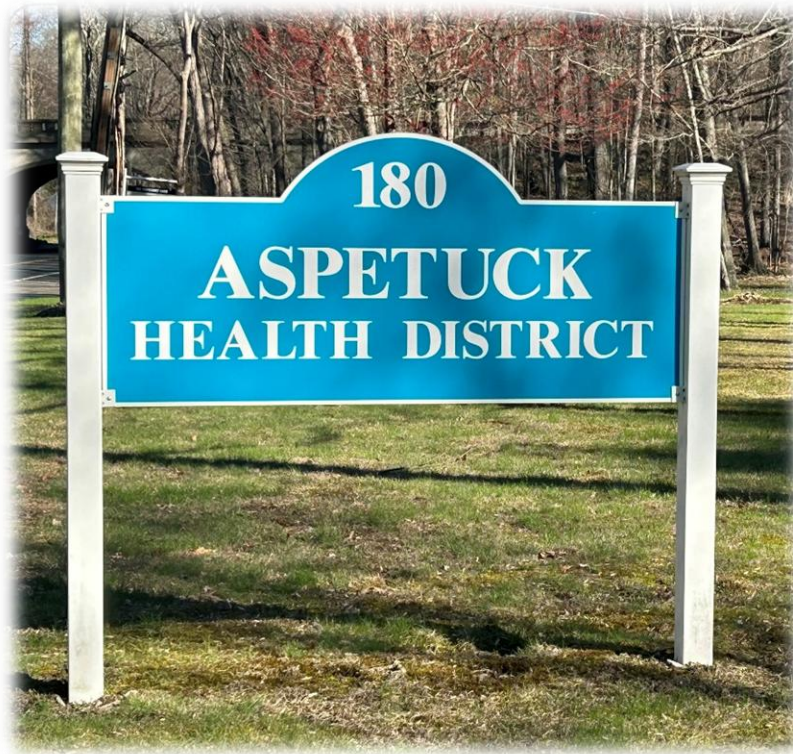




# ASPETUCK HEALTH DISTRICT

Serving Easton, Weston & Westport



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



**Public Health**  
*Prevent. Promote. Protect.*



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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As the new Director of Health, for the Aspetuck Health District, I am pleased to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report highlighting our accomplishments and sharing with you the many ways we are committed and dedicated to improving the quality of life for all our citizens. The Aspetuck Health District is a governmental agency which provides local public health services to the towns of Easton, Weston and Westport.

Through state and federal funding, the Aspetuck Health District was able to expand its services and assess the needs of the communities it serves. Public health programs were coordinated through local partnerships leading to healthier and safer communities. Through the implementation and promotion of public health programs, communities benefit from improved qualities of life and reduced human suffering.

This year, we look forward to focusing on the needs of our residents and continue to offer important health programs and initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles. We look forward to continued partnerships with the towns we serve, local and state agencies and strengthening relationships enabling our staff to offer additional services to our residents.

Through the dedication of our staff, the support of our residents, and strong partnerships with local and state agencies, we have navigated public health hurdles effectively. I look forward to continued success, while implementing positive changes for the department, staff and the communities we serve.

Warm Regards,

*Lucienne Bango*

Lucienne Bango, MPH, REHS, RS

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# VISION AND MISSION

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***The Aspetuck Health District strives to promote health and well-being, prevent disease, and ensure a clean and safe environment for the communities we serve.***

The Aspetuck Health District (AHD) is a governmental agency which provides local public health services. AHD is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the First Selectpersons of Westport, Weston, and Easton.

**Environmental Health** works to prevent and control the spread of disease in the environment and responds to local environmental emergencies. Sanitarians perform health inspections, investigate and resolve nuisance complaints, respond to public health hazards and educate the public about communicable disease prevention. Some services include:

- Permitting food service establishments, salons and daycares
- Approval of septic systems and private wells
- Enforcement of state public health codes and regulations

**Community Health** provides health promotion and disease prevention through education, screenings, immunizations and surveillance. These efforts help prevent chronic disease and improve the health of the community. Most of these services are provided at the Health District's office and an appointment is necessary for most services. Some services include:

- Travel and routine immunizations
- Blood pressure and cholesterol screenings
- Confidential HIV/STI counseling and testing

**Emergency Preparedness** conducts planning activities to prepare for and respond to emergencies. These include threats of pandemic influenza, biological terrorism, and natural disasters. Westport Weston Wilton Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) relies on volunteers to support and assist local health officials during public health emergencies.



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# BOARD AND STAFF

## **BOARD**

Paul Shaum, *Chair*, Westport

Catherine Revzon, *Vice Chair*, Weston

Doreen Collins, Easton

Ilissa Spitzer Nussbaum, Weston (*Resigned June 2024*)

Ali Walker, Weston (*Effective April 2025*)

Edward Mally, Westport

Paul Fonteyne, Westport



## **STAFF**

### **Administration:**

- Mark A. R. Cooper, MPH, RS-Director of Health (*Retired 3/31/25*)
- Lucienne Bango, MPH, REHS, RS – Director of Health (*Effective 12/1/2024*)
- Pamela Scott – Director of Finance and Human Resources
- Joanna DiPalma-Administrative Support (*Effective 3/17/2025*)
- Michael J. Vincelli – Director of Emergency Preparedness/Response
- Janet Pucci – Bookkeeper
- Kerri F. Hagan – Director of Special Projects
- Melissa Romano – Support Services Assistant
- Jessica Whitman-Support Services Assistant (*Resigned 4/9/2024*)

### **Environmental:**

- Lora Hayes, RS – Supervising Sanitarian II
- Richard Janey, RS, MPH –Acting Director of Health, Sanitarian II
- Ryan Currier, RS – Sanitarian II
- Zach Drzal, RS-Sanitarian II (*Effective 2/21/2025*)
- Kelly Phelan – Support Services Assistant (*Retired 3/28/2025*)

### **Clinical:**

- Vanessa Hurta, DNP, APRN – Director of Clinical Services
- Rheajeanne Britt, RN – Public Health Nurse
- Judy Reilly, Support Services Assistant

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# 10 ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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The responsibility of local health departments/districts is to protect and promote health and prevent disease and injury. To accomplish this mission, public health departments/districts deliver 10 Essential Public Health Services to serve as the framework for public health initiatives. The Aspetuck Health District provided these essential services through the following accomplishments.

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# 10 ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## MONITOR HEALTH

Monitored state disease databases for communicable diseases to determine community transmission and epidemiological trends.

## DIAGNOSE AND INVESTIGATE

Responded to complaints related to public health to determine sources and prevent reoccurrence

## INFORM, EDUCATE, EMPOWER

Attended community events to educate the public on topics such as tick-borne diseases and radon.

## MOBILIZE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Attended meetings with town agencies to strengthen and build relationships.

## DEVELOP POLICIES

Updated policies and procedures and Strategic Plan.

## ENFORCE LAWS

Conducted inspections of septic system installations and repairs to verify compliance with state and local codes.

## LINK TO/PROVIDE CARE

Administered immunizations to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

## ASSURE COMPETENT WORKFORCE

Attended trainings and conferences to learn about relevant public health topics.

## EVALUATE

Participated in a Community Health Needs Assessment to learn about the needs of the communities we serve.

## RESEARCH

Applied data from health agencies and websites to the development of local policies used to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.



# COMMUNITY HEALTH



The Aspetuck Health District investigates, monitors, tracks and implements control measures to address communicable diseases to reduce their spread in the community. We work closely with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) and other health agencies to prevent and control the spread of disease. Aspetuck Health District provides educational programs and preventative programs/screenings for early prevention, detection and control of chronic diseases.

## **SERVICES AND PROGRAMS PROVIDED:**

### **TRAVEL IMMUNIZATIONS**

Aspetuck Health District offers a Travel Immunization Program for clients who require vaccination for travel abroad. Staff can provide consultations about travel vaccine needs. AHD is an authorized Yellow Fever Center and can provide travelers with the Certificate of Yellow Fever Vaccination, which is required to enter some countries. Malaria prescriptions are also available.

### **ROUTINE VACCINES**

Routine immunizations and vaccine boosters are available for adults and children.

### **STI AND HIV TESTING**

Open to all regardless of age or residence. Testing is confidential.

### **TICK IDENTIFICATION AND SUBMISSIONS**

Ticks can be brought to the Aspetuck Health District for species identification. The tick can be sent to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) Tick Testing Laboratory. If the tick is a deer tick, it will be tested for five tick-borne illnesses, including Lyme Disease.

### **BLOOD PRESSURE AND CHOLESTEROL SCREENINGS**

Nurses are available by appointment to provide blood pressure and cholesterol screenings to residents.

### **RABIES**

Nursing staff provide consultations and submission of animals for testing of possible rabies exposures.

### **ENTERIC DISEASE SURVEILLANCE**

The nursing staff monitors the Connecticut Electronic Disease Surveillance System (CTEDSS) to evaluate and analyze epidemiological disease data.

### **RADON KITS AND FOLLOW-UP**

Free radon test kits are available on a yearly basis at AHD, beginning in January. Kits are provided by CT DPH at no charge.



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# COMMUNITY HEALTH

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## **HOMEBOUND VACCINATIONS**

Nursing staff will make home visits to administer vaccines to residents who are homebound.

## **HOME SAFETY ASSESSMENTS**

This is a free service offered to residents. A member of the Health District staff will visit your home to determine if any safety concerns exist. Some of the items on the checklist include: lighting, flooring, footwear, fire protection, stairways, and water temperature. At the completion of the visit, the homeowner is given a copy of the completed home safety and risk assessment with the findings and any recommendations.

The Community Health staff also participates in and hosts several educational events and screenings promoting public health topics at various locations within the communities we serve.

***Below is a list of the events and screenings offered.***

- **Cholesterol screening 9/7/23**
- **Skin cancer screening 9/26/23**
- **Car Seat Safety Day Weston 9/29/23**
- **Flu shots Easton Library 10/16/23**
- **Flu shots Weston Senior Center 10/18/ 23**
- **Flu shots Westport Center for Senior Activities 10/19/23**
- **Flu shots Westport Town Hall 10/20/23**
- **AHD Afternoon Evening Flu clinic 10/24/23**
- **LIFT Wellness Lunchtime Zoom 2/8/24 Disordered Eating**
- **LIFT Wellness Lunchtime Zoom 3/13/24 Body Positivity in the Digital Age**
- **LIFT Wellness Lunchtime Zoom 3/20/24 Nutrition Tips for Active Individuals**
- **Drug takeback Day 4/27/24**
- **YMCA Healthy Kids Day 4/27/24**
- **Green Farms Garden Club presentation on TICKS 5/7/24**
- **Staples High School TAG (Teen Awareness Group) day 5/8/24**
- **Westport Farmers Market 5/30/24**



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



The Environmental Health division works to provide a clean, safe and healthy environment. The Sanitarians protect public health and the environment by ensuring conformance with local, state and federal ordinances and laws pertaining to a wide variety of environmental health programs. Much of this work is accomplished by performing routine inspections and investigations and taking enforcement action when warranted. The Health District's Environmental Health Department is responsible for enforcing the Public Health Code of Connecticut and the local Aspetuck Health District Sanitary Code. It does so through the issuance of permits, plan reviews and regular on-site inspections.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED:**

### **FOOD PROTECTION**

Restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, bars, schools, private clubs, and temporary food events must obtain a permit and be approved before operation. All are inspected regularly. In addition, staff review establishments plans for new restaurants or changes in ownership.

**Easton-14 Establishments Inspected**

**Weston-21 Establishments Inspected**

**Westport-242 Establishments Inspected**

### **PUBLIC POOL INSPECTONS**

Public pool inspections are inspected on a regular basis to ensure compliance with local and state codes.

### **SALON INSPECTIONS**

Salons, barber shops, spas, and massage therapy centers must obtain a permit to operate, be inspected and approved before operation. All are inspected regularly.

**132 Salons Inspected**

### **DAYCARE INSPECTIONS**

Daycares are inspected on a regular basis to ensure compliance with state codes.

**Easton-3 Daycares Inspected**

**Weston-2 Daycares Inspected**

**Westport-9 Daycares Inspected**

### **NUISANCE/HOUSING**

Environmental staff responds to complaints of Public Health nuisances and housing code violations, including: garbage, rodents, no heat, hoarding.

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# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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## **SEPTIC SYSTEM REPAIRS/INSTALLATIONS**

New system installations and repairs to existing systems must be reviewed and approved. Includes soil testing, plan review, and inspection. Structures and changes to the property which may impact the existing septic system, such as sheds, generators, tank replacements, and lot line changes must also be reviewed and inspected.

### **NEW HOMES**

**Easton-13**

**Weston-12**

**Westport-28**

### **NEW SEPTIC**

**Easton-19**

**Weston-24**

**Westport-33**

### **ADDITIONS**

**Easton-44**

**Weston-102**

**Westport-123**

### **ACCESSORY STRUCTURES**

**Easton-4**

**Weston-5**

**Westport--6**

### **TEST HOLES**

**Easton-62**

**Weston-66**

**Westport-120**

### **SEPTIC REPAIRS**

**Easton-19**

**Weston-19**

**Westport-25**

### **GENERATORS/PROPANE TANKS**

**Easton-23**

**Weston-108**

**Westport-59**

**OTHER SEPTIC INSPECTIONS/REVIEWS** *(includes lot line changes, tank replacements, septic alterations, inspections, plan reviews, water treatment drainage)*

**Easton-72**

**Weston-75**

**Westport-178**

## **CONSTRUCTION**

Proposed building construction, including private swimming pools and sport courts, must be approved before construction can begin.

**Easton-22 Pools/1 Tennis Court**

**Weston-31 Pools**

**Westport-129 Pools/2 Tennis Courts**

## **WELL INSPECTIONS**

Private drinking water wells are regulated to ensure proper location and installation for a safe water supply.

**Easton-11 Well Inspections**

**Weston-23 Well Inspections**

**Westport-18 Well Inspections**



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# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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Public health prepares for responding to emergencies such as disease outbreaks, contaminated food or water, chemical releases, insect-borne diseases, and other health hazards. The Aspetuck Health District works to ensure that they respond effectively to natural disasters, bioterrorism and other emergencies that could affect the health of the public. This is achieved through department planning and collaboration, staff training, and educating our citizens. The Aspetuck Health District is part of the CRI Region 1 Planning Group which consists of Bridgeport, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, and Wilton. In the event of a bioterrorism attack, the health district is prepared to conduct mass dispensing and mass vaccination, providing medication or vaccinations quickly to town residents to prevent disease. Some of the activities during this past year that staff participated in to prepare for such an event included:

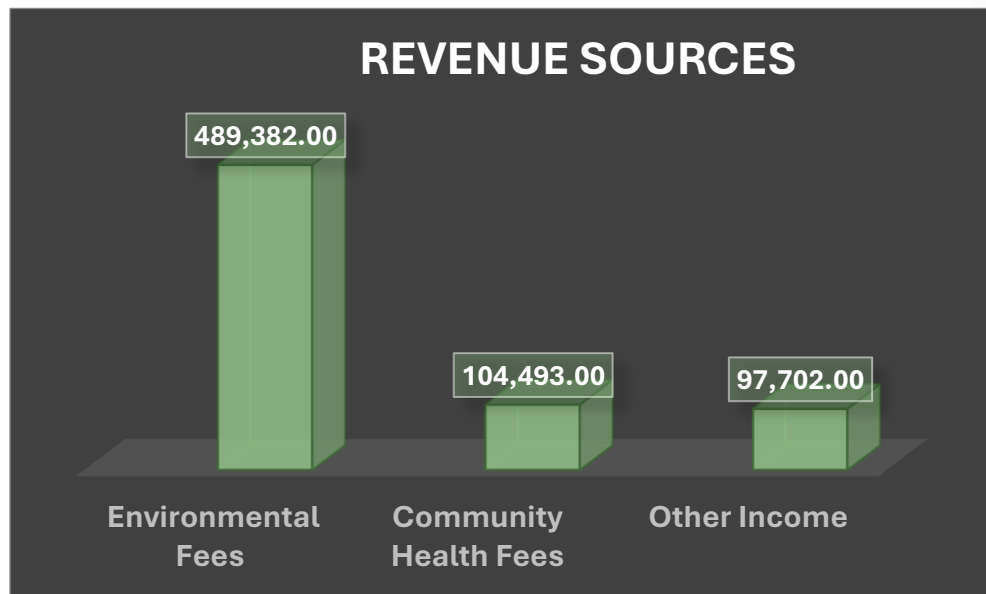
- Participation in Statewide Preparedness Exercises
- Participation in Local Regional Tabletop Exercises
- Participation in Regional Full-Scale Exercises
- Coordination of Local Full Scale and Functional Exercises
- Participated in Call-down and Radio Drills
- Participation in various trainings, such as Stop the Bleed, N95 Fit Testing and ICS Training
- Plan development which includes Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication, Mass Dispensing Plan
- Review of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Response Plan and Point of Dispensing Plan



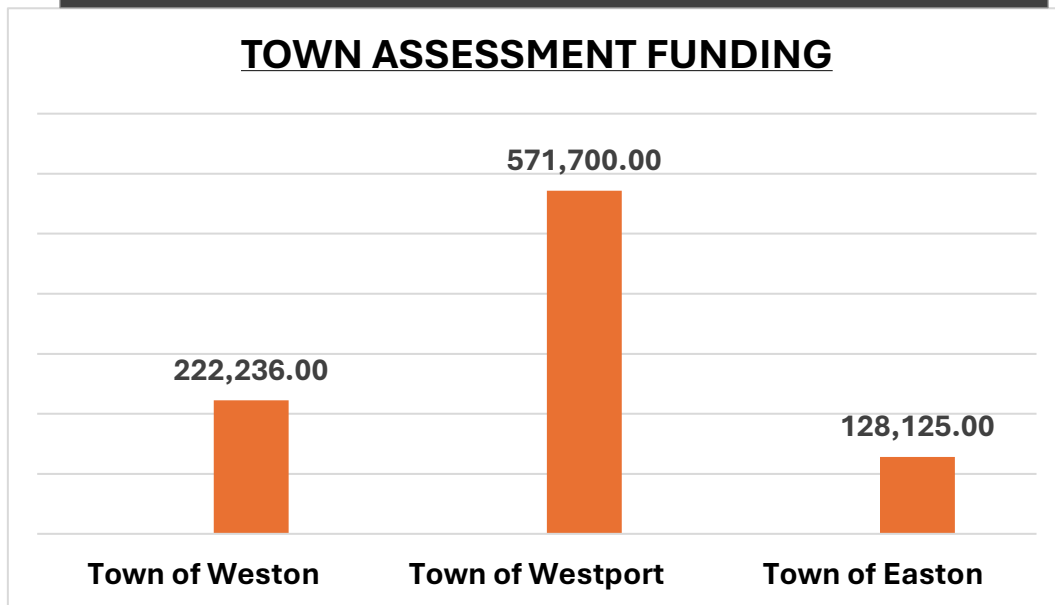
# REVENUE AND FUNDING



## REVENUE SOURCES



## TOWN ASSESSMENT FUNDING



## GRANT FUNDING

