

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health Office is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Multipurpose Senior Center, located behind the Town Hall.

Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections

The Board of Health is required by state statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. Staff annually permit, and regularly inspect restaurants, tobacco retailers, massage therapy establishments, tanning establishments, pools, the ice-skating rink and the bathing beach. Inspectors from the department also follow up on numerous resident complaints relating to nearly any health related issue within the community ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations.

Permits issued by the Board of Health in 2004:

PERMIT ISSUED	NUMBER OF PERMITS ISSUED
Food	155
Tobacco	29
Massage therapist	66
Massage Establishment	21
Waste Hauler	11
Funeral Director	7
Tanning Establishment	4
Public Pool	8
Public Beach	1
Ice rink	1
TOTAL	303

Communicable Disease Surveillance

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, a rigorous

communicable disease tracking system is in place. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a communicable disease, the public health nurse conducts an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any disease trends of concern.

During 2004, ninety-five communicable diseases were monitored. Other efforts for disease prevention during 2004 included immunization clinics such as influenza vaccine clinics in the fall where over 700 elders were vaccinated. The 2004 influenza vaccination season was slow to begin due to a nationwide shortage of vaccine after a vaccine production failure in England. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provided the Board of Health with a sufficient number of doses of vaccine to vaccinate the highest at risk within the community.

Hepatitis A

In June, the Board of Health organized immune globulin clinics to prevent the spread of hepatitis A after two food handlers from two local food establishments were diagnosed with the virus. The Arlington clinics were the largest immune globulin administration clinics in state history. In total, over 2,800 persons received a dose of immune globulin at the Arlington clinics where all town departments pulled together to respond to the event. Town departments that contributed to the response included, the Department of Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department, Council on Aging, Town Manager's Office, Personnel Office, Veteran's Services Office, Planning Department, School Department, Recreation Department and Human Services Department.



Claire Lewkowitz RN, Ottoson School Nurse, administered immune globulin at clinic

Additionally, nurses and staff from neighboring communities pulled together to assist Arlington in responding to the clinics. Communities that contributed to the response included, Cambridge, Belmont, Lexington, Watertown, Brookline, Boston, Wellesley, Hanover, Randolph, Dracut and Westford. Additionally clinic assistance was sent from, Mount Auburn Hospital, Emerson Hospital, Renaissance Health, Arlington Visiting Nurses Association and the Boston University School of Public Health.



Fire Department Personnel at clinic assisting the Board of Health Left to right: Fire Fighter Corbett, Deputy Chief Springer and Lieutenant Kelly

The Arlington immune globulin clinics have served as a case study across New England for public health emergency preparedness trainings.

Communicable Diseases monitored by the Public Health Nurse

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE	# Of cases 2003	# Of cases 2004
Campylobacter Enteritis	7	7
Chicken pox	1	1
Cryptosporidiosis	2	0
Ehrlichia	1	0
Giardia	6	6
Haemophilis Influenzae	2	0
Hepatitis A	0	1
Hepatitis B	24	21
Hepatitis C	21	14
Hepatitis E	1	0
Legionellosis	1	3
Lyme Disease	11	4
Meningitis	1	1
Pertussis	10	18
Salmonella	6	4
S.A.R.S.	1 (suspect case)	0
Shigellosis	2	3
Strep pneumonia invasive	4	5
Group A strep	1	0
Group B strep	2	0
Tuberculosis	3	6
West Nile Virus	1	0
Yersiniosis	0	1
TOTAL	108	95

Childhood vaccines are provided to pediatric health care providers free of charge through the Vaccines for Children Program that is sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through this program all children, regardless of a family's ability to pay, will have access to necessary vaccines.

The Arlington Board of Health is the local vaccine depot for the State.

The three member Board of Health meets on a regular basis. During meetings, environmental health concerns are addressed and public hearings and policy review is performed. In 2004 the Board of

Health amended the Tobacco Regulations to prohibit smoking within 15 feet of the public libraries. The department received a skin cancer awareness grant from the Massachusetts Health Officers Association to educate children in the Recreation Department summer programs about the dangers of exposure to the sun. Arlington has a slightly higher incidence of skin cancer than the state average. In 2004 the Board of Health received federal bio-terrorism preparedness funding that was used to train staff as well as improve local public health infrastructure.

Sealer of Weights and Measures

To ensure compliance with the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act, the Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment. This includes retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks and food establishments. The Sealer responds to all consumer complaints to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Impact Report 2001-2004 for Gas Stations and Home Heating Oil Trucks

Year	Consumer Savings	Merchant Savings
2001	\$13,398.20	\$2,486.98
2002	\$7,424.05	\$1,754.35
2003	\$3,949.32	\$1,184.67
2004	\$6,634.17	\$8,495.03
Total	\$31,405.74	\$13,921.03