

SELECTED MILESTONES

THE NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

- 1878 First Annual Report of the Connecticut State Board of Health: “Our city fathers, generally, have not yet quite reached the plane of appreciation of preventive medicine, so that we have but one thoroughly organized local health board in the State, although matters are fairly under way in one or two of the cities, with a promise of good results.” (The organized health board was in New Haven).
- 1887 State law now requires every town to organize a “working board of health, in place of the fiction which has heretofore existed in most towns; and further, the new laws bring the State Board into definite correspondence with the local boards, in every case of the occurrence of smallpox or cholera, and of every epidemic of infectious diseases.”
- 1917 Enabling legislation allows formation of local district departments of public health. In 1966, Westport and Weston form Aspetuck Health District as the first health district.
- 1953 Salmonella epidemic occurs at a local health care facility.
- 1954 Local mayors and selectmen, with urging from civic groups, authorize Yale Department of Public Health to survey health conditions and seek cost-effective answers to area’s increasing public health problems. Survey sparks lively debate with health district defeated.
- 1955 The Flood of 1955 requires extraordinary public health control measures.
- 1957 WADS in Ansonia broadcasts *Valley Health Story*, nine daily radio programs with Dr. Ira V. Hiscock, Chairman of the Yale Department of Public Health. WADS President, Sydney Byrnes, broadcasts several editorials on the proposed health district.
- 1970 Valley Council of Governments’ Health Study Committee prepares *A Proposal for the Establishment of a District Public Health Department*.
- 1971 Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton pass local resolutions agreeing to form Connecticut’s third district department of health.
- 1972 The Lower Naugatuck Valley District Public Health Department opens its doors at Plaza-On-The-Green, Derby. Susan Addiss is Director of Health and Paul Pawlak is Chairman of the Board. First Registered Sanitarian is Joseph Hock and Code Inspector is Albin Karczmarczyk.

- 1972 The 1st Annual Flu Shot Campaign for the Elderly offers mass influenza vaccine.
- 1972 First anti-smoking campaign commences. In 1988, Surgeon General declares nicotine a highly addictive drug.
- 1973 Valley school children receive 12,500 doses of oral polio in response to epidemic of paralytic polio in CT.
- 1973 *Procedures for Handling Problem Lots* (for septic systems) was adopted. In 1974, the district adopts its first Sanitary Code, Food Section, and in 1981 the district adopts its first Well Code Ordinance.
- 1974 The district implements its first high blood pressure screening program.
- 1975 The district moves to Liberty Street in Ansonia.
- 1975 Lorraine Hart, first Nurse Practitioner, implements Health Services for the Elderly Program.
- 1976 The district implements WIC Program with Kathleen Dinice as Coordinator.
- 1976 Initial cases of Swine Flu match 1918 flu strain that killed 21 million people worldwide. The district immunizes more than 11,200 people and distributes 5,765 doses to medical providers. The effort halts when a possible connection is detected between swine flu vaccine and Guillain-Barre Syndrome.
- 1977 David Sundmacker becomes second Director of Health, followed by Leon O'Connor in 1979, and Karen Spargo in 1998.
- 1978 Lead levels in paint are regulated to protect children from lead poisoning. District launches lead screening and prevention program.
- 1978 Legislation requires that each child is fully immunized prior to school entry.
- 1979 Yale Public Health students develop local hazardous waste plan.
- 1979 World's last case of smallpox is reported.
- 1979 Cardiovascular diseases and cancers become #1 killer of Americans. For the first time in history, infections are no longer #1 cause of death in USA. Most are preventable diseases associated with behaviors like smoking cigarettes, lack of exercise and poor nutritional habits.
- 1980 Town of Beacon Falls joins district
- 1980 The district moves to Shelton.

- 1980 The district's Maternal and Child Health Section assumes Well Child Clinic sites, coordinated by Dr. Christina Smillie and Lucy Potts, Nurse Practitioner. In 1982, home visits for WCC enrollees are implemented.
- 1981 AIDS first reported in 5 patients. In 1982, the district's first case is diagnosed. By 2000, 36 million infected worldwide.
- 1982 *An Act Concerning Child Passenger Restraint Systems* in effect and district offers infant car seat restraint program.
- 1984 Maternal and Infant Health Protection Program assists with health care services for pregnant women and children. In 1989, Healthy Start follows. In 1998, HUSKY provides free or low cost health insurance for uninsured children.
- 1985 The Borough of Naugatuck joins. The district's name changes to the Naugatuck Valley Health District (NVHD).
- 1985 Elevated cholesterol is linked to coronary artery disease. Community screenings follow.
- 1985 TB rates in nation reached an all time low and begin to increase again.
- 1991 NVHD establishes a housing code section with Rita Fazzino as first Housing Code Enforcement Officer.
- 1991 First case of raccoon rabies found in CT. In 1992, Shelton raccoon is first in region to test positive.
- 1991 The last case of poliovirus is reported in the Western hemisphere thanks to immunizations.
- 1992 Antibiotic resistant diseases emerge. In 1993, WHO declares TB a global health emergency and Direct Observed Therapy is launched as a strategy.
- 1993 More than 600 illnesses in nation are traced to E. coli bacteria in undercooked fast food hamburgers resulting in greater emphasis on foodhandling and safe cooking temperatures.
- 1994 A Needs Assessment Study leads to federal designation for a Public Health Clinic in Ansonia.
- 1996 Medicaid Managed Care Program presents a major shift in the health care funding environment. Health departments and other "safety net" service providers face a shifting and diminishing client base. NVHD becomes a "provider of last resort."
- 1997 Legislation requires a Qualified Food Operator Certification for food service.

- 1998 NVHD implements the amendment to the State Public Health Code requiring review for change of use, building conversions and additions for homes with septic systems.
- 1998 First NVHD website started on Electronic Valley.
- 1998 Pneumonia vaccine for those over 65 years is offered jointly during community influenza immunization clinics.
- 1999 Mosquito-borne West Nile virus appears.
- 1999 Irene Reshetar becomes first recipient of NVHD Peer Recognition Distinguished Service Award.
- 1999 Industrial accident cross-contaminates the public water supply in areas of Shelton and Stratford.
- 1999 Tattooing and body piercing become popular but present risk of developing infection and hepatitis from needles so NVHD implements local ordinance, inspection and training requirement for operators.
- 1999 Y2K leads to emergency preparedness.
- 1999 NVHD adopts its first Public Pool Code, implements inspection and training.
- 2000 First NVHD Strategic Plan is implemented.
- 2000 Komen Foundation funds breast cancer outreach program.
- 2001 March of Dimes funds Healthy Futures to provide health education and outreach to women of childbearing age.
- 2001 Events of September 11th begin a new era of local public health emergency preparedness.
- 2001 NVHD accesses National Pharmaceutical Stockpile in response to anthrax case in Oxford resident.
- 2002 Meningococcal vaccine is mandated for all on-campus residents in CT colleges.
- 2002 Recognition by Valley Council for Health and Human Services as Agency of the Year.
- 2003 NVHD becomes a field site for the new Regional Field Epidemiologist Program in partnership with the State Department of Public Health. Staff and volunteers receive smallpox vaccine in preparation to bioterrorism concerns.

- 2003 NVHD adopts and implements its first Cosmetology, Barber Shop, Beauty Salon, and Nail Salon Code.
- 2005 NVHD relocates to its new offices at 98 Bank Street in Seymour.
- 2007 NVHD WIC becomes a regional satellite office of Waterbury Health Department while NVHD implements Regional Putting On Airs Asthma Program.
- 2008 NauVEL is launched as a \$3 million, 3-year HUD grant for residential lead safe repairs. In 2012, a Healthy Homes component is added to the 2nd cycle of NauVEL.
- 2010 The first Valley CARES Quality of Life Report is released.

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