

HEALTH HAPPENINGS

A recap of the great work our divisions have accomplished.



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HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

We are delighted to share with you the exciting news that the Bridgeport Health Department has achieved the prestigious accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). We are proud to be one of the few health departments in Connecticut that has achieved this milestone. This recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence and continuous improvement in providing top-notch public health services to the residents of Bridgeport.

What is PHAB Accreditation?

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to improving and protecting the health of communities by advancing the quality and performance of public health departments. This national accreditation program, which receives support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sets standards against which the nation's governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. Standards emphasize Foundational Capabilities and are aligned with the 10 Essential Public Health Services. Achieving PHAB accreditation signifies that a health department meets the highest standards of performance, transparency, and accountability.

PHAB accreditation is a significant milestone for the Bridgeport Health Department, but it's only the beginning of our journey to improve public health and promote wellness in our community. We invite you to be an active part of this endeavor. Together, we can build a healthier, safer, and more resilient Bridgeport.

Explore our website to learn more about our services, programs, and initiatives. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions, suggestions, or if you'd like to get involved in our mission to create a healthier future for all.

Why We Are Proud to be PHAB Accredited

- **Commitment to Excellence:** Our pursuit of PHAB accreditation reflects our unwavering commitment to excellence in public health. Through this process, we have demonstrated our adherence to the highest standards of practice, continuous improvement, and evidence-based strategies.
- **Enhanced Service Delivery:** PHAB accreditation has allowed us to enhance the delivery of essential public health services. By benchmarking against national standards, we have identified areas for improvement and streamlined our processes to better serve the needs of our community.
- **Stronger Partnerships:** Collaboration is at the heart of public health. Achieving PHAB accreditation has strengthened our partnerships with community organizations, local healthcare providers, and government agencies. Together, we work towards a healthier and more resilient Bridgeport.
- **Increased Accountability:** As a PHAB accredited health department, we hold ourselves to the highest levels of accountability. We are transparent about our actions, decisions, and outcomes, ensuring that the public's trust is well-placed in our ability to safeguard their health.
- **Continuous Improvement:** PHAB accreditation is not a one-time achievement. It is an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. Through regular assessment and quality improvement initiatives, we strive to remain at the forefront of public health best practices.
- **Empowering the Community:** By undergoing the rigorous process of accreditation, we empower the residents of Bridgeport to actively participate in their health and well-being. We engage the community in decision-making processes and ensure their voices are heard in shaping public health programs and policies.
- **Preparedness and Emergency Response:** Accreditation has helped us strengthen our emergency preparedness and response capabilities. We have robust plans in place to protect our community during emergencies and to recover swiftly in their aftermath.

DEPARTMENT ON AGING

Living Life to Its Fullest



Every year we apply for Grants to help us subsidize the cost of our recreational activities. This year we were awarded \$22,000 from the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging (SWCCA) for recreational opportunities and \$18,577.60 for our Elderly Hispanic Program. We were also awarded \$100,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act, which we will use to refurbish the Eisenhower Center and approximately over \$300,000 to be divided among all Senior Centers in Bridgeport.

Aging is an inevitable process and we here at the Department on Aging try to ensure that all our members reach their full potential in providing the resources necessary.

We strive to educate our members on the importance of nutrition, health and wellness, and other supportive services. That is why we have approximately two sessions a month on topics that will help our seniors stay independent.

Not only do we provide educational information, but we also provide recreational and leisure opportunities daily. In September of 2023 we took forty -two (42) seniors to Lancaster Pennsylvania, where they were educated on the Amish culture, and to the Sight and Sound production where they were entertained by Moses the Christian Musical. The seniors enjoyed themselves immensely!



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Protecting Public Health Through Vigilant Inspections and Updated Ordinances

The Environmental Health Division of Bridgeport, Connecticut, plays a crucial role in safeguarding the community's health and well-being. Charged with the mission of ensuring safe and sanitary conditions throughout the city, the division undertakes a broad range of responsibilities, from food safety inspections to the regulation of sexually oriented businesses.



The Environmental Health Division of Bridgeport remains dedicated to its mission of protecting the public through vigilant inspections, the adoption of up-to-date standards, and a proactive approach to health and safety regulations. As the city continues to grow, the division's work will remain vital to ensuring that all residents and visitors enjoy a safe and healthy environment.

Impressive Inspection Numbers

In 2023, the division completed an impressive 1,505 inspections, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining high public health standards. This rigorous inspection regime continued into 2024, with 1,132 inspections already conducted in the first half of the year. These inspections cover a variety of establishments, ensuring that food service locations, retail stores, and other public venues adhere to strict health and safety regulations.

Adoption of the FDA Food Code Inspection Form

In a significant move to enhance the consistency and effectiveness of food safety inspections, the division adopted the FDA food code inspection form. This update aligns Bridgeport's inspection protocols with national standards, ensuring that food establishments are held to the highest levels of food safety. The FDA form provides a more comprehensive and structured approach to evaluating food service operations, helping to identify potential risks and enforce corrective actions more efficiently.

Updated Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance

The Environmental Health Division also played a key role in updating the city's ordinance for sexually oriented businesses. This update reflects a proactive approach to managing these establishments, ensuring they operate within safe and regulated environments. The ordinance addresses various aspects of operation, including health and safety standards, to protect both workers and patrons.

Reorganization and Strengthening of the Sanitarian Team

Recognizing the increasing demand for public health services, the division reorganized the assignment of a sanitarian position, bringing the total number of sanitarians to six. This expansion of the team ensures that the division can continue to meet the city's needs effectively, allowing for more thorough inspections and faster response times to public health concerns.

FAMILY HEALTH & WELLNESS CLINIC

Serving our Residents



The Bridgeport Health Department has opened a new Family Health and Wellness Clinic in downtown Bridgeport, replacing the longstanding East Side clinic that served the community for decades. The relocation was necessitated by the closure of the old building due to structural concerns. Conveniently situated on Middle Street, the new facility offers easy access to residents, especially those reliant on public transportation. Its prime location, close to downtown amenities and residential areas, makes it particularly accessible for seniors.

The new clinic, housed in a former private healthcare facility, required minimal refurbishment to meet state health standards, ensuring a seamless transition for continued community care. The upgraded space will enable the clinic to expand its services, providing comprehensive care including preventive services, chronic disease management, and wellness programs. This improved accessibility and expanded service capacity will significantly benefit residents by reducing barriers to essential healthcare, ultimately enhancing the overall health and well-being of the Bridgeport community.

The Bridgeport Family Health and Wellness Clinic currently offers a variety of services aimed at preventing and treating communicable diseases in the community. Key services include testing, treatment, and case management for tuberculosis (TB), testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and HIV. The clinic emphasizes the importance of getting tested, especially if you are sexually active, to manage and prevent the spread of these infections effectively.



Property owners and tenants must complete applications demonstrating that the occupant's annual household income is less than 80% of the Area Median Income. The funds are provided in the form of a three-year forgivable loan. There are no payments, no interest, and the loan is forgiven after three years if the owner complies with the program requirements. Program requirements include that the unit covered continues to house a low- or moderate-income household, and those rents be kept at or below Fair Market Rent as outlined by HUD and the homeowner must maintain ownership throughout the three (3) year period. Submission of an application is required should there be a replacement tenant.



Bridgeport tenants benefit from these programs because they will reside in safer housing and their rent payments will be at or less than the Fair Market Rents established by HUD. Information regarding Area Median Incomes and Fair Market Rents can be found at HUD User Home Page | HUD USER.

Owner-occupants benefit from the program because their properties are improved, and their homes are safer. Investor-owners also benefit from these programs because their properties are following the City of Bridgeport Lead Law. The majority, if not all the cost of compliance is paid for by the program.

LEAD

The Lead Hazard Control/Healthy Homes (LHCHH) program is a federal grant program that provides funding for cities to mitigate lead-based paint hazards and related home health and safety issues. Bridgeport Health Department uses LHCHH funds to address lead paint and health and safety problems in units occupied by low and moderate-income (LMI) residents.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awards LHCHH funds through a competitive grant process from January 15, 2021, to July 15, 2024. Each property must qualify for the program which will include a full lead paint and housing inspection of the unit's interior and exterior components.

Eligible Work

Lead hazard control funds must be used to remediate lead hazards. This work may include replacing lead-painted windows and their components, interior and exterior doors and their components, among other things. All properties receiving Lead Hazard Control funds are eligible to receive Healthy Homes Supplemental funds. These funds can be used to correct non-lead paint related health and safety hazards.

The maximum lead hazard control grant is \$11,950.00 per unit and the maximum number of healthy homes supplemental funds is \$4,999.00 per unit.

Homes built prior to 1978, housing children six (6) and under and proven evidence of lead paint are required. Both rental properties and owner-occupied properties are eligible with the residing households meeting the income and rent limits set by HUD guidelines of low to moderate income (LMI).

Benefits to Tenants and Property Owners

Both programs are administered by the Bridgeport Health Department Bridgeport Lead Hazard Control program.

LIGHTHOUSE/YOUTH SERVICES

Bridgeport's Emerging Young Employees



The Department of Youth Service is getting a head start on providing experience to Bridgeport's "Gen Z" who are forecasted to compete with 30% of their peers in the 2030 global workforce. Atop of the projected amount, approximately fifty additional youth were able to be hired to work among the various Lighthouse Afterschool sites.

The Lighthouse Afterschool and Summer Employment programs provide opportunities to aid young people within the Bridgeport community. Early employment helps to increase financial management skills as well as provides access to resources necessary for fostering self-reliance and confidence building. Tasks range from classroom to administrative assistance which strengthen the soft skills needed to remain productive.

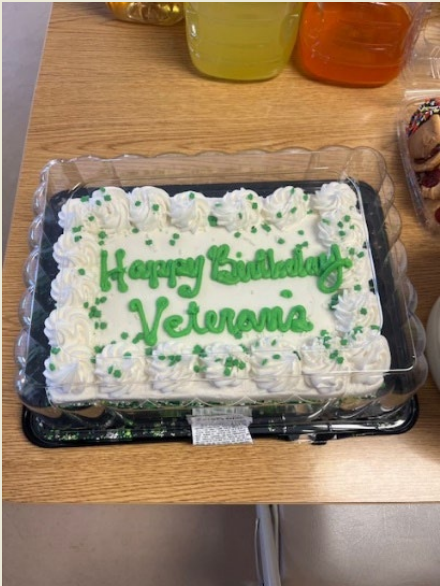
Additionally, Department of Youth Services is preparing Bridgeport's future workforce and leaders through the Ambassador's Program. During this twelve-week program students will leadership development skills, increase knowledge surrounding civic engagement and government; foster meaningful discussions; and build a network among their peers. Students who successfully complete the program are guaranteed summer employment within the department.

Our goal is to not only provide experience, but also skills enhancement so that our youth employees will have the interview, resume writing, communication, self-management and other skills necessary to be equipped for employment. Moreover, our youth-workers play a key role in Lighthouse programming through their energetic participation with our young participants.

We invite you to stay updated on events and opportunities by following us on social media!



VETERAN AFFAIRS



In celebrating our unique department within the City of Bridgeport, I present to you, none other than the Veterans Affairs Support Center!

Our office was recently relocated to the North End Bethany Senior Center on 20 Thorne Street temporarily, until we find our forever home.

We're navigating this exciting journey with the help of our newly established leadership of Directors, trailblazing to become the model District Veterans Affairs Support Center! Respectfully paying homage to the Past, but Presently advocating, educating and assisting our honored Veterans to include their families like never before, as we enthusiastically triumph into the Future. Forward March!

We're making huge strides promoting the Military's Five (5) Pillars of Health, along with PTSD Counseling by a Department of Defense VA Counselor, physical fitness, nutrition, mental health and wellness, finances and VA benefits, safety awareness, as well as our very own Veterans businesses! We've implemented a Green Program which focuses on plastics and sustainability, not only at the Support Center, but in our homes to get our families motivated and involved with one of our mayor's goals for making Bridgeport a hub for clean energy production. We've also been out and about educating our community partners, and in return receiving love, a better understanding of who we are, and donations that we're grateful for.

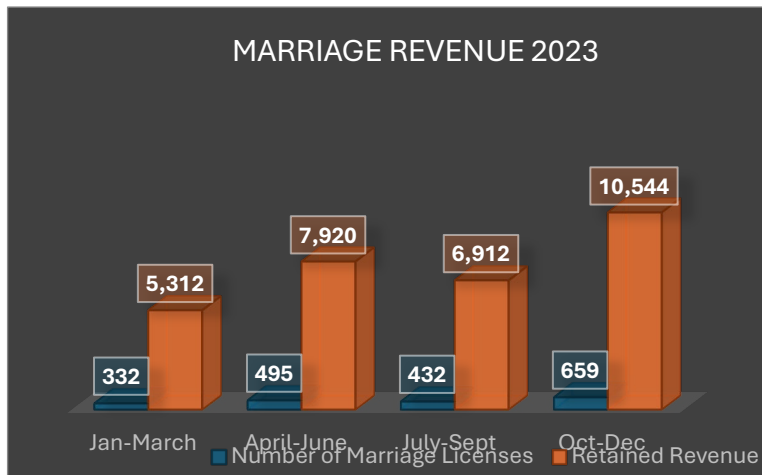
We're extremely proud of our accomplishments thus far and would like to share with you a few pictures showcasing our successes.

Over and out.

VITAL STATISTICS

Satisfaction Guaranteed

The office initiated an agency fee of \$3.00 per transaction for all vitalchek orders issued by the City to customers. Our office processes about 35 requests online per day for birth, marriage, death, and genealogy; generating an additional revenue of approximately \$525.00 per week for the city.



The Assistant Register is working collaboratively with the IT Director to revamp the marriage application process. Improving the operation to be more efficient and accessible on the city's website. Marriage license applications have more than quadrupled in a very short time. The revenue fee for the city has increased proportionally.

The main purpose of this division is to receive, certify, file, maintain, protect, and preserve the City's Vital Records as dictated by law. The office strives to provide excellent customer service to the public in an efficient, professional, courteous manner with the goal of being recognized by others both in and outside the working environment as an outstanding department staffed by highly competent municipal employees.

The Park City Municipal ID Program is one of the more popular programs offered by the city to its constituents and generates revenue for the city. The municipal ID machine was renewed with a state-of-the-art replacement ensuring that we continue to provide the highest level of customer service.

"It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice!"




COMMUNITY HEALTH & EDUCATION

 **11**
Farmer's Markets

 **10**
PSA Videos

 **19**
Research Chronicles

 **500+**
Facebook Posts

 **34**
Epi Reports

 **83**
Webpages

Previously known as the Research Team, the newly rebranded Community Health and Education Team has been working hard to increase health literacy in the Bridgeport community through multiple methods.

We completed a Rapid Community Assessment to explore the barriers to children in Bridgeport receiving their required vaccinations for school. From this intense 3 week process we can utilize this knowledge to develop programs that address the barriers residents are experiencing as heard directly from school nurses and the residents themselves.

Our health educators have been and continue to be very active on Facebook, sharing health information and events with our residents and building our following. They have conducted book readings at Bridgeport libraries, provided nutrition education at food pantries and shelters, and taught Bridgeport residents about the importance of knowing your blood pressure as a part of managing your long-term health.

The team has completed a research project on the causes of vaccine hesitancy in parents and presented it at the NACCHO conference in July 2024.





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