

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

June 15, 2021

The St. Lawrence County Board of Health (hereafter known as SLCBOH) met on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, in the Large Conference Room (via teleconference), Human Services Center, Canton, New York 13617.

MEMBERS PRESENT: (via teleconference) Kevin Acres, Dr. Gregory Healey, Nancy Potter, Jessica Rafter, Dr. Jessica Scillieri Smith, Dr. Kathleen Terrence, Dr. Andrew Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Jolene Munger, Interim Director; Shannon Beldock, Administrative Assistant; Alivia Sheffield, PH Sanitarian; Jenesse Watson, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; Joseph Lightfoot, Legislator; Clare Snell, Pharmacy Intern.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Andrew Williams, President, called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by K. Acres, and seconded by N. Potter, the minutes from the May 18, 2021 meeting were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

Sanitarian Update: Alivia Sheffield

There are no open complaints. We have had calls regarding the following:

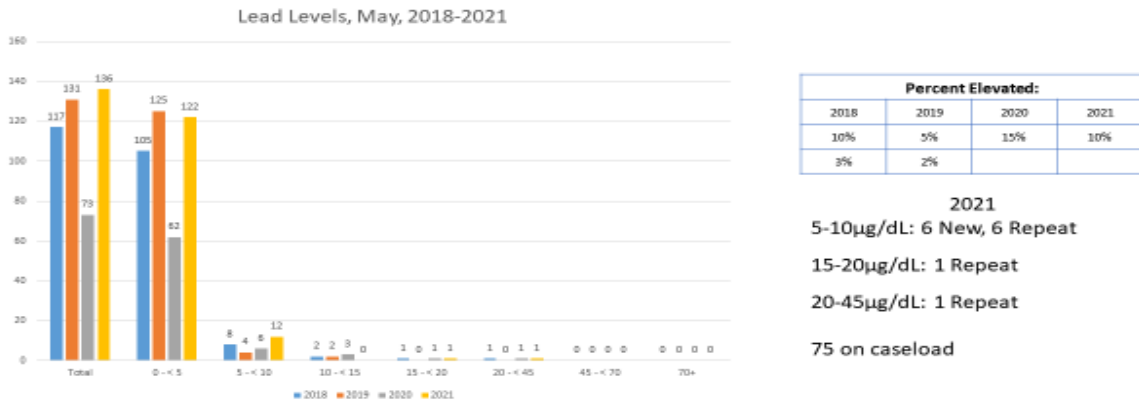
1. Garbage smell at Canton Housing Authority.
2. Individual living in the woods (off grid) with no water or electricity. Per complainant this individual has been defecating in bags/holes for 7 years and piling them up.
3. Cockroaches (tenant/landlord dispute), tenant denying landlord entry to apartment.

A copy of the complaint form is now on our website (pdf version). We are hoping over the next couple of months to create an online submission form. We are reviewing the current form and considering changes to make it more descriptive regarding what complaints the Public Health Department can provide education and guidance on, and which complaints we can take action on. These changes will be brought to the Board of Health for review.

Kevin mentioned the old Chevrolet Dealership property in Madrid. The owners have attempted to clean the property, but have accomplished all they can afford to do. Asked if there was a way to find out what the estimated cost would be to finish the cleanup of the property. Alivia noted the Housing Council is unable to help a dealership. She does remember this property from last year and said she can do a drive by and also contact code enforcement.

Lead Update: Alivia Sheffield

Lead level comparisons for May 2018-2021.



- May 2021 there were (136) lead tests performed.
- Of the (136) there were (14) elevated, which is 10% elevated.
- (12) were between 5 ug/dL and 10 ug/dL (6 new/6 repeat)
- (1) between 15 ug/dL and 20 ug/dL (repeat)
- (1) between 20 ug/dL and 45 ug/dL (repeat)

Guidance was different in 2018 and most of 2019. Per that guidance, only 3% and 2% were elevated in 2018 and 2019. If the guidance had not changed, we would have had 7% elevated in 2020 and only 1% elevated in 2021.

There was a brief discussion regarding the test result between the 20 ug/dL and 45 ug/dL range. This lead exposure is on the environmental side (in the home). The parents are working with SUNY Upstate. We are encouraging education and monthly testing of the child – unless there is a different plan chosen with the doctor/SUNY Upstate. We have constant communication with the parents and are providing education on nutrition and how to make the home lead safe. It was noted the body is able to shed the lead. There are times when medicinal procedures may be needed.

For advertising purposes it should be stressed “no amount of lead is good.” Alivia noted if a child’s first lead test is less than 5 ug/dL some providers are telling parents this is a normal range, causing the parents to refuse the second test which is required for discharging their case. Dr. Williams asked to be notified of who these providers are.

Alivia noted there have been past discussions about making updates to the letters going out to parents. These letters have been redone to make them easier to read. A friendly and fun (1) month reminder of upcoming lead testing has been created in hopes parents will put them on their refrigerator to serve as a reminder, same as they may do with appointment cards you get from your doctor or dentist office.


Reminder:
 _____ is due for
 a lead test on
 ____/____/____!

Please make sure you have their lab slip ready to go!

It is important to follow on the recommended schedule to assure that your child's lead levels are going down, and not increasing to levels that require immediate medical attention.

If you are having trouble getting your child tested, the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program can help arrange testing. If you have any questions, or want more information, please call us at 315-386-2325

**St. Lawrence County
 Public Health
 Department**



REMINDER!

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

**YOUR CHILD,
 _____ IS DUE
 FOR A LEAD
 TEST IN
 ONE
 MONTH, ON
 _____**

TESTING:
 It is important to follow the recommended schedule.
 Your child is at risk, and we want to continue to monitor their levels to make sure they are going in the right direction!

TO DISCHARGE:
 Your child needs two lead tests below a 5ug/dL in a row (at least 3 months apart)
 &
 The home must be determined to be lead safe by the Department of Health

If your child has no health insurance or health care provider, the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program can help arrange testing. If you have any questions or if you want information about having your child tested, you may call the **St. Lawrence County Public Health Department Lead Poisoning Prevention Program** at (315) 386-2325.

COVID-19: Jolene Munger

Hospital Data:

Jolene shared data surrounding the number individuals hospitalized for COVID-19 and fatalities due to COVID-19 based on the following criteria: female, male, specific age groups. Information on whether or not these individuals had any comorbidities is not available.

There was a discussion regarding COVID-19 deaths, the medical effects on some individuals and data surrounding inflammation of the heart and whether or not these incidents (inflammation) were greater in those who have been vaccinated. Also discussed the COVID-19 variants (Alpha and Delta) and that it seems to be effecting younger individuals more. Dr. Williams noted the school system may feel pressure to make vaccination a requirement as other vaccinations are. Noted vaccinations are available in medical provider offices.

The Governor announced today, the statewide vaccination data today and New York State reached 70%. The North Country is the 2nd worst region in the state and within our region, we are the 2nd worst county. To reach 70% in our county we still need approximately 7000 more individuals vaccinated to reach our goal. Hamilton County has passed the goal, Essex County just hit the goal this weekend and Clinton County is anticipating hitting the goal by July.

Data by age group:

- Age 18+ - 62%
- Age 16+ - 61% with at least (1) dose

Taking into consideration the total population we are at 52%

- Age 15-19 is going up fast
- Age 20-29 is still the lowest percentage
- Age 70-79 is up to 90%

We hosted a drive thru clinic today at the Human Services building, even with the rain we had (9) individuals show up to be vaccinated.

On Friday, June 18, 2021, we are holding a drive thru Johnson & Johnson clinic in the parking lot of the Tractor Supply in Gouverneur. The Valero in Potsdam and Massena have been contacted about holding a clinic on their sites – waiting to hear back. We may also look at the Waddington and Norwood music festivals as locations. We are looking to partner with SLHS for the County Fair to combine resources to provide Pfizer and potentially Johnson & Johnson vaccinations. Jessica R. noted Kinney’s may be interested in partnering also, as they usually have a flu shot table at the fair. Asked Jolene to send her an email outlining what she wants to do and she will send it through the proper channels.

We have been also focusing on the low vaccine areas, for example, Pyrites, Rensselaer Falls, Brier Hill, etc. At a clinic held in Pyrites we vaccinated (7) individuals for Moderna and (3-4) for Johnson & Johnson.

We have provided vaccination for the (17) school districts and are in the process of giving 2nd doses now. There were (5) schools who chose to bus their students to other schools where the clinics were being held so we didn’t have to go to all schools. Clifton-Fine didn’t want to hold a clinic because they didn’t think they would have a lot of students sign up, but we had (14) register for Clifton-Fine and actually provided (23) vaccinations. The clinic held at SLU on Saturday, June 12, 2021, we vaccinated (221) individuals, including about (10-15) parents who came with them.

The Public Health Department will be scheduling a back-to-school immunization clinic at the end of July. If they are age 12+, parents will be asked about the COVID-19 vaccine at this time also. We have been providing education to the schools and our regional hub is doing a Facebook Live, they have some providers from Jefferson County doing it. We will put this on our Facebook page to help promote it. Dr. Terrence was kind enough to do a short video for us, and we shared it with the schools and on Facebook. We are seeing that some kids do want the vaccine, but their parents are not allowing it. Dr. Williams said it seems kid’s motivation is the disruption of their lives, fear of being put on quarantine or being the case that causes someone else to be quarantined. They seem less concerned about their own health and more concerned about their freedom – if the shot will keep COVID away from them they want the shot. Dr. Terrence noted kids are motivated by wanting to get back to normal participate in sports and hang out with their friends and get rid of masks. We are working with the schools on a plan for testing in the fall.

The Governor announced today most restrictions have been lifted. If you are unvaccinated you still need to follow the mandatory quarantine guidelines. Isolation and quarantine has not gone away and individuals still need to provide their contacts for contact tracing – could continue until at least November at the earliest. Large indoor events (over 5000) still have restrictions (capacity, vaccination, etc.) and mask wearing is still required in schools, on public transit, homeless shelters, nursing homes, and healthcare settings regardless of vaccination status. Any business can choose to follow any “archived” guidelines. If a business or event chooses to allow only vaccinated individuals that is their right as a business. They can have a fully vaccinated section and request proof of vaccination, or an unvaccinated section – requesting proof of vaccination is not a HIPAA violation. You are able to divulge your own information.

Summer Meeting Schedule:

The Board of Health is required to meet (10) months each year – they usually do not meet in the months of July and August. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings were held every month. There was a brief discussion on whether or not to meet in July and August for this year. It was decided they would not meet in July, unless something comes up that would require a meeting, and felt it would be more beneficial to meet in August prior to the start of the school year.

OTHER ITEMS AND QUESTIONS

Jolene Munger:

The RiverLedge Nursing Home in Ogdensburg has announced they are closing. They had already stopped taking long term residents and will be working on getting their short term and rehab residents moved to other facilities by September 1, 2021.

The Coroner’s program will be looking to hire a new Medical Examiner within the next year. In 2020, (42) autopsies had been performed by October – for 2021 (42) autopsies were performed by May. Currently, autopsies are performed at Canton-Potsdam Hospital (CPH), which means every case needs to be transported to CPH and back to the funeral home, etc. Sometimes bodies are stored at Massena Memorial Hospital (MMH) due to lack of space at CPH. There are occasions when there is a need to send cases to other counties/facilities (Broome, Monroe, Rensselaer) and most recently Glens Falls Hospital. All of the above, has caused an increase in our program costs. It was noted there had been a previous discussion on the possibility of sending cases to Canada, but we need to check on the regulations for transporting bodies across the border. Joe suggested taking a look at the program as a whole. Dr. Williams shared there is a new Pathologist at SLHS, Dr. Scott LaPoint, who used to work in the Medical Examiner’s office and had expressed interest before, he is also local. Also noted SLHS is affiliated with Rochester where there are about (20) pathologists – maybe something can be worked out with them if needed. Joe noted it is a very costly program and having someone local fill the position would be great.

The St. Lawrence County Public Health Department, on behalf of the CPH Board of Directors, the Community Services Award for 2020. A small in-person ceremony will be scheduled to accept the award.

OLD BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT/NEXT MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for August 17, 2021 at 6:00 pm.
(location/format TBD)

ACTIONS ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP

N/A