

# REPORT OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

We respectfully submit the annual report of the Abington Board of Health for the calendar year 2007.

The Board of Health has the responsibility to protect the public health of its citizens by developing, implementing and enforcing health policies, pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws.

The Board of Health continues to manage the trash disposal contract and has opted to extend Waste Solution's contract for another year. The Board of Health institutes and manages an array of recycling initiatives including enforced mandatory recycling, recycling of CRT's and propane tanks at the Town run compost site on Groveland Street. The "Got Books" container continues to be a great success keeping heavy used and unwanted books out of the waste stream.

**The Board of Health's major areas of responsibility are as follows:**

- 1. Public Health/Environmental Sanitation**
- 2. Health Officer Duties**
- 3. Administrative Assistant Duties**
- 4. Health Promotional Services/Clinics**
- 5. Trash/Solid Waste/Hazardous Waste/Recycling**

## Public Health/Environmental Sanitation

This category includes inquires concerning the water supply and beach safety, food establishments, mosquito control, vermin control, infectious disease reporting, illegal dumping of refuse or hazardous materials, asbestos, lead, mercury, household trash and recycling.

During 2007 the Board of Health responded to inquires from residents seeking information or reporting complaints with rubbish/recycling/leaf collection and drop off. Many of these calls were regarding the disposal of televisions, computer monitors, propane tanks and appliances. A majority of the calls were regarding trash, recycling, hazardous waste, tires, furniture, car batteries and leaves. The remaining calls dealt with dirty water, dust complaints, water runoff complaints, housing and mold complaints, food establishment complaints, septic/sewage overflow and/or odor, dead animals, infectious diseases, flu clinics, rabies clinics, and burial permits. Other inquiries included well water installations and testing requirements, mosquito spraying requests, dead bird reporting, EEE and West Nile Virus reports.

The Board of Health continues a drop off service at the Abington Compost Site on Groveland Street for CRT's (televisions and computer monitors). Permits can be purchased at the Board of Health office at the Town Hall. Propane tanks can be dropped off at the compost site for a nominal fee. The leaves and grass clippings dropped off at the compost site are ground and screened and the compost is available to all residents free of charge. Thirty nine propane tanks were collected and 328 televisions and computer monitors were collected to be recycled.

Our Senior Tax Rebate Program includes two seniors this year. Mr. James Rapson and Mr. John Ross work at the Groveland Street Compost Site from the first Saturday in April to the last Saturday in November collecting CRT's, propane tanks and providing resi-

dents with a leaf drop off service every other Saturday from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. rain or shine. The Board of Health wants to commend our volunteers for their time, dependability and competency for the work they do for the community.

The Board of Health and the Park and Recreation Department adopted an Outside Smoking Regulation prohibiting smoking in workplaces and public places effective June 1, 2007.

The Annual Rabies Clinic was conducted on May 5, 2007 at the Highway Department. Dr. Curtin vaccinated 96 dogs and cats at a discounted cost of \$10.00 per animal.

Flu clinics were held in November and December, the visiting nurse, Gail Miller administered 556 doses of influenza vaccine to Abington residents.

#### Health Officer Duties

The full-time Health Officer, Michelle Roberts carries out the day-to-day responsibilities of the Board of Health. If an emergency arises at night or on weekends the overseeing officials call out the health officer to respond to restaurant or retail store fires, floods, oil spills, illegal dumping or septic failures. During the winter months the health officer will respond to no heat calls.

Each food establishment in town is required by State Law to be inspected twice a year with reinspections as needed. The Health Officer has inspected each food service establishment with follow up inspections when receiving a complaint.

The Health Officer's duties include witnessing percolation tests, reviewing Title V reports, reviewing plans for septic systems, conducting onsite inspections of septic systems, pool and beach inspections, beach water testing, retail and restaurant inspections, well inspections, housing code violation inspections, burial permitting, nuisance complaints, trash and recycling complaints, assisting the visiting nurse with flu clinics and infectious disease reports and coordinating and attending the annual rabies clinic. She also responds to day-to-day complaints while enforcing the State Sanitary Code. The Health Officer attended a three day Yankee Conference on Environmental Health in Plymouth, DPH Emergency Preparedness Region 5 meetings, South Shore Recycling meetings, Department Head meetings, Safety Committee and South Shore Agent's meetings. She attended workshops on West Nile Virus, EEE, Healthy Housing, Compulsive Hoarding and an ICS 200 and 300 training through the police department. The Health Officer was invited to speak about recycling and composting at the September meeting of the Abington Garden Club.

The Abington Board of Health held a joint Hazardous Waste Day with the town of Whitman on September 8, 2007. The cost of the hazardous materials collection was \$4,482.80 and 136 residents participated.

#### Administrative Assistant's Duties

The Administrative Assistant, Donna Manna duties include answering and assisting resident complaints and inquiries. Preparation and issuance of burial, tattoo, massage, CRT, septic pumping, septic installers, trash haulers, food service, retail food, catering, mobile food, tobacco, camp and well permits. The Administrative Assistant bills, collects and processes these permit fees. Responsible for preparation of Financial Reports which include vouchers, turnovers and reconciling reports from accounting department. She schedules compost site, work crew and advertises. Responsibilities include trash/recycling tonnage,

preparing agendas, meeting packets, reporting of communicable diseases to proper authorities, tracks and logs pumping records. The Administrative Assistant attends all Board of Health meetings and prepares and maintains these official minutes.

#### Health Promotion Services/Clinics

Through the diligent efforts of Gail Miller, the visiting nurse provides residents of the Town of Abington a full range of public health services. Mrs. Miller submits her own annual report, inclusive of flu clinics, school programs and communicable disease follow-up. The Board of Health wishes to acknowledge the excellent cooperation received from town departments, boards, committees and organizations, as well as from the residents of Abington, in maintaining compliance with the public health rules and regulations of the Town and Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Welch, *Chairman*  
Harold Norton, *Vice-Chairman*  
William Creighton  
Susan Brennan  
Christine Hickey  
Michelle Roberts, *Health Officer*  
Donna Manna, *Adm. Assistant*