



**Jessica Kristy, MPH**  
**Director of Health**  
**September 2025**

**Miscellaneous**

CT Association of Directors of Health (CADH)

Positions held: Member; Elected to Board of Directors; Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair; Environmental Health Committee

The CADH Board of Directors meeting was held on September 16<sup>th</sup> however I was unable to attend due to evaluating an exercise at St. Vincent’s Hospital (detailed below).

I attended the CADH Environmental Health Committee meeting on September 4<sup>th</sup> and attended a separate CADH meeting regarding septic on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Statewide DPH & Local Health Meetings

I continue to attend the monthly meeting held for local health and DPH staff (co-hosted by CADH). NVHD staff also attend if their schedule permits. The meeting was held on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, I attended a virtual webinar presented by DPH and DEEP with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities on understanding and addressing PFAS contamination.

**Workforce Development**

Lisa continues to chair the NVHD Workforce Development Committee. Staff continue to work on completing the required two online training courses this quarter. We had 100% compliance during the first quarter of the fiscal year for our online training plan.

I attended a key stakeholder Public Health Training Academy of Connecticut (PHTAC) meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup> where we reviewed the CT DPH required mandatory training plan, software capabilities for local health for virtual training, Food Inspector training, and a new PHTAC SharePoint site.

I attended an in-person training held at the Worker’s Comp. Trust office in Wallingford on September 18<sup>th</sup>. It was the first-ever Trust joint program featuring the Deputy Director of the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), Attorney Cheryl Sharp, as well as a senior CHRO legal manager who provided CHRO rules and expectations, as well as the insight on how they process and evaluate employment discrimination (age, race, gender identity, retaliation, religion, sexual orientation, sex and more). Additionally, housing discrimination complaints, the ways for avoiding such complaints, and how to defend the complaint was also covered. Letizia, Ambrose & Falls senior partners, John M. Letizia and Phyllis M. Pari, provided guidance on how to successfully defend complaints through the initial response, mediation and fact-finding stages.



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**Air Quality and Climate Change**

Grant: EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant

*Status: Contract is fully executed!*

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, I virtually attended the 2025 Connecticut Symposium on Climate Change and Health, which was sponsored by the Yale Center on Climate Change and Health and organized in partnership with the Office of Climate and Health at the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

I met with Hannah B. of the DPH Office of Climate and Health on September 15<sup>th</sup> to review contract obligations and to extract any updates regarding the other project partners (Yale U. and UConn) who are still pending their contracts. Vanessa will be assisting me on the grant in the interim.

**Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Program**

Grant: Overdose Data to Action: Limiting Overdose through Collaborative Actions in Localities (OD2A)

*Status: Year 3 Sub-contract Pending with New Haven Health Department*

Austin and I attended the monthly OD2A partners meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup> hosted by New Haven where Austin provided updates for NVHD. I attended the OD2A subgrantees meeting with the CDC Support Team on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Austin is participating in the Region 5 Breathe Easy Workgroup, which met on September 4<sup>th</sup> and is a coalition focused on combatting youth drug and vape use. Participating in this working group supports regional initiatives to reduce adolescent substance use through education and prevention programming. Austin has also started attending the Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce Healthcare Council meetings which met on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Austin has coordinated 7 Narcan training sessions that he will be providing across the Valley, which started on September 25<sup>th</sup> in Ansonia and will continue into October. The objective of this series of trainings to better equip older adults with life-saving knowledge and resources so they are primarily being held at the senior centers.

He also continued to perform educational outreach at community events, the Foodshare distribution events, Derby Public Library, and at the Umbrella Center in Ansonia.

He attended several back-to-school events and brought resources for parents and staff on preventing teen substance use and mental health education material. Street outreach efforts were also conducted to assist unhoused individuals in preparing for the upcoming winter months and expected inclement weather conditions.



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**Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)**

September is National Preparedness Month. We provided education updates in our newsletter and on social media.

On September 24th, I joined emergency management professionals at the Weathering the Storm Symposium. Focused on leadership and resilience in the eye of the storm, this full day of learning was held ahead of the 2025 EMS & FIRE PRO Expo & Conference at Mohegan Sun. The Keynote speaker was Michele Mainelli, Deputy Director, National Weather Service and other featured speakers included Brenda Bergeron (CT DESPP), Frannie Bui (US Army Corps of Engineers), William Turner (CT DEMHS), Josh Cingranelli (DEMHS Meteorologist), Jill D’Abrosca (ASPR Region 1), Douglas Glowacki (CT Hazard Mitigation), Bob Kenny (CT DEMHS), Joseph Laucella (Town of Greenwich), Jamie Barry (MEMA), and Nelson Vaz (NWS New York). Kudos to Joseph Laucella, Echo Hose Ambulance/R2 ESF8/Greenwich EMD for pulling off another great conference!



**ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services, Chair**

I facilitated the Region 5 ESF #8 meeting on September 4<sup>th</sup> and attended the Region 2 ESF #8 meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Paulina has been attending and Vanessa will now also attend the ESF 8 meetings with me. I attended the virtual REPT & REPT Steering Committee meeting for Region 2 on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, I served as an Exercise Evaluator for a large exercise at St. Vincent’s Hospital Emergency Department. The exercise included a cyber component that tested internal and external downtime communications as well as an active assailant situation that turned into a mass casualty and trauma exercise. Beyond the ED, other functions of the hospital were also in play including the Incident Command Center, ED Ambulance Bay/Triage, Laboratory, Radiology, and others. In addition to 2 realistic mannequins, Medical Reserve Corps volunteers were put in moulage with real looking injuries and played the roles of 16 additional patients. The exercise coordinator was Paul Rabeuf, Program Manager for Public Safety and Emergency Management for Hartford Healthcare and my Co-Chair for Region 5 ESF #8. Brien LaForge, B.S., EMT-P, CCP-C, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for Torrington Area Health District and Region 5 ESF #8 Recording Secretary was also an evaluator.



**Statewide Training and Exercise Workgroup (STEW)**

I attended the meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

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CT Healthcare Coalition (HCC)

Public Health Representative & Voting Member; Elected to the Executive Committee

I attended the CT HCC Executive Committee meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

NACCHO Preparedness Policy Advisory Group (PPAG)

Connecticut Representative

I attended the PPAG meeting that was held on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Naugatuck Valley Medical Reserve Corps (NVMRC)

I performed one Loyalty Oath Ceremony for a new volunteer on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Surveillance & Outbreak Response

If you need a COVID-19 home test kit, please arrange pick up or delivery with Paulina by calling 203-881-3255 x 118 or emailing pcherkasov@nvhd.org.

The following update is provided by Paulina:

With the beginning of respiratory virus season, Paulina created back to school public health guidance which was shared on social media and with community partners and residents via the NVHD newsletter. Paulina continues to update ELC outreach materials on topics such as RSV, flu, and COVID-19, as well as monitoring said virus rates when available through reported test results. As expected with the season, there has been a slight increase of reported COVID-19 cases in September. Paulina applied for access to EpiCenter in order to better monitor respiratory virus activity in the Valley.

**Table 1. COVID-19 Adults Case Statistics (18+)**

	August	September
Total Cases & Contacts Managed*	146	155
Consultations with Residents	1	1

**Table 2. COVID-19 Youth and Teen (0-17) Case Statistics**

	August	September
Total Cases & Contacts Managed*	20	36
Consultations with Residents	0	0

*\*Please note that "Total Cases & Contacts Managed" also includes reports of self-tests originating from various sources such as self-reports, schools, childcare centers, congregate living facilities, etc. and as such do not always come with contact information and/or do not always warrant further follow-up by NVHD staff.*

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Figure 1. Back to School Guidance (also available in Spanish)

# It's Back to School ~~SCHOOL~~ FLU Time!



HOW TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AND THEIR CLASSMATES SAFE FROM  
FLU & OTHER RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES THIS SCHOOL YEAR

## Know the Symptoms!

### INFLUENZA (FLU)

Symptoms **come on suddenly** and usually include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

**TIP:** not everyone with the flu will have a fever. Check out the "flu vs common cold" chart below

### COVID-19

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days** after infection and can include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Body aches
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

### RSV

Symptoms appear **4-6 days** after infection and come on in stages. Symptoms include:

- Runny nose
- Congestion
- Decrease in appetite
- Cough
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing

**TIP:** RSV in very young infants may only present as irritability, decreased activity, and breathing difficulties

## Is it Flu or the Common Cold?

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Common, lasts 3-4 days
Aches	Slight	Common, often severe
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue/weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Cough	Hacking cough	Common, can be severe
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

Colds are typically milder than the flu and generally do not result in serious health problems.

**WHILE BOTH ARE CONTAGIOUS, flu can have serious associated complications, making it important to test for flu!**

Information courtesy of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## Can My Child Go to School if They Are Ill? \*

**IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK.**

If your child is experiencing unexplained respiratory virus symptoms, **keep them home and away from others.**

They can return to their normal activities if, for **at least 24 hours**, both are true:

- symptoms are getting better overall, and
- they have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication)

*\*Please consult your child's school or daycare respiratory virus protocol and attendance policy*

## Preventing Spread

Taking extra precautions is recommended for **5 days** after returning to school, such as practicing **good hygiene, masking** and **social distancing** when possible. **Talk to your child about proper hygiene, such as covering their cough and hand-washing.** Check with your child's school or daycare if they can bring tissues and hand sanitizer with them to school.

## How Else Can I Protect My Child?

Vaccinating **yourself and your child** against the most common respiratory viruses such as flu and RSV is recommended.

Keep **masks and COVID-19/flu tests** on hand, or contact your healthcare provider for testing as soon as you suspect respiratory illness.

Take advantage of **free supplies and COVID-19 test kits** from NVHD! Call **(203) 881-3255, ext. 118.** (while supplies last)

For immunization information, including **NVHD's 2025 flu clinic schedule**, visit [www.nvhd.org/immunizations](http://www.nvhd.org/immunizations) or call Nurse Kristie at **(203) 881-3255, ext. 107**

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**Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)**

Me, Jess, and Lisa are members of the CHIP Steering Committee along with Myra O. (Griffin Health Services) and Beth C. (Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center). We will continue to meet as we finalize the document and implementation plan during October. The four priority areas of the 2025-2028 Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) are, in no particular order: 1) Access to Care (Co-Chaired by Myra and Griffin employee TBD); 2) Reduce the Burden of Chronic Disease (Co-Chaired by Carissa and Griffin employee TBD); 3) Enhance Mental and Behavioral Health (Co-Chaired by Lisa and Austin); and 4) Increase Awareness and Access to Healthy Food and Nutrition (Co-Chaired by Jess and Beth). Additional NVHD staff will participate as subcommittee members, and we encourage the Board to consider joining if interested as well! A formal press announcement and instructions to on how to sign up will be forthcoming in October.

**Community Health Programs**

LiveWell chronic disease programs were put on hold in September and October but will be picked back up in November. We always skip this time of year because it is our busiest time with flu clinics and community events.

**Mental Health Programs**

Jess attended a webinar about Mental Health and Aging: Breaking the Stigma and Addressing Psychological Well-being on September 17<sup>th</sup> which was sponsored by the AARP, moderated by Dr. Sheila Robinson, Executive Woman Media, and included the following panelists: Rawle Andrews, American Psychiatric Association Foundation; Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director, Senior Services of Alexandria, Virginia; and Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director, Senior Services of Alexandria, Virginia.

**Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**

Austin and Lisa co-taught a MHFA training at NVHD on September 12<sup>th</sup> and had 6 participants including Kristie and I. It was an excellent training and I highly recommend it.

**QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer Suicide Prevention)**

In recognition of September being National Suicide Prevention Month, Lisa hosted a virtual QPR training on September 11<sup>th</sup> and had 5 participants.

**Suicide Prevention & Postvention**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Lisa and Austin attended the Connect™ Postvention Community Training that was held at the United Way of Greater New Haven. The training was co-hosted by the (Region 2) South-Central Regional Suicide Advisory Board (RSAB), which is led by BHcare’s Alliance for Prevention and Wellness (APW), and the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). Suicide postvention is a planned response after a suicide occurs and evidence has shown that how information is shared about a suicide attempt or death can have an impact in the community. Lisa and Austin are now both certified in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) NH Connect™ Suicide Postvention Program. Lisa would like to convene a working group focused on postvention here in the Valley.

**Immunization Grants & Clinical Services**

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Kristie, Elizabeth, and Vanessa attended the Annual Immunizations and Respiratory Viral Disease Update conference on September 24<sup>th</sup> at The Woodwinds in Branford, CT. This one-day, in-person conference hosted by the Connecticut Immunization Coalition and American Lung Association provided key findings and trends from the previous season, immunization recommendations, strategies for addressing vaccine hesitancy and more.

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Clinical Services

Kristie provided 39 child vaccines in September. We hosted 7 flu clinics in September recognizing that October and November will be packed with 19 additional clinics at local businesses, schools, daycares, senior/community centers in addition to patient appointments at our office.

Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Grant Program

We received our executed contract from DPH for the first budget period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) of a 3-year cooperative agreement. Elizabeth conducted 1 in-person Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) visit in September.

Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) & Healthcare-Associated Infections & Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI-AR)

DPH continues to host a monthly meeting with the CT DPH HAI-AR staff and local health departments/districts building capacity in Infection Prevention & Control (IPC). Jess attended the meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup> which focused on responding to and precautions for dealing with multidrug-resistant bacteria.

Tuberculosis (TB)

There are currently no active TB cases.

Kristie attended the Annual New England TB Clinicians Conference on September 18<sup>th</sup> at the Chrysalis Center, Inc. in Hartford. Jointly Provided by Rutgers Global Tuberculosis Institute and the New England TB Consortium, this conference included topics such as an update on the treatment of drug susceptible and drug-resistant TB, implementation of the new community isolation guidelines, management of common adverse effects, and laboratory advances.



Outreach Events

<b>Back-to-School Nights</b>	Vanessa and Austin attended multiple Shelton back-to-school nights during the month.
Shelton	They attended Shelton High School, Long Hill Elementary School, Sunny Side Elementary School, and Shelton Intermediate School. During the back-to-school nights, they provided families with up-to-date respiratory virus information, upcoming flu clinic info, and the CDC's "Free Mind" campaign.
Beacon Falls	They also attended the Town of Beacon Falls first annual Back-to-School Safety Fair, giving families the opportunity to learn, explore, and prepare for the year ahead. The event featured a wide range of engaging activities, including fingerprinting workshops, a K9 presentation, handwashing and hygiene education, back-to-school health tips, and hands-on CPR training.
Derby	In collaboration with Cathi Kellett from Griffin, Vanessa provided giveaways and information on staying healthy to families. Little Raiders University is a collaborative preschool that accepts applications from Derby residents.



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<b>Griffin Passenger Safety Clinic</b>	Vanessa attended the monthly car seat check hosted by Griffin. Every month is special, but this month was a bit different because it is nationally recognized as car seat safety awareness month.
<b>CT Foodshare</b> Beacon Falls Derby Shelton	Vanessa and Austin attended the Beacon Falls, Shelton, and Derby bi-weekly food distribution events, where they provided the community with NVHD's upcoming Flu clinic schedule and important health education for keeping safe during the upcoming respiratory virus season. The Shelton Foodshare is new to NVHD and was a success.
<b>Huntington Branch Library</b> Tabling	Vanessa continues to engage with our local public library branches. This month, she attended an event at the Huntington Branch Library, where she brought Tuck the Tiger giveaways and information on staying healthy while going back to school.
<b>Shelton Senior Fair</b> Shelton Senior Center	Senator Perillo and Representatives McGorty and Romano hosted their annual Senior Fair on September 15 <sup>th</sup> . Kristie administered flu shots and Vanessa helped with registration. Lisa and Austin provided health education materials.
<b>Naugatuck Senior Fair</b> Naugatuck Senior Center	Lisa and Austin attended the Naugatuck Senior Fair on September 18 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Valley Senior Resource Fair</b> Warsaw Park, Ansonia	Lisa and Austin attended Representative Rochelle, Senator Cabrera, and Congresswoman DeLauro's jointly hosted Valley Senior Resource Fair at Warsaw Park on September 24 <sup>th</sup> .

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**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Melanie Dokla, BS, RS**  
**September 2025**

**Food Service Establishments**

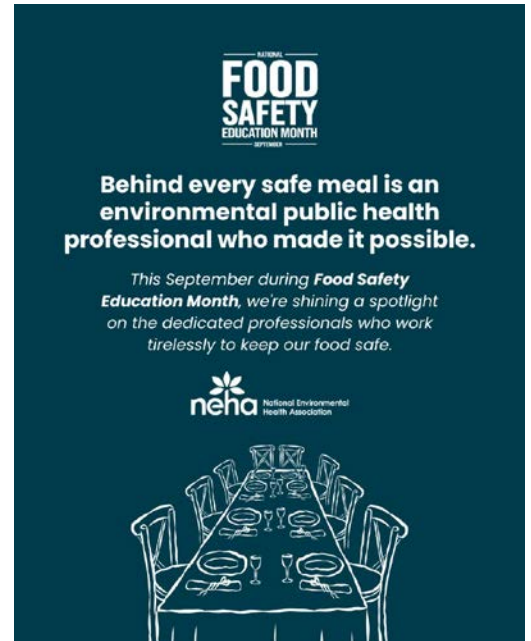
Sanitarians continue to conduct seasonal inspections for itinerant vendors (food truck/trailers), concession stands at sporting events and temporary events.

We also continue to conduct routine inspections, plan views and inspections for food service establishments that are new or changing ownership.

A total of **66** (56 last year) temporary event inspections were conducted.

Glenda Buenaventura, per diem food inspector, continues to assist in conducting food service inspection after hours and on the weekend, up to 20 hours a week.

September is National Food Safety Education Month. We provided education updates in our newsletter and on social media.



**Body Care**

The deadline for the renewal of all existing Body Care permits was September 30<sup>th</sup>. Reminder phone calls were sent out via The Voice Reach System on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. A reminder was also posted to our website, social media, and LinkedIn pages. As of today (October 6, 2025), **9** (20 last year) applications are still pending. Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>, a late fee of \$20/day will be assessed for all applications that miss the expiration. If applications and fees are not received by October 8<sup>th</sup>, the business will be ordered to close immediately.

Inspectors conduct annual inspections of the salons as the applications are received and processed. Staff continue to conduct plan views and inspections for body care establishments that are new or changing ownership.

**Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems (SSDS)**

Staff continue to conduct SSDS inspections, B-100 visits, soil testing, B-100 plan reviews, new SSDS plans reviews, and have issued permits to discharge.

**Housing Complaints**

Environmental staff continue to investigate housing code violations and complaints.

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, Registered Sanitarians Amanda Ruchin and Amy Durand attended a Housing Seminar located in Plainville, CT that discussed mold remediation and lead renovation, repair or painting (RRP).

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**Lead Education & Action Program (LEAP)**

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, me, Jess, Lisa, and Carissa attended our virtual Annual Site Visit with Brianna F. from DPH’s Lead Program. During the site visit, topics including staffing and surveillance system updates, training, legislative changes, education and outreach, coordination of child case management, chelation cases, XRF loaner program, and timely inspections and data entry were covered.

We continue to see an increase in elevated blood lead (EBLL) cases, which require a comprehensive lead inspection. If the residence is a multifamily dwelling the other units are required to be tested if there is a child under the age of six.

Lead abatement plans submitted by lead abatement contractors are reviewed and property owners are issued written orders from this office. Once the project has received approval and work is completed, a final inspection is conducted to ensure work was done as specified in the plan.

Vanessa has begun assisting with more lead investigations. She completed two epidemiological investigations and helped Registered Sanitarian, Amy, with a lead inspection for a Spanish-speaking family. Moving forward, Vanessa will continue assisting Amy during EBLL cases.

**Lead Stats**

Open environmental lead cases (properties)	20
New environmental	3
Active case management (children)	56
New case management	-

**Miscellaneous**

Micheal Delossantos was welcomed to the NVHD team on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. He comes to us from West Haven Health Department and will be conducting a variety of inspections within the EH programs.

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, Registered Sanitarians Amanda Ruchin and Amy Durand attended a virtual training course entitled: De-escalation and Conflict Resolution for Environmental & Public Health Professionals: Building Skills for Safe and Effective Community Engagement.





**After-Hours Emergency Reponses**

	Date/Time	Location	Description of Event
1.	9/7/25 8:30am – 1:45pm	59 New Haven Road, Seymour	Multiple FSE fire

**After-Hours Temporary Events**

	Date	Description of Event	Location
1.	9/8/25	St. Michael’s Village Green Fair	Naugatuck
2.	9/12/25	Food Trucks on the River Fall Edition	Shelton
3.	9/20/25	Harvest Moon Festival	Naugatuck
4.	9/22/25	Pumpkin Festival	Seymour
5.	9/28/25	Harvest Festival	Ansonia

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