

## **Report of the Health Officer**

Fremont's Health Department had a complete staffing turn over in 2018. With the support of the previous Health Officers, a smooth transition ensued. Many thanks to Bob Meade and Carla Smith for their service to Fremont safeguarding the health and well-being of our community. Gregory Arvanitis is the new Health Officer and arrived with many years of experience serving as a Building Inspector in the State of Massachusetts. April Phelps was sworn in June 2018 as the Deputy Health Officer. April is a registered nurse with a background as an Army Public Health Officer and a recent graduate with a Master's Degree in Nursing with the focus as a Nurse Educator. April is currently attending a Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program at Liberty University.

As of February 2018, New Hampshire has the second highest rate of opioid-related overdose deaths in the country according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. New Hampshire State lawmakers approved approximately twenty million Federal dollars to enhance treatment and recovery programs in Fall 2018. For help, contact New Hampshire's Statewide Addiction Toll-Free Crisis Line at 1-844-711 HELP (4357).

State leaders set mental health priorities for the next decade this year. They include expanding access to treatment and crisis response efforts throughout New Hampshire. A shortage of mental health access continues to be an ongoing problem in New Hampshire.

Acute Flaccid Myelitis was of national concern this year with 72 cases confirmed in 24 states. Acute Flaccid Myelitis is a rare but serious neurological condition affecting the central nervous system and causes sudden limb weakness, loss of muscle tone, and reflexes. Since 2014, New Hampshire has identified four confirmed cases and one probable case. In 2018, only one suspected case was under investigation in New Hampshire. For further information on Acute Flaccid Myelitis refer to: <https://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/references.html>  
In June 2018, the outgoing Deputy Health Officer and incoming Deputy Health Officer attended the Fourteenth Annual New Hampshire Emergency Preparedness Conference in Manchester. This conference was an opportunity to network with Emergency Management Officials throughout the State. Some of the conference topics the Deputy Health Officers attended included NH Drug Monitoring Initiative Overview and Updates, River Ice Jams in New Hampshire: What They are and Technologies to Assess Them, Addressing Human Trafficking in New Hampshire, and Northwoods Law: An Overview of New Hampshire Fish and Game's Law Enforcement Division.

Refer to the following resources for more information on these topics:

New Hampshire Drug Monitoring initiative: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/bdas/data.htm>

River Ice Jams: <https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/gsu/index.htm>  
<https://www.weather.gov/gyx/>

New Hampshire Fish and Game: <https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/>

The United States is a destination country for thousands of men, women, and children trafficked from all areas of the world. Human trafficking occurs in New Hampshire and is a form of modern slavery. American teenagers can even be deceived and fall victim to human trafficking rings. People caught up in trafficking need help to be rescued from their horrific situations. To recognize the signs of a person potentially trafficked refer to: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-signs>

From 2007 to June 2018, the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) reported 306 calls and 43 total cases of human trafficking occurring in New Hampshire. In 2018, NHTH received 18 calls and confirmed 2 cases in NH. Some resources available if you or a loved one are a victim of human trafficking are:

Call 1-888-373-7888 ( TTY: 711)/ Text 233733

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org>

<https://www.ice.gov/factsheets/human-trafficking>

This summer, the Heath Officers worked closely with the Town Administrator and Mosquito Prevention Contractors to help oversee the Mosquito Control Program. Many thanks to the Fremont Residents for voting to fund the contractors who closely monitor West Nile, Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus (EEEV), Zika, Lyme, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, and Powassan. The contractors also conducted preventative spraying to protect the health and wellbeing of the entire Fremont Community. Surveillance and spraying efforts are extremely important as we were reminded this summer when our neighboring towns of Newton and Sandown identified the first mosquitoes testing positive for EEEV in New Hampshire.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, EEEV is one of the most severe mosquito-transmitted diseases in the United States with approximately 33% mortality and significant brain damage in most survivors. You can reduce your risk of being infected with EEEV and other mosquito-borne diseases by using insect repellent (30% DEET), wearing protective clothing, staying indoors while mosquitoes are most active (dawn and dusk), and removing standing water from around your home.

In October, April attended a webinar titled, “Role of Local Health Officer.” This was an opportunity for April to learn about her new role as the Deputy Health Officer.

In October, Gregg conducted health and sanitary inspections of the food vendors at the New Hampshire Grass Drags and Watercross ensuring the health and safety of over 40,000 attendees.

In November, Gregg and April attended the New Hampshire Health Officers Association Workshop in Concord. This conference provided an opportunity to network with other Health Officers throughout the State of New Hampshire. The conference topics included Too Many Treasures: An Overview of Hoarding Disorder, Hoarding: Sanitary Concerns, Harm Reduction and Municipal Intervention Strategies, Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Centers, and Septic Systems and Failures.

At the end of November, Gregg and April conducted a Health Inspection of Ellis School as requested by the incoming Ellis Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds.

Safety and wellness tips, as well as links to other sources, can be found on the Town's website at [www.Fremont.nh.gov](http://www.Fremont.nh.gov).

It is our privilege to serve the public health needs of the Fremont Community.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory Arvanitis, Health Officer  
April Phelps, Deputy Health Officer

Santa Ride-Around with Fremont Public Safety Services

15 December 2018



Photo courtesy of Pat deBeer