



AGENCIES

Above: Reflections on Coventry's Lake Wangumbaug.

Eastern Highlands Health District 2009/2010 Annual Report for Coventry

The Towns of Bolton, Coventry, and Mansfield established the Eastern Highlands Health District on June 6, 1997 as a cooperative effort to pool their resources and create a regional full-time professional health department. Reducing costs and improving both the scope and quality of public health services in the community were the objectives of establishing the District. Seven more towns joined between 2000 and 2005: Andover, Ashford, Chaplin, Columbia, Scotland, Tolland, and Willington. The mission of the Eastern Highlands Health District is to prevent illness and promote wellness in the communities it serves. The pursuit of this mission is realized by assuring that other community agencies provide certain public health services within the region and by providing specific public health services directly. These direct services include a communicable disease control program; public health education and promotion; community assessment and public health planning; emergency preparedness; and comprehensive environmental health services. The main components of environmental health services include: on-site subsurface sewage disposal permitting; complaint investigation; food establishment licensing and inspection; and an environmental monitoring program.

Highlights/Accomplishments for FY 09/10:

- Board of Directors adoption of an operating budget of \$719,290 for FY 10/11, which is a 1.3% reduction from the previous fiscal year.
- Activated EHHD Pandemic Response Plan in response to the 2009 H1N1 Influenza A outbreak. Activities included risk and public health education communications, regular updates to community stakeholders, active surveillance, and the administration of 9,360 vaccinations (primarily to school aged children) in all ten health district communities.
- Health promotion activities this fiscal year included the reinvigoration of the Matters of the Heart Partnership funded by grants from the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, and the expansion of the employee wellness program, BeWell.
- Septic plan review and approval process was updated and streamlined.
- The food protection program for non-profit entities was updated to provide greater options and improved ease for applicants.
- The fee schedule was expanded to accommodate farmers' market initiatives to include food service activities.
- Communicable disease control activities included review of and follow up (as needed) with 1,200 case reports; and conducting 10 outbreak, or individual case investigations.
- **The main FY 09/10 indicators for environmental health district activity in Coventry include: 177 site inspections for septic systems; 62 septic permits issued; 11 well permits issued; 24 complaints investigated; 95 environmental samples taken for lab analysis; 152 food establishment inspections and other health inspections; 95 B100a building permit reviews; and, 171 test pits and/or perk tests.**

Plans for the Upcoming Fiscal Year:

- Update and enhance agency website for greater functionality and easier use.
- Continue to update and exercise local emergency response plans. Develop a funding strategy for long-term program continuation in anticipation of federal funding reductions.
- Continue to pursue other funding sources to maintain existing scope of quality services and possibly expand health promotion programs.
- Expand Be Well employee wellness program to other employers in the community.
- Develop and implement policy and environmental changes that promote healthy behaviors.
- Address the individual public health needs of member towns as they arise.