is committed to an Integrated Mosquito Management program. The primary control options are breeding habitat removal and larvicide, which kills the mosquito larvae in the waters where they hatch, and is not toxic to humans or other animals. Also, the Project attempts to control the adult mosquito by spraying on a **request-only** basis.

Animal Control

In July of 2006 we established two new positions for dealing with animal control and animal inspections. We have an Animal Control Officer who is also the Assistant Animal Inspector and we have an Animal Inspector who is also the Assistant Animal Control Officer. These two positions provide excellent coverage throughout the town with the ability to respond quickly to any situation. We take this opportunity to remind all dog owners that they are required to have an up-to-date dog license and proof of rabies inoculation. We offer a rabies clinic every spring for dogs and cats. If you are a cat owner it is very important for you to make sure your cat is protected against rabies, even indoor cats should be inoculated. The following is a report of activity for the past year:

Dog Complaints – 69	Cat Complaints – 5	Animal Complaints – 39
Injured Animals – 4	Found Dogs – 12	Found Cats – 6
Lost Dogs – 32	Lost Cats – 40	Cruelty/Neglect – 6
Information – 49	Dead Animals on Roads – 35	Dogs Impounded – 6
Dogs Returned to Owners – 5	Dogs Placed in New Homes -1	

Citations Issued:	Quartines:	Animal Bites - 6
Written Warnings – 3	10 day – dogs 3, cats 0	
\$50.00 fines – 1	45 day – dogs 5, cats 14	
\$25.00 fines – 4	6 month – dogs 0, cats 5	

Livestock:		
Horses – 139	Goats – 27	Sheep - 57
Chickens – 164	Waterfowl – 30	Rabbits – 12
Alpacas – 7	Llamas – 2	Dairy Cattle – 4
Beef Cattle – 18	Turkeys – 3	Game Birds – 5
Swine – 10	Donkeys – 1	

Permitting & Revenues

Revenue of \$29,376.36 was remitted to the General Fund from permits issued by the Board in 2006. The following permits were issued:

Bed & Breakfast – 4	Camps – 3	Cider Mills – 4
Ice – 4	Dumpsters – 12	Stables – 28
Tobacco – 7	Food Service – 47	Massage Therapists – 7
Pet Shop – 1	Rubbish Haulers – 3	Pools – 2
Septage Haulers – 11	Title 5 Inspections - 76	Wells - 27
Disposal Works Construction Permits- 57		
Disposal Works Construction Installers – 48		

We welcome the public to take advantage of our informational brochures. These are at the Board of Health office. We are open from 9AM to 5PM Monday through Friday. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need information or our help. We are ready to help you in any way we can.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia B. Rising, Chairman
Betty Cormier
Sylvia Daley
Theora S. Cole, Administrative Assistant

Lynn Fishman, Clerk
Jack Wallace, Health Agent
Susan Latham, Animal Control Officer
Phyllis Tower, Animal Inspector