



**CITY OF BURLINGTON
BOARD OF HEALTH**

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BURLINGTON CLERK
TREASURER'S OFFICE

BOARD OF HEALTH

Austin Sumner, MD,MPH, Chair • David Casey, RN • Mary D. Hart, RN • Julie Hathaway, MD, PhD • Caroline Tassey, APRN

HEALTH OFFICER

William Ward

HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR

Linda Ayer

FY13 Year End Report for Burlington Board of Health

The Burlington Board of Health is a five-member all-volunteer citizen advisory group appointed by City Council. Each member may serve unlimited, three-year terms at the discretion of the Council. A chairman of the board is elected at the discretion of its members. Two high school interns (non-voting members of the Board) continued volunteering for a second year.

The Board of Health has statutory responsibility for “prevention, removal or destruction of public health hazards and the mitigation of public health risks.” The Board of Health coordinates foremost with the City Health Officer who also serves as the Director of the Code Enforcement Office. The Board of Health receives its authority from Vermont state statute and various sections of the Burlington City Charter.

The Burlington Board of Health is committed to asserting our great city in its rightful place at the top of the list of healthiest cities in the country! Given the volunteer nature of the board, limited authority, and limited budget, strategically planning our efforts is crucial.

Over the past year the Board of Health implemented a strategic plan, which involved completing a community health assessment conducted over a period of 18 months, the Board identified five primary public health domains on which to focus for the next 2-year period:

- Emergency Management
- Substance Abuse
- Food Safety
- Housing Habitability
- Safe Schools

In addition to these five primary areas the Board allots time at every meeting to discuss emerging public health issues that are affecting our community. While our city faces numerous public health challenges, the Board of Health chose these areas based on our determination that we could make the greatest difference.

Currently, Board members are receiving instruction on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which is a nationally-implemented protocol for incident and disaster management. The Board is also currently overseeing the drafting of a city urban livestock and slaughtering ordinance for eventual consideration by the City Council. The Board is considering a number of projects addressing substance abuse prevention in the city such as supporting the Hub and Spoke Program for opiate addiction treatment, promoting safe medication prescribing practices, and promoting National Drug Take-Back Day. The Board of Health also produces Front Porch Forum postings each month to raise awareness of public health issues.

These newly-initiated projects represent only a part of the Board of Health's overall public health efforts. Within the past few months, the Board of Health provided guidance regarding health impacts in the form of a resolution sent to the City Council on the basing of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter plane at the Burlington Air Guard Station. Because weed and insect killers are washed into our storm water and end up in Lake Champlain, our own source of drinking water, the Board of Health continues to work collaboratively with area organizations, businesses, and homeowners to reduce and eliminate the use of toxic chemicals on residential lawns and gardens.

The Burlington Board of Health is a member of the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) and has sent its members to their annual conferences. This organization supports board of health/health officer leadership training and serves as a resource for practical solutions to public health concerns by providing information on public health governance functions, engaging citizens, and the role of effective leadership in healthy communities. The Burlington Board of Health public health resolutions have been cited in NALBOH publications on environmental health and the Healthy Lawns, Healthy Lives project was part of the program for the 20th Annual Conference in Atlanta, August, 2012.

The Board of Health met the second Thursday of every month at 3 different rotating locations. Meetings began at 5:30 pm and lasted between 2-3 hours and were open to the public. The Board of Health currently does not have vacancies but desired skill sets include an interest in public health and experience with law or interpreting regulations. Feel free to email us, or come to one of our monthly meetings. Help make Burlington become number one in health!

Austin Sumner

David Casey

Mary Hart

Caroline Tasse

Julie Hathaway

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