

# Town Health Officer News

Environmental Health News

Fall 2012, Volume 1

## Update to Recreational Water Chapter of the THO Manual

In June the Vermont Department of Health revised Chapter 9 of The State of Vermont Town Health Officer Manual. This revision was made to reflect recent changes to the Vermont Department of Health Recreational Water guidance value for E. coli bacteria as well as an introduction to an expanded Healthy Recreational Waters program at the Department of Health.

The Recreational Water guidance value for E. coli bacteria was reviewed and updated to reflect current EPA recommendations. The current guidance value is 235 colony forming units (cfu) per 100 milliliters (ml) of water.

The Healthy Recreational Waters Program includes a new guidance document and fact sheets. These documents provide information of recreational water contamination, beach closure and opening procedures as well as general beach and recreational water safety information.

The Vermont Department of Health Laboratory continues to offer E. coli test kits. The kits for recreational water are now called Kit SW and are available for \$15. The Healthy Recreational Waters guidance document provides recommendation for sampling location and frequency.

The new guidance document can be found at:

<http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/water/recwater.aspx>.

For a revised version of the Town Health Officer Manual:  
<http://healthvermont.gov/local/tho/documents/TownHealthOfficerManual.pdf>

## Bats in the Belfry?

The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife has issued new guidance for individuals who encounter bats. Many of you have been following the news stories regarding White-nosed Syndrome and the devastating effects it has had on Vermont's bat population. As a result, VT Fish and Wildlife has listed the once common Little Brown Bat as an endangered species. This has significant implications for those who need to kill a little brown bat to report and investigate a possible rabies exposure.

While less than 1% of all bats have rabies, if you have questions regarding potential exposure, contact the health department as soon as possible by calling 1-800-4RABIES, 1-800-640-4374, 1-802-863-7240.

For more information:

[http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/wildlife\\_bats.cfm](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/wildlife_bats.cfm).



## Online Training Tools

The Vermont Department of Health is ramping up its online training schedule for Town Health Officers.

Each webinar will be held from 12:00–1:00 PM and will be archived on the Department of Health’s website for Town Health Officers: <http://healthvermont.gov/local/tho/tho.aspx>. You can also find earlier trainings, presentations, and podcasts on our website listed above.

Blue Green Algae and Recreational Water .....July 18  
Mold: Fact and Fiction .....August 22  
Infestations and Pests..... September 5  
Unsafe Buildings..... September 19

## Regional Training Events

The Department of Health is partnering again with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns this September to conduct three regional trainings across the state. These trainings will focus on the Basic Duties of Town Health Officers, Inspecting for Indoor Air Quality Issues, Writing Defensible Health Orders, and the Vermont Rental Housing Health Code.

### Trainings will be:

September 13 – Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier  
September 20 – Holiday Inn, Rutland  
September 25 – Double Tree Hotel, Burlington

Workshops are from approximately 8:30 am–4:00 pm, and will include breakfast and lunch. They’re free to all Town Health Officers and Deputy Town Health Officers! Visit <http://www.vlct.org/eventscalendar> to register online or fax your registration to (802) 229-2211.

## Need Help?

Did you know that the Town Health Officers have an active email list serve? This list serve connects THOs from all over the state to one another and allows the Department of Health to answer any technical questions quickly. We strongly encourage all Town Health Officers and Deputy Town Health Officers to join. Don’t have email? Have your town clerk email us.

It’s not only a great resource but our department uses the list serve to send out updates and training notices. To have your email added to the list please contact Marielle Strong ([marielle.strong@state.vt.us](mailto:marielle.strong@state.vt.us)).

## Check Out Vermont’s New Tracking Portal

The Health Department launched a new online resource in April that brings environmental and public health data together in one place. Now online at [www.healthvermont.gov/tracking](http://www.healthvermont.gov/tracking), the Environmental Public Health Tracking portal is designed to help policymakers, health officers, researchers, students, residents and anyone who is interested explore the connections between our environment and health.

To date, the portal contains searchable data and information about the state’s air quality, asthma, hospitalizations, birth defects, cancer, carbon monoxide poisoning, drinking water, heart attacks, lead poisoning and reproductive health.

A new feature this summer are blue-green algae maps, tracking blooms on Lake Champlain. After flooding from Irene, Tracking tools were used to predict where private drinking water wells may have been compromised. And data doesn’t end at the state line: as part of the national Tracking Network, Vermont’s portal also links to national Tracking data and other state portals.

### Health Department Local Offices

<i>Barre</i> 479-4200	<i>Middlebury</i> 388-4644	<i>St. Albans</i> 524-7970
<i>Bennington</i> 447-3531	<i>Morrisville</i> 888-7447	<i>St. Johnsbury</i> 748-5151
<i>Brattleboro</i> 257-2880	<i>Newport</i> 334-6707	<i>Springfield</i> 885-5778
<i>Burlington</i> 863-7323	<i>Rutland</i> 786-5811	<i>White River Jct.</i> 295-8820

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**Vermont Department of Health**

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**Health Officer Hotline:**

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