

**ANNUAL REPORT
2007
LYNDHURST HEALTH DEPARTMENT**



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Commissioner of Public Affairs
Director of Health Department

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Health Council Members

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Joyce Jacobson, Chair
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2007

During the calendar year of 2007, the Lyndhurst Health Department continued to serve its residents with a wide range of programs and services. Under the direction of Mayor Richard J. DiLascio, the Health Department's mission is "to promote and protect the public health of our community by using the highest standards for disease control and prevention."

By following the Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health in New Jersey (Chapter 52; N.J.S.A. 26:1A-15 and 26:3A2-1) and the Township of Lyndhurst Ordinances (Chapter 22: Health), the Health Department fulfills its primary function of protecting the public health. With its ongoing preventative screening programs, health inspections, communicable disease surveillance, and health education, the Health Department reaches a large segment of the population.

In order to guarantee health performance standards are met, the Township of Lyndhurst contracts with Bergen County's Department of Health. By working closely with the County, we are able to provide professional, skilled, and efficient public health care. With a goal of ensuring coverage and continuity, the Health Administrator provides services also performed by the Public Health Nurse. In 2007, the health administrator and nurse participated in training for emergency preparedness, disease investigation, bioterrorism, pandemic planning, and health education.

2007 brought the first known case of rabies to the Township, with a confirmed case of rabies in a stray cat. Recognizing the significance of this event, the Health Department quickly provided health safety information to residents. With the assistance of the Lyndhurst Police Department and the Board of Education (BOE), we sent notification and educational literature home with school children, delivered information door-to-door, and instituted a reverse 9-1-1 to warn residents to protect themselves and to avoid stray animals. Animal surveillance was increased.

The Health Department worked closely with the County's Division of Environmental Protection to investigate suspicious soil. Together with the Department of Public Safety and the Building Department, we assisted in expediting removal of potentially contaminated soil (New York Avenue).

With a goal of increasing access to health care, the Lyndhurst Health Department joined Bergen County's Task Force to Increase Access to Health Care. This group is part of Bergen County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). With this partnership, the Health Department was able to enroll over 60 individuals into health insurance plans.

Our Health Department web page received a complete revision in 2007, with access at www.lyndhursthealth.org, or as a link from www.lyndhurstnj.org. Special health announcements, contact information, health topics, and resources are provided.

During 2007, the Township Health Code underwent significant changes, enacted with the approval of the Board of Commissioners.

1) The advisory Health Council was established by ordinance rather than by resolution to ensure its permanency. The Health Council worked closely with the Health Department to address public concerns and public health issues. The Council was called upon to conduct a hearing regarding a massage therapy license. The council's decision was upheld by the Superior Court of New Jersey; the establishment was closed.

2) Massage therapy licensing was re-examined and our code was revised to enact stricter regulations by requiring massage therapists to be certified by the State Board of Nursing.

3) Background checks are now done on workers of mobile (itinerant) food establishments in order to protect our residents, especially our children.

4) Permanent cosmetology is now regulated by the Township so as to ensure health safety when these procedures are performed.

2007 brought a renewed interest in the State's Municipal Alliance to Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Lyndhurst's previous Municipal Alliance had been disbanded in 2004. The Health Department's successful grant application brought an award of \$13,500 for 2008. While the grant funds will be administered through the Health Department, the funds will be used town wide.

This has been a year of change and growth in the Health Department. We held our first annual Fifth Grade Health Fair. We provided public health services through health educational programs and served as a health resource while promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

Under the leadership of Mayor Richard J. DiLascio, in 2008, the Health Department will continue with its goal of ensuring that Lyndhurst is a town with healthy people in a healthy community.

The following report is respectfully submitted,

Joyce Jacobson
Health Administrator
Chair, Health Council
Lyndhurst Health Department
January 14, 2008

Office of Vital Statistics:

The Lyndhurst Health Department serves as the Office of Vital Statistics, with the recording of births, deaths, and marriages. Official certified copies of records are obtained through this office. Our two registrars are New Jersey State licensed which requires continuing education to ensure compliance with changing laws. The recognition of civil unions in 2007 by the State of New Jersey is one such change affecting the Office of Vital Statistics. With new passport regulations and the security concerns of the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Health Department has seen an increased demand for certified copies of marriage licenses and birth certificates. Marriages performed by the mayor occur in the Health Department. Net revenue generated from vital statistics and food establishment licenses totaled \$39,133.

The following licenses and applications are processed in this office:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Marriage | Food Establishment |
| Dog and Cat | Commercial Pools |
| Laundromats | |
| Permanent Cosmetics | |

Health Inspections: The Township contracts with Bergen County for Sanitarian (Health Inspector) services. With 190 food establishments and 170 complaints, this requires a full time position.

Under the current administration, these services have increased from 2 days to 5 days because of the number of licenses, inspections, and complaints received. Additionally, the Health Inspector addresses animal bites, rodent complaints, heat concerns, public nuisance complaints, and environmental concerns.

Food Establishment Inspections:

Lyndhurst had 190 licensed food establishments in 2007; each was inspected 1-2 times by the Health Inspector. Food establishment inspections follow New Jersey law (Chapter 24, N.J.A.C. 8:24). Each inspection report generates a satisfactory, conditional, or unsatisfactory result. If an unsatisfactory rating is determined, the restaurant is closed. No restaurants received an unsatisfactory in 2007. However, several food establishments received a “conditional” report. This generates the need for a re-inspection and therefore, more of the health department’s time. Restaurants which received more than two conditionals in 2007 included: American Hero Sub, Angelo’s, Appetizzio’s, Colonial Diner, Dunkin Donuts, Foschini Brick Oven, Lee’s Hawaiian Islander, Oriental Gardens, and 7-Eleven.

In order to promote excellence in food handlers, the Bergen County Gold Star Program has been introduced in Lyndhurst by the Health Inspector. This program establishes an award for outstanding food safety. In 2007 two restaurants received this award: Lyndhurst Burger King and Polito Avenue Subway.

Animal Control:

1) 2007 brought the first-known confirmed case of rabies to Lyndhurst. After a resident was attacked by a feral (stray) cat in Lyndhurst, the cat was impounded and euthanized so it could be tested for rabies. Since rabies is a fatal disease, the health department reached out to the Township to notify its residents to protect themselves. This was accomplished through a variety of venues: notices going home with students, newspaper announcements, web postings, and a reverse 9-1-1. Animal control surveillance was increased.

Rabies control has become a significant concern in NJ since 1989 when rabies was discovered in a land-based animal (raccoon) in NJ. The Township contracts with the County for animal control services. Services include stray animal patrol and housing, rabies control and testing, quarantine services for strays, and trappings of feral and dangerous animals.

2) State law mandates that dogs be licensed. Township ordinance calls for the licensing of cats and dogs. The Health Department licensed 1,015 dogs and 115 cats in 2007. Public compliance is difficult to achieve, with many residents having unlicensed cats and dogs. Adding to animal control issues are the residents who feed stray cats which are not licensed.

The Health Department made numerous repeated calls to homes which did not renew their pet licenses in January. Notices placed in local newspapers and on the town web site urged residents to license their pets. Finally, in April, our Health Inspector issued 100 summonses to residents who did not renew these licenses. Residents complained that they were being treated unfairly because households who had never licensed their pets were not fined.

3) The state calls for a dog census every two years. Township ordinance calls for a dog census to be done by the Police Department every year (9-2.2 of Township Ordinance). It is unknown when the last dog census was done.

4) Animal Bites and scratches are investigated by the Health Inspector. We work closely with the police department to receive notices of all reports. Animal Bite investigations performed by our health inspector numbered 31; a nursing investigation was required in six cases.

5) No dead crows reported in 2007 (no known West Nile Virus).

Communicable Disease Investigations:

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. Title 8, Chapter 57) provides for regulatory control through the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. Some diseases are reportable to the state while others are reportable to the local health department. Examples of these diseases include AIDS, TB, Anthrax, Hepatitis, Botulism, Smallpox, Meningitis, and sexually transmitted diseases. By using the Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System (CDRSS), the Lyndhurst Health Department is able to track diseases and protect the public health.

In 2007, there were 65 cases entered into the CDRSS at the local level by the Lyndhurst Health Department. While not every positive laboratory test was a confirmed active disease, each of these cases involved an investigation. Investigations included:

Dengue Fever	1	Malaria	1
Hepatitis A	5	Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever	1
Hepatitis B	13	Rubella	1
Hepatitis C	30	Salmonellosis	1
Legionellosis	1	Streptococcus pneumoniae	1
Listeriosis	2	Streptococcus pyogenes	1
Lyme Disease	7		

While not a state-mandated reportable disease, the topic of MRSA (staph) raised health concerns. The Lyndhurst Health Department worked closely with the Board of Education to ensure that residents and parents were updated and informed regarding Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, more commonly known as “MRSA” or “staph.” The Health Department provided telephone and in-person consultations to address infection control issues. By providing educational information in the local newspapers and on the Health Department’s web site, the department was able to reach a larger section of our population. Measures which were stressed to prevent the spread of MRSA included: 1) proper hand washing, 2) discouraging the sharing of personal items such as sports equipment and clothing, 3) proper personal hygiene, and 4) the use of disinfectants.

Child Health Conferences:

The pediatric well-child clinic is held on the second Wednesday of each month. Our public health nurse, a second nurse, and a pediatrician, Dr. Kaye, provide physicals and immunizations. Since it is recommended that every child receives 28 immunizations before entering kindergarten, this is an important health service for children. In 1994, a federal program, Vaccines for Children (VFC), was implemented to ensure that all children receive their vaccinations. VFC provide the vaccines recommended by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Eligible children include those who have no insurance or are under-insured. The Township’s cost of this program is the cost of staffing as vaccines are received at no cost to the Township.

The total number of patient visits in 2007 was 76; this included 58 different children.

Lead Prevention Programs:

1. Even though lead poisoning is the number one environmental hazard affecting children under the age of six, it is a preventable disease. The American Pediatric Association recommends that all children receive a lead level test at the ages of 1 and 2. Only one lead test was performed by our public health nurse since most of the children have this test done by their pediatricians.

2. When New Jersey expanded its Wipe Out Lead NJ program in 2006, the Health Department contacted the state to join. The state-funded program provides kits which parents can use to test the insides of their homes with a goal of identifying lead contaminated homes before a child ingests lead. Thirty-three kits were given to parents in 2007. Parents are provided with pre-paid postage envelopes to return the tests and are sent a \$5.00 gift card to Pathmark or Shop-Rite as an incentive to participate in this program. The Township receives the kits at no cost.

3. Lead investigations: When a child has an elevated lead level, a public health investigation is conducted by the public health nurse. This includes interviews with parents, home visits, educational services, and a health inspector home visit to identify potentially contaminated areas. Number of 2007 investigations: 3.

Flu Shots:

As part of our preventative public health services, the Health Department continues to provide free flu shots to all Lyndhurst residents who are 18 and older. However, in 2007, our department changed our ordering practice in an attempt to lower the cost of this program.

In 2006, 950 vaccine doses had been ordered; only 556 doses were given. The 2006 cost for the Flu Vaccination Program was \$11,904 (excluding regular staffing hours). We received no reimbursement for these expenses as we do not have a billing service.

In 2007, we ordered 900 doses from the Bergen County Health Department; previously we had ordered from an independent supplier. This change in ordering was done to take advantage of the County's billing services. By ordering through the County, we are not billed until the billing is complete. Therefore, instead of paying up front for the flu shot doses, we now will be billed the cost after subtracting out the reimbursement for Medicare recipients.

In past years, there had been both a real and a perceived flu vaccine shortage. Residents become concerned when flu shots are not available in early Fall. With more stores providing flu shots, many residents get their shots elsewhere. Since we are dependent upon the supplier, we are unable to know when the vaccines will arrive.

While we only used 58 % of our 2006 supply, we were advised by the County to order approximately the same number of doses for 2007. During the 2007 Flu Season, we gave 625 flu shots; therefore we have 275 remaining. This equates to using 69 % of the doses. Flu shots are not returnable so we are responsible for the cost of unused doses. Since flu shots for the 2008 season must be ordered by February 2008, 700-750 doses will be ordered from the County for the 2008 Flu Shot Program.

Medical Transportation:

We provide weekday transportation to medical appointments for Lyndhurst residents. While our priority is to provide service for dialysis patients, in 2007 we provided transportation to the following towns: Lyndhurst, North Arlington, Kearny, Harrison, Bloomfield, Nutley, Clifton, Rutherford, Wallington, Carlstadt, Passaic, Belleville, Paramus, Teaneck, Cedar Lane, and Newark. With gas prices increasing and our vehicles needing numerous repairs, this program has been problematic. We request 7 days advance notice for scheduling, but appointments in different locations are hard to accommodate. A goal for 2008 is to develop a written protocol to decide how best to service our residents.

Medical Equipment: We have a supply of crutches, wheelchairs, walkers, and commodes to loan to Lyndhurst residents. Deposits are refunded when items are returned.

Blood Borne Pathogen Safety Training:

In 1993, New Jersey passed the Public Employee Occupational Safety and Health Act (PEOSHA) in order to protect public employees from job-related exposures to blood borne pathogens (BBP). This mandate requires the Township of Lyndhurst to: 1) identify employees at risk, 2) provide education, 3) provide safety equipment, 4) offer free Hepatitis B vaccinations to these employees, and 5) have a readily available Exposure Control Plan. The Township employees have responsibilities under this law. Employees must: 1) attend the educational sessions, 2) decide whether they want the hepatitis B vaccine series, and 3) follow PEOSHA guidelines for Protection and Reporting.

Following PEOSHA guidelines, the Health Administrator and Public Health Nurse formulated and taught the new 2007 course. Discouraged with past low compliance rates (less than 60% in 2006), we worked closely with each department to ensure improved compliance. The Health Department offered 14 training sessions in 2007 at varying times of the day to reach employees on varying shifts. A separate course was provided in September for Board of Education employees. All 14 employees who requested the Hepatitis B vaccination series were BOE employees.

With an improved compliance rate of 81% in 2007, we are continuing to assess methods to increase compliance. We have again set a 2008 goal to reach a compliance rate of 100%.

Health Fair:

Our First Annual 5th Grade Health Fair held on October 25th was a success thanks to a coordinated effort with the BOE and public school nurses. The Parks Department provided the transportation for 200 students from 7 schools in town. The Police Department provided internet safety and alcohol/drug education. Our nurse taught proper hand washing. Volunteering their time were Dr. Cianni (dental health), Dr. Haley (backpack safety), Drs. Natari and Subik (Foot care), and the Lyndhurst Police Emergency Squad.

TB Testing: Mantoux testing is available for all residents and BOE employees at no cost to the person requesting the test. In 2007, 86 tests were administered, with one positive result. While this client's x-ray showed that no active disease was present, the person received the recommended treatment.

School Audits: Every year, all daycares and preschools must have their students' immunization records audited by our public health nurse (11 audits performed, with 6 requiring re-auditing. With audits being state mandated every three years for grades K-12, the audit was performed in 2007 (9 schools).

Newborn Letters: All parents of newborns are sent a welcome letter by the Health Department. Included are health safety educational materials as well contact information for a variety of programs (163 packets sent).

Programs: All screening programs require participants to have a personal physician. Since these are screening programs, we do not want residents to self-diagnose. We also want to ensure that participants have a physician to turn to if there is a problem. Residents are charged a fee only if a laboratory fee is involved.

Women's Health Clinic: New to this program in 2007 was a partnering with Clara Maass Medical Center which enabled us to provide 2 new services: A specialized health educator who provided breast self-exam instructions and the use of the Thin Prep Pap smear, an improved testing method (22 participants, 10 referrals during our two clinics).

Blood Screening: Multi-phasic blood testing was offered in June and December. Participants are required to have Total participants: 128 (123 referred to their MD).

Personal Health Consultations: Conducted monthly by the nurse, there were 108 total visits. However, only 46 residents took advantage of this program designed as a health and lifestyle assessment. In reality, it is used for residents wanting a blood pressure check. A goal for 2008 would be to re-evaluate this program and improve outreach.

Men's Clinic: Two clinics were scheduled, but one was cancelled because of lack of interest in the program. Increased outreach and education is needed to encourage participation since this clinic consists of a rectal exam to check the prostate. Blood is drawn to check PSA levels and stools are checked for blood. One clinic is scheduled for 2008.

Eye Clinic: The two clinics were cancelled because of lack of interest. We have only scheduled one eye clinic for 2008. We will evaluate whether to continue this program if participation does not increase.

Lifeline Radiology: Held twice in 2007, this program has great participation. Four tests are offered to check for: carotid artery blockage, abdominal aneurysm, peripheral arterial disease, and decreased bone density. This program is run by an independent company; in spite of the fees involved, 353 tests were performed on 98 residents.

Community Collections 2007:

1. Collection for servicemen/women serving overseas (Spring 2007).
2. Project Backpack: School supplies and health insurance information were provided after the health department obtained backpacks from the organization, "Covering the Uninsured." Residents and local businesses donated backpacks and school supplies to make this project a success. With Health Council member Dawn Failace's support, 72 backpacks and supplies were provided to Lyndhurst children (Summer 2007).
3. Holiday Food Drive: November- December 2007. Donated food provided to needy families.

Food Stamps: A representative of Bergen County Social Services assists residents with completing applications for food stamps at the Health Department at least once a month. For Welfare inquiries, residents are referred to Bergen County Welfare Office.

Health Care Access/Resource:

After joining Bergen County's Task Force to Increase Access to Health Care, the Health Department held an event to enroll children in New Jersey's health insurance program for children, NJ FamilyCare. Over 60 individuals who previously had no health insurance were enrolled at this March 31 event. The Health Administrator assists families throughout the year with the NJ FamilyCare application.

When residents do not have health insurance, they are referred to the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) in Passaic and Garfield.

Our Health page serves to notify residents of health communications as well as to serve as a health resource (www.Lyndhursthealth.org). The Health Department thanks The Leader and the South Bergenite newspapers for posting our notices and health education messages.

Advance Directives:

Commonly known as "Living Wills," advance directives allow individuals to protect their health care decisions and choices. Individuals can choose to state specific health care choices (i.e. "Do everything medically possible in every situation," "Never place me on a respirator") or can name a specific person to make decisions if the individual is no longer capable.

In order to increase awareness of Advance Directives, the Health Administrator addressed the Mount Carmel Senior Group to explain the different types of Advance Directives. Members were provided with samples of living wills. The Health Administrator is available to assist residents with completing their Advance Directives at no cost (individual consultations with 6 residents in 2007).

Municipal Alliance Grant:

The Health Department submitted a grant application in 2007 to the County's Municipal Alliance to Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse. With this successful grant application, we were awarded a \$13,500 grant for 2008. While the grant funds will be administered through the Health Department, the funds will be used town wide.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

The Health Department worked closely with the County's Division of Environmental Protection and the state's EPA to investigate suspicious soil. Together with the Department of Public Safety and the Building Department, we assisted in expediting removal of potentially contaminated soil on New York Avenue.

2007 Ordinance Changes:

There were four major additions affecting the Health Department:

1. Mobile Food Establishments: In order to ensure the safety of our children, Hot Dog and Ice Cream Trucks will now have to be fingerprinted to continue receiving a food establishment license (Ordinance No. 2597).
2. Health Council: Whereas the Health Council was previously established through a resolution, it is now a permanent advisory health council (Ordinance No. 2608).
3. Massage Therapy: While massage therapy licenses are issued by the Police Department, Ordinance 2608 regulates the requirements for this licensing. With a two year grace period for already established therapists, this ordinance requires all new licensees to receive massage therapy certification from the New Jersey Board of Nursing.
4. Permanent Cosmetics: Ordinance 2618 was established to ensure that permanent cosmetology is regulated for public health and safety. The New Jersey Department of Health regulates Body Art (NJSA 26:1A-7, et seq. and NJAC 8:27-1, et seq.), requiring all such establishments to be licensed by the municipality. With Palladium Palace applying to perform permanent cosmetics, the Health Department reviewed State laws and procedures for licensing. While no shop has such licensing in 2007, licensing will be provided in January 2008.

----END of 2007 Report---