



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

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Ansonia ° Beacon Falls ° Derby ° Naugatuck ° Seymour ° Shelton

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ABOUT NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

The Naugatuck Valley Health District (NVHD) was founded in 1972 as a collaborative effort to provide public health functions to the towns of Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton. Beacon Falls and Naugatuck were included in the voluntary effort in 1980 and 1985, respectively. The NVHD is an independent governmental entity formed under the CT General Statutes. One of twenty health districts in the state of Connecticut, it was the third district to be formed. The NVHD serves a population of approximately 127,000 residents. The district is governed by a board of directors comprised of representatives appointed by the towns served by the District. It was the first health district in Connecticut to achieve national public health accreditation.

VISION

Optimal health and quality of life for our communities.

MISSION

The Naugatuck Valley Health District, as the official public health agency for its partner communities, is committed to improving the quality of life for all it serves through the promotion of health, prevention of disease, and by assuring a safe and clean environment.

VALUES

Professionalism

We will treat all our community members, clients, partners and colleagues in a caring, respectful, ethical and fair manner.

Knowledge

We will utilize the most current evidence-based information in all our work and embrace ongoing workforce and leadership development.

Integrity

We will be truthful, honest, and fair, and hold ourselves to the highest standards while being fully accountable for our decisions and actions.

Dedication

We will work to demonstrate our commitment to the Naugatuck Valley Health District and to the public health of the communities we serve.

Teamwork

We will support each other in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation for the public good.



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 annual report for the Naugatuck Valley Health District, highlighting the accomplishments of the District and the public health services provided to residents of the member municipalities.



This year brought additional changes in leadership for the Naugatuck Valley Health District. After previously serving in the role of the district's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for four years, I transitioned into the role of Director of Health. I'd like to thank our Assistant Director of Community Health Services, Carissa Caserta, for taking on the role of Acting Director after Jeffery Dussetschleger resigned until I was officially promoted. Melanie Dokla, Registered Sanitarian and former Head Sanitarian was promoted to Assistant Director of Environmental Health Services.

Our public health responsibilities follow the 10 Essential Services as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guide to public health services in Connecticut at both the state and local level. According to the CDC, these services fall into three key areas: assessment, assurance, and policy development. The assessment standards include services for monitoring health status to identify and solve community health problems and diagnosing and investigating health problems and health hazards in the community. The policy development standards include informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues; mobilizing community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems; and developing policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts. For the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year, the District has accomplished much in these service areas.

I hope to see you out in the community at one of our various programs!

Kind regards,

Jessica Stelmaszek, MPH

Jessica Stelmaszek, MPH
Director of Health

STRATEGIC PLAN

2015-2020

The purpose of the Naugatuck Valley Health District Strategic Plan is to:

1. Affirm a shared vision, mission, and core values that serve as guiding principles for our stakeholders.
2. Establish clearly defined priorities, goals, objectives, and strategies for the district in a realistic time frame suitable to the district's capacity for implementation.
3. Provide a guide for making informed decisions that balance allocation of resources with the pursuit of priorities and strategies.
4. Effectively communicate priorities and strategies to our staff, board, member municipalities, partners, and community.
5. Identify a base from which to measure progress and evaluate the need for change when required.
6. Provide a process to continually improve organizational focus, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Strategic Priority 1: To utilize current and emerging technologies to improve the effectiveness of our data, information management, and evaluation systems.

Goal 1: To upgrade, improve, and utilize technology to allow the staff to work more effectively.

Goal 2: To enhance information management in program evaluation (e.g., tracking goals and activities).

Strategic Priority 2: To build capacity in the organization through proactive recruiting and relevant training and development efforts.

Goal 1: Succession planning and active recruiting for the board.

Goal 2: Succession planning for the staff.

Strategic Priority 3: To raise the Agency's visibility as a means to increase the community's awareness of the District's roles, responsibilities, and services.

Goal 1: To get messages out to folks in the community about services being offered.

Goal 2: To expand the use of communication media beyond print and use more Social Media platforms, including but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter.

Strategic Priority 4: To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of current assets and to seek new sources of revenue.

Goal 1: To develop a long-term financial plan to enhance management of assets.

Goal 2: To explore and expand on ways to participate in Commercial Insurance and Medicaid.

Strategic Priority 5: To maintain high-quality mandated services and to implement evidence-based programs based on community needs assessments.

Goal 1: To become more proactive than reactive.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE 1

The focus of this Essential Service is the accurate collection and tracking of health data for the purpose of intervention planning and tracking and periodic assessment of the community's health status. This is achieved through the identification of health risks, attention to vital statistics and disparities, and the identification of assets and resources.

The District addresses this in several ways. The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) provides access to a surveillance tracking system which allows local public health entities to track communicable diseases and lead poisoned children. The system allows for the uniform collection of lab results and provides a conduit to DPH experts for assistance in case management/follow-up.

NVHD collaborates with community partners including Griffin Hospital and members of the Valley Council for Health & Human Services to maintain two important documents that help achieve this essential service area (1) a multi-year Community Health Improvement Plan, or a CHIP, developed from a (2) Community Health Assessment (CHA), called the Valley Index Report. The work outlined in the 2015-2018 Valley CHIP was completed during this fiscal year and planning workshops for the 2019-2021 CHIP began.

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) explains the significance of a CHA as being "a resource for all members of the public health system and the population at large. It is a basis for collaborations and for priority setting, planning, program development, funding applications, coordination of resources, and new ways to collaboratively use assets to improve the health of the population. Other governmental units and not-for-profits will use the community health assessment in their planning, program development, and development of funding applications."

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) explains the CHIP in the following way: "While the local health department is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of the population, it cannot be effective acting unilaterally. The health department must partner with other sectors and organizations



*Monitor
health
status to
identify and
solve
community
health
problems*

to plan and share responsibility for community health improvement. Other sectors of the community and stakeholders have access to additional data and bring different perspectives that will enhance planning. A collaborative planning process fosters shared ownership and responsibility for the plan's implementation. The community health improvement process is a vehicle for developing partnerships and for understanding roles and responsibilities."

The focus areas in the 2016-2018 Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan included:

Behavioral Health Community Care Team	Create and implement an interdisciplinary, interagency team to improve care management and outcomes of chronic behavioral health/substance abuse patients
Chronic Disease Management	Coordinate hospital and community-based programs and resources to improve chronic disease management and prevention in the community
Substance Use Disorders	Identify opportunities and partnerships to prevent drug overdose, a leading cause of premature death, and a rising concern in the Valley and statewide
Childhood Obesity Prevention and Community Programming	The Valley Initiative to Advance Health & Learning in Schools (VITAHLS) partners with the Yale-Griffin PRC, Griffin Hospital, 5 Valley school districts and community partners on a school-based program to reduce the prevalence of obesity in students in grades Pre-K through 12
Lung Cancer Screening and Smoking Cessation	Support and expand Griffin Hospital's Low-Dose Lung CT Cancer Screening Program, launched in 2013 to increase early detection of lung cancer
Asthma Prevention and Self-Management	Leverage the efforts of Griffin Hospital, NVHD and other partners
Healthy Homes	Assess effects of lead, mold and other housing-related environmental factors on the health of adults and children in the community.

Significant accomplishments from the collective Valley CHIP work can be found on the NVHD website: www.nvhd.org/CHIP.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE 2

This service includes epidemiologic identification of emerging health threats; active infectious disease epidemiology programs; and technical capacity for epidemiologic investigation of disease outbreaks and patterns of chronic disease and injury. To this end, the District provided:

1,957 infectious disease follow-ups and did not have any communicable disease outbreak(s) that required an investigation.

Direct observed therapy, which consists of home visits for residents with infectious tuberculosis and screenings for the potentially exposed, decreased from last year. **28 home visits** were completed.

The Public Health Nurse managed human cases for those potentially exposed to the rabies virus by providing vital health education, consultation, referral and laboratory testing of animals with the state lab. The number of **potential rabies cases remained stable at 18.**

District residents sent **78 ticks** to the CT Agricultural Experiment Station for laboratory testing for tick borne diseases. Follow-up was provided to residents by the public health nurse. Of the ticks sent for laboratory testing **22 were positive for a tick-borne illness.**



To reduce the impact of **childhood lead poisoning**, NVHD provided case management, medical provider coordination and education for families of children under age 6 with elevated lead levels. Staff conducted environmental investigations of paint, dust, soil and water samples from premises where poisoned children were identified. Orders were issued to property owners to ensure that lead hazards are eliminated.

Investigations managed: 26
Environmental inspections and visits: 19
Orders issued: 8



*Investigate
health
problems
and
environmental
public health
hazards*

Communicable Disease Cases in District Reported to NVHD 2014-2018

Selected Diseases	Cases 2018-2019	Cases 2017-2018	Cases 2016-2017	Cases 2015-2016
Chlamydia	335	361	462	373
Syphilis	44	47	54	9
Gonorrhea	76	64	32	42
Lyme	170	151	103	31
Babesiosis	8	12	13	9
Streptococcal	135	89	53	38
Staphylococcus	103	131	42	44
Influenza A & B	442	659	319	186
Pneumococcal Disease	66	58	39	20
Hepatitis B	32	21	32	30
Hepatitis C	335	250	262	208

NVHD sanitarians provided **environmental health** investigations of resident complaints subject to state and local laws and regulations with the goal to protect the health of the public from illness, disease and injury from health hazards.

Environmental Complaints Investigated

Food Establishments: 51

Housing: 216

Nuisance: 82

Septic and Sewage: 9

Pools: 2

Air: 0

Salons: 3

Schools: 1

Total Environmental Complaints Investigated: 364



ESSENTIAL SERVICE 3

This service involves providing health information that is easy for people to get and understand, and providing health promotion activities and immunizations.

NVHD provided **childhood immunizations** through the **CT Vaccine Program**.

Vaccine for Children Program: 145

Adults (Cocoon Program): 7

CT WiZ, the official Immunization Information System for Connecticut, formerly called the Childhood Immunization Registry and Tracking Service (CIRTS), tracked children's immunizations scheduled in health care providers' offices for an assigned region of NVHD, and also Oxford, Trumbull, Stratford and Monroe.

CIRTS follow-up: 2,334

Influenza vaccine, recommended for residents six months and older, was provided throughout the community at senior centers and health fairs. One emergency clinic was hosted in partnership with the Pomperaug District Department of Health in response to the high number of cases this past season.

Influenza vaccine recipients: 511

Adult immunizations were offered on-site and in community settings by nursing staff.

Adult immunization recipients: 6



*Inform,
educate
and
empower
people
about
public
health
issues*

With generous funding from both the Valley Community Foundation and the Connecticut Community Foundation, the District continued to offer an evidence-based program for older adults, A Matter of Balance.

A Matter of Balance is a multi-session evidenced-based program focused on reducing the fear of falling and increasing physical activity among seniors. Participants in this program felt it was an excellent program and felt strongly that other seniors should participate when offered again.



MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

The District provided **100 radon home test kits** to residents at no cost. This year, 29 of the homes were found to have indoor air radon levels greater than or equal to 2.0pCi/L which is the level in the

State of Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends for follow-up testing within one month of the initial test. The action level for remediation is 4.0pCi/L. All homeowners received their test results and those with elevated levels were provided information on how to remediate the problem. The NVMRC also hosted an evening community training session on Radon Awareness during January, National Radon Action Month.

January 2019 NVHD Radon Test Kit Distribution by Town

Ansonia	8	Seymour	23
Beacon Falls	12	Shelton	19
Derby	11	Other	7
Naugatuck	20	Total	100

A monthly newsletter is distributed in the community, through both hard copy and electronic means. Topics address timely health issues and events that being held by the district.

The NVHD website, www.nvhd.org, continues to offer information and links to reliable sources on a range of public health topics. The District also is active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Be sure to “follow” and “like” our page!



@NaugValleyHD



@NaugatuckValleyHD



ESSENTIAL SERVICE 4

This service involves convening and facilitating community groups and associations to build coalitions focused on improving the community's health.



In partnership with the Echo Hose Ambulance Company, the **Naugatuck Valley Medical Reserve Corps** (NVMRC) prepared, trained and credentialed medical and non-medical

volunteers to respond to various emergencies and support public health activities in the jurisdiction. The NVMRC held trainings on the following topics:

- Until Help Arrives
- Psychological First Aid
- Family Assistance Centers
- Point(s) of Dispensing

NVMRC Volunteers: 70

For more information about the NVMRC or to apply, visit www.nvmrc.com.

N.O.P.E. CAMPAIGN

Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education



The district continued its efforts addressing the opioids crisis with its Naugatuck Valley Overdose Prevention & Education (N.O.P.E.) Campaign, which provides Narcan and opioids education and data sharing to the general public and community organizations.



*Mobilize
community
partnerships
to identify
and solve
health
problems*



The District continued its partnership with the Waterbury Health Department to host the **WIC** Program for the jurisdiction to provide a supplemental food and nutrition education program for pregnant and postpartum women and children up to age five years.

Participants: 812



The District convened the **Valley Maternal Health Coalition** in 2014 in response to rising rates of inadequate prenatal care and decreasing availability of reproductive services to women in Naugatuck Valley. The Coalition has continued to meet every 2-3 months, serving as an ongoing networking vehicle for its partner members, which include Griffin Hospital, Griffin's high school-based health center, the two community health centers, TEAM Inc., Nurturing Families Network, Child First/Parent Child Resource Center, Valley United Way, Waterbury WIC, and the school nurses from the 6 local high schools.

As mentioned in Essential Service 1 NVHD's **Community Health Improvement Plan** completed in the summer of 2019. NVHD worked closely with Valley Community Foundation, Griffin Hospital and Prevention Resource Center to begin the process of our third CHIP. The next CHIP work will begin in the fall 2019 and continue until 2021.



On June 4, 2019, we presented information from DataHaven that revealed health concerns in the Greater Naugatuck Valley communities. The group of over 50 community members that attended had the opportunity to vote on a topic they felt was a priority health topic to focus on.

The priority areas that were chosen to focus our efforts on were:

- Heart Disease
- Behavioral Health
- Infant Death & Inadequate Prenatal Care

CHIP 2019-2021 will be published in the fall of 2019.



ESSENTIAL SERVICE 5

This service looks to the development of codes, regulations and legislation to guide the practice of public health.

As part of the District's Quality Improvement Plan (see Service 9), sanitarians were asked to review common violations of the Body Care Code. They found that within nail salons there were violations that occurred with a higher frequency at many nail salons that could pose a risk to the public. The Body Care Code was revised to include clearer language to make it more understandable and added a requirement that at least one manager or nail technician from each salon participate in a 1-hour training on infection control provided by the District.



*Develop
policies and
plans that
support
individual
and
community
health
efforts*

ESSENTIAL SERVICE 6

A large part of the District's activities fall into this essential service. In addition to the work described below, this year, the Environmental Health staff worked to prepare for the upcoming changes to the food code. Connecticut has begun the process of adopting the FDA Food Code although full implementation has not yet occurred. This past fiscal year saw limited implementation of certain aspects of the code, such as new training requirements.

NVHD licensed, inspected, reviewed plans and provided education to **food service establishments (FSE)** including restaurants, markets, caterers, private clubs, itinerant vendors, school cafeterias, group homes, day care centers, nursing homes and temporary events.

FSE licenses issued	656
Temporary event licenses	302
Food plan reviews	34
Inspections and visits	2,036



NVHD maintains a food rating webpage on its website, www.nvhd.org.

The NVHD responded to **housing code complaints** filed by residents with investigations that may result in enforcement activities including the issuance of violation orders and/or litigation.

Complaints investigated	216
Inspections and visits	79



*Enforce
laws and
regulations
that protect
health and
ensure
safety*



NVHD issued permits and supervised the installation of private **subsurface sewage disposal systems (SSDS)**, and provided deep-hole tests, inspections and investigations. Plans were reviewed for change of use, additions, and engineered systems.

SSDS permits issued	New: 10
	Repair: 75
SSDS visits	232
Subdivision lots	0
Test hole applications	77

NVHD issued permits and inspected all **private well** construction sites working with homeowners, the construction industry and other government agencies to resolve water quality problems and protect the water supply at the local level.

Well drilling permits issued	20
Private well water visits/samples	32

NVHD issued permits and inspected all **public pools**.

Inspections and visits	12
Closed	13

NVHD issued permits and inspected all **tattoo and body piercing establishments and body care salons** including **hair, nail, massage and tanning salons**.

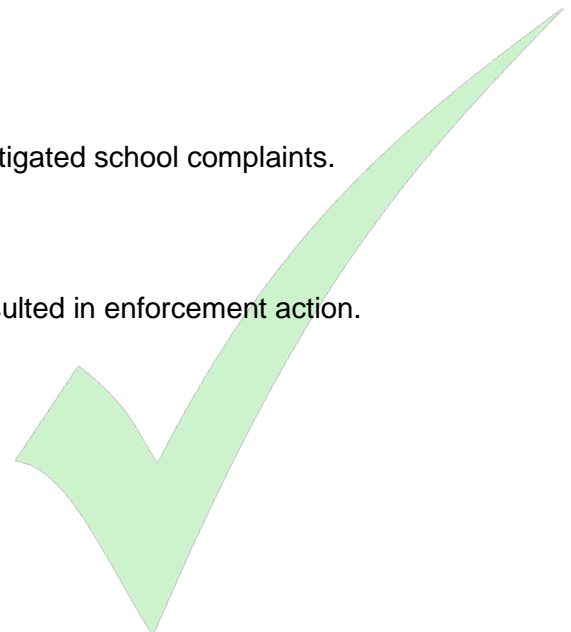
Body Care permits	176
Inspections and visits	194
Tattoo and Body Piercing permits	8
Inspections and visits	8

NVHD provided **day care inspections** for state licensing and investigated school complaints.

Inspections and visits	15
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NVHD provided a range of **nuisance** inspections that may have resulted in enforcement action.

Nuisance	59
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ESSENTIAL SERVICE 7

This service (often referred to as “outreach” or “enabling” services) includes providing culturally and linguistically appropriate materials; targeting health information to at risk groups; and working with the community to improve health care access.

The District provides educational materials in multiple languages to the public and subscribes to a HIPAA compliant telephone-based translation service to serve the needs of non-English speakers. This year the District began to develop a policy to ensure all written materials could be easily understood by the public. Adopted from the CT Department of Public Health’s Office of Health Strategy, the District implemented a small binder at each administrative station that includes “I SPEAK” cards. “I SPEAK” cards describe a patient’s or client’s right to interpreter services in English and 16 other languages. The cards signal that the bearer does not speak English well and is requesting a qualified interpreter. The district was fortunate to have a translation service provider, Language Link, present with multiple translators at the 2019 Point of Dispensing emergency preparedness Exercise.

In collaboration with many partners, the District provided health education materials on asthma, women’s health, the risks of lead-based paint, the need to assess homes for health risks and responded to the opioid crisis through hosting Narcan trainings.



*Link people
to needed
personal
health
services and
promote
strategies to
improve
access to
health care
services*

ESSENTIAL SERVICE 8

This service includes education and training for personnel to meet the needs of agencies involved in delivering the activities of public health. To this end, NVHD has developed a Workforce Development Plan that includes a Multi-Year Staff Training and Exercise Plan (MYTEP). The plans are reviewed annually and are based on the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals from the Council on Linkages and the Fifteen Preparedness Capabilities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This past year mandatory training topics included:

- Quality Improvement Training
- Foodborne Illness Response Tabletop Exercise
- Fire Prevention Safety Training
- Cultural Competency Training
- CT DPH Laboratory Overview
- Data Collection Workshop
- Conflict Resolution and Workplace Violence
- Psychological First Aid
- Point of Dispensing Full-Scale Exercise, simulating a response to an anthrax attack

In addition, staff completed individual training needed to maintain licenses and certification. All staff are encouraged to participate in trainings provided by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health, professional organizations and academia throughout the year to agency staff so they can keep abreast in a dynamic science-based field.



*Assure a
competent
public
health
workforce*



ESSENTIAL SERVICE 9

This service calls for ongoing evaluation of health programs, based on analysis of health status and service utilization data, to assess program effectiveness and to provide information necessary for allocating resources and shaping programs.

The NVHD Quality Improvement Plan serves as the foundation for the agency's efforts to continually improve our services to our six communities. As part of our PHAB accreditation, NVHD supports at least one administrative and one program QI project at all times. In FY2018-2019, our program improvement initiative was the continuation of our effort to reduce code violations of nail salons; the mandatory training introduced in FY2017-2018 was repeated as a refresher in 2019, resulting in a reduction in major code violations in the salons. An additional program project was identified by the QI Committee, for implementation in late 2019: increasing public awareness of and participation in our community health programs. This will be enabled in part by the launch of NVHD's updated website.

The administrative QI project is the continued standardization of communications used by the Environmental Health Committee. This project improves the service of our sanitarians and support staff.

In addition, NVHD has now recognized 12 "Quick QI" projects (aka *Just Did It!* activities), which contribute incrementally to our day-to-day service to our customers.



*Evaluate
effectiveness,
accessibility
and quality of
personal and
population
based health
services*

ESSENTIAL SERVICE 10

NVHD, in partnership with the Pomperaug District Department of Health, received a grant from the Connecticut Office of Health Strategy's State Innovation Model (SIM) to explore and provide several diabetes self-management programs to specific individuals who meet certain qualifying criteria set by the Waterbury Hospital Chase Outpatient Center and Waterbury Health Access Program. The SIM is developing a strategy to promote healthier people, better care, and smarter healthcare spending and health equity by moving away from traditional medical billing to one which rewards healthcare providers for improved patient outcomes. The grant supplied funding and technical assistance for the two health districts to develop a business plan to present to healthcare organizations for the districts to supply diabetes education and management to patients in need, and be reimbursed by the healthcare organization, Waterbury Hospital, for the services.



"It's Your Life...Live it Well"



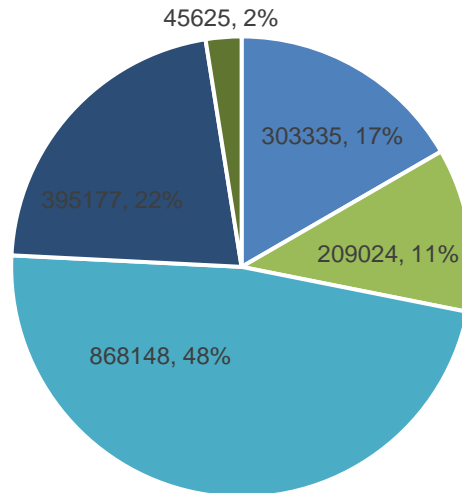
**Waterbury
Hospital**
WaterburyHEALTH



*Research
for new
insights and
innovative
solutions to
public health
problems*

FUNDING SOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019



- Grants (17%)
- Allocations from the State (11%)
- Allocations from Cities/Towns (48%)
- Permits, Licenses, Fees (21%)
- Other Income (4%)

GRANTS AWARDED DURING FY18-19

Immunization Action Plan	\$74,257
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	\$87,702
Medical Reserve Corps	\$13,625
MRC Challenge Award (<i>NACCHO</i>)	\$7,500
Preventative Health Block Grant	\$33,054
A Matter of Balance (<i>Valley Community Foundation</i>)	\$12,000
A Matter of Balance (<i>CT Community Foundation</i>)	\$4,700
Diabetes Self-Management Program (<i>Office of Health Strategy</i>)	\$49,997
Lead Poisoning Prevention – Ansonia (<i>CT DPH</i>)	\$20,500
Total Grants	\$303,335

OTHER

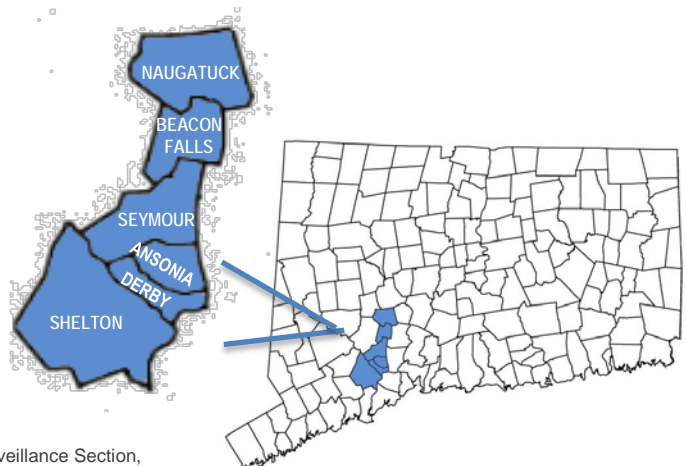
Allocations from the State	\$209,024
Allocations from Cities/Towns	\$868,148
Permits, Licenses, Fees	\$395,177
Other Income	\$45,625
Total Other	\$1,821,309

Total Revenue including Grants: \$2,124,644

POPULATION

Ansonia	18,813
Beacon Falls	6,168
Derby	12,581
Naugatuck	31,461
Seymour	16,583
Shelton	41,397

Total District Population: 127,003





NVHD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Zikaras, Chair, Shelton
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Jessica Stelmaszek, Secretary/Treasurer/Ex-Officio
 Elizabeth King, Recording Secretary

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

Kenneth Ward, MD, Medical Consultant
 Frederick Stanek, Esq, Legal Consultant

NVHD STAFF

Jessica Stelmaszek, MPH, Director of Health
 Carol Slajda, MBA, MA, NauVEL Program Manager
 Dave Heiden, MS, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
 Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator
 Joan Lane, MPH, Public Health Specialist

Administrative Support

Lisa McEachern, Business Manager
 Gaby Reyes, Administrative Assistant
 Judith Waleski, Administrative Assistant

Environmental Health Division

Melanie Dokla, BS, RS, Assistant Director
 Rita Fazzino, RS, Housing Code Enforcement
 Pran Gjelooshi, BS, RS, Sanitarian
 Laurel Shaw, MPH, RS, Sanitarian
 Yvonne Douglas, BS, Sanitarian

Community Health Division

Carissa Caserta, MPH, Assistant Director
 Kristin Charest, RN, Public Health Nurse
 Elizabeth Green, BS, Immunization Coordinator
 Jamie Luckhardt, BS, Health Educator

Proudly serving Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Seymour, and Shelton