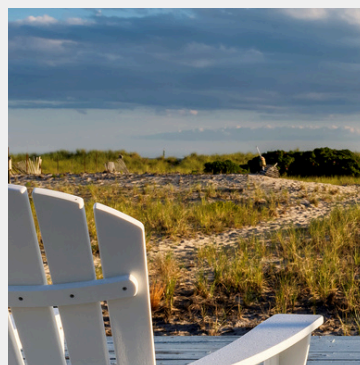
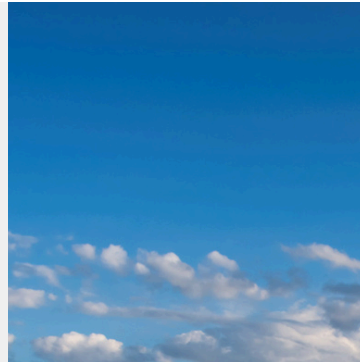


Southcoast Public Health Collaborative

FY25 PHE Report

Serving the communities of
Freetown, Lakeville, Marion,
Mattapoisett, Rochester and
Westport.



Explore More
→



About Us

Our Mission:

The Southcoast Public Health Collaborative (SCPHC) is dedicated to fostering a healthier future for our communities by working together to optimize public health initiatives, promote equitable access to healthcare resources, and enhance community well-being. Through collaboration, innovation, and inclusive practices, we aim to proactively address health inequities, cultivate resilience, and create a supportive environment where every individual can thrive. Together, we strive to build a healthier, more adaptable Southcoast for generations to come.

Our Communities:



Town of **FREETOWN**
MASSACHUSETTS
Established 1683



Town of *Mattapoisett*
Massachusetts



Lakeville
MASSACHUSETTS

Town of **Rochester**
Massachusetts



MARION
MASSACHUSETTS



Town of **Westport**
MASSACHUSETTS

The Coastal Agricultural Resource Community of New England

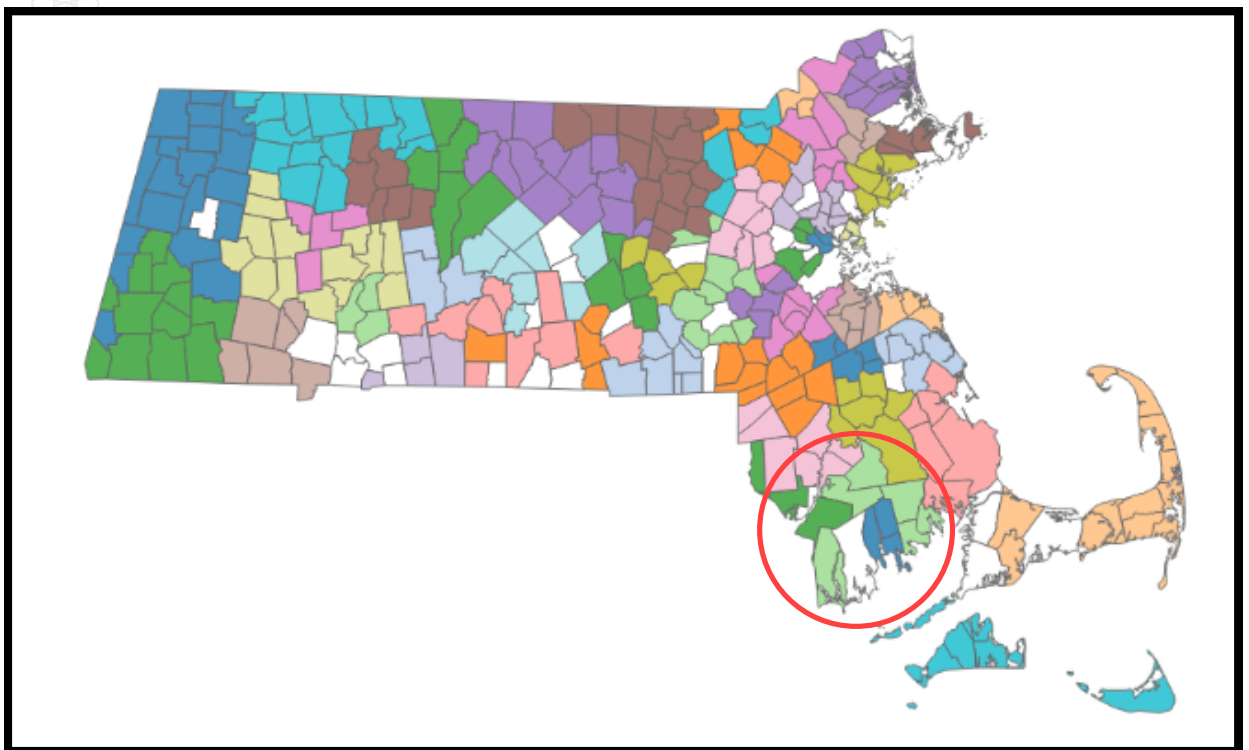


Public Health Excellence


The Public Health Excellence (PHE) grant program, funded through line-item 4512-2022, provides cities and towns with the resources they need to hire staff and procure goods and services to serve not a single community but a whole region. This gives local boards of health access to specialized staffing and resources that they likely could not support on their own, lightening the loads of locally focused staff and increasing capacity to help their communities.

Additionally, this collaborative approach allows for more equitable and effective responses to public health crises like devastating weather events fueled by climate change, the opioid epidemic, and infectious disease outbreaks.

PHE Map as of March, 2025



Health information and messages are often overly complex, making them hard to understand. Clear, easy-to-read public health communications can help people make informed health-related decisions. Below are examples of health communications created by the SCPHC in FY25:



MEASLES

Measles is one of the most contagious diseases of all time. If one person has it, 9 out of 10 people nearby will become infected if they are not vaccinated.

MEASLES SYMPTOMS

Anyone who is not vaccinated against measles is at risk.

Measles symptoms appear 7 to 14 days after contact with the virus. Common measles symptoms include:

- High Fever (may spike to more than 104°F)
- Runny nose (coryza)
- Red, swollen eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Red, flat rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the trunk and rest of the body
- Other measles symptoms may include small spots in the cheeks inside the mouth, diarrhea and ear infection. Measles can lead to pneumonia, swelling of the brain, deafness, neurological disability and death.

MEASLES MYTHS

Robert F Kennedy Jr. is pushing another hoax.
 Treatment instead of getting the MMR vaccine
It does not work as a preventative treatment.

It is possible to overdose on vitamin A.
 Large, prolonged outbreaks of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and high bone pain, blurry vision and skin hair problems.
 They are not likely to lead to death from the virus, liver damage, confusion, coma and other problems.

Protect yourself with the vaccine.
 The best way to protect against measles is with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

MMR is safe and effective.
 Two doses of the MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.

For more information about measles or the MMR vaccine, please contact:
 Health Services, 504-636-1300

Health Communications

BLACKLEGGED (DEER) TICK
Protect yourself from tick-borne illness

Life Stages: Larva, Nymph, Adult Male, Adult Female

BLACKLEGGED (DEER) TICK
Ixodes scapularis

Overview

Blacklegged ticks (aka a deer tick) take 2 years to complete their life cycle from eggs and larvae in one calendar year to nymphs and adults in the next. This tick is encountered predominantly in deciduous forest as well as tall grasslands and shrubs bordering forest edges. Their distribution relies greatly on the distribution of their reproductive host, white-tailed deer. Both the nymph and adult stages and the larger adult female stage are responsible for transmitting diseases such as Lyme disease, Babesiosis, and Anaplasmosis.

Symptoms of Lyme Disease:

- Bull's-eye rash
- Flu-like symptoms
- Joint pain
- Fatigue
- Neurological problems

Symptoms of Babesiosis:

- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Anemia
- Organ failure

Symptoms of Lyme Disease:

- Fever
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle Aches
- Organ failure

Ways to prevent tick bites

The following preventative measures can help avoid a possible bite by the Blacklegged Deer Tick:

- Cover up
- Use bug spray
- Tick-proof your yard
- Check yourself and your kids
- Shower ASAP
- Remove ticks quickly

AMERICAN DOG TICK
Protect yourself from tick-borne illness

Life Stages: Larva, Nymph, Adult Male, Adult Female

AMERICAN DOG TICK
Dermacentor variabilis

Overview

American dog ticks are found over most of North America, predominantly along forest edges and in areas with little or no tree cover, such as grassy fields and scrubland, as well as along waterways, roadsides, and trails. American dog ticks are 3-host ticks (use 3 different hosts in their lifecycle) feeding on people and a variety of animals ranging in size from rodents, livestock, and dogs to medium-sized hosts, including raccoons, skunks, cats, dogs and other canids. Larvae and nymphs mainly infect small mammals including mice, voles, rats, and chipmunks. Humans and adults can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and lesser pathogenic spotted fever group germs as well. They also transmit the germs causing Tularaemia. American dog ticks can survive for up to 3 years at any given stage if no host is found.

Symptoms of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever:

- Fever
- Headache
- Rash that appears as spots on the wrists and joints
- Muscle aches
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting

Symptoms of Tularaemia:

- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Stomach pain
- Cough
- Chest pain
- Pneumonia

Ways to prevent tick bites

The following preventative measures can help avoid a possible bite by the American Dog Tick:

- Cover up
- Use bug spray
- Tick-proof your yard
- Check yourself and your kids
- Shower ASAP
- Remove ticks quickly

LONE STAR TICK
Protect yourself from Alpha-gal Syndrome

Life Stages: Larva, Nymph, Adult Male, Adult Female

LONE STAR TICK
Amblyomma americanum

Overview

Lone Star ticks are found mostly in woodlands with dense undergrowth and around animal resting areas. The larvae do not carry disease-causing germs, although they do inject allergic saliva when they bite. But the nymphs and adult stages can transmit the germs causing Human Granulocytic Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Star Babesiosis. Lone Star ticks are aggressive human biters, and their bite is associated with the development of a red meat allergy (alpha-gal syndrome) in some people. Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is a disease-causing allergic reaction to a sugar molecule called galactose (alpha-gal).

Symptoms of AGS usually appear 2-8 hours after consuming mammalian meat (such as beef, pork, lamb, or venison). They may include:

- Hives
- Swelling in e.g. face, lips, tongue
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Shortness of breath
- Anaphylaxis (in severe cases)

People with AGS may also have an allergic reaction to certain medications and cosmetics that contain alpha-gal.

Ways to prevent alpha-gal syndrome

The following preventative measures can help avoid a possible bite by the lone star tick:

- Cover up
- Use bug spray
- Tick-proof your yard
- Check yourself and your kids
- Shower ASAP
- Remove ticks quickly

7 WAYS TO PROTECT AGAINST MOSQUITOS

- 1. Use Repellents:** Use an EPA-registered repellent with an active ingredient, such as DEET, Icaridin, or Picaridin, on exposed skin and clothing.
- 2. Wear Protective Clothing:** Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and closed-toe shoes. Use insect repellent on your clothing.
- 3. Keep Mosquitoes Outside:** Mosquitoes are attracted to dark and wet areas. Use mosquito netting on porches or patios.
- 4. Remove Tall Grasses:** Mow your lawn frequently and remove brush, tall grasses and leaf litter.
- 5. Remove Standing Water:** Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water that sits for more than 7 days. Commonly found areas are buckets, barrels, tires, toys, and water basins, and tree stumps.
- 6. Stay Inside During Peak Hours:** Mosquitoes are most active during peak hours for many mosquitoes, between dusk and dawn. Mosquitoes are most active during evening or early morning in areas of high risk.
- 7. Protect Animals:** Mosquitoes are most active during peak periods of mosquito activity (dusk to dawn). Mosquitoes are most active during evening or early morning in areas of high risk.

MOSQUITO BITES CAN MAKE YOU SICK!
Take steps to protect yourself and your family.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TICKS

KNOW WHERE TO EXPECT TICKS

Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside waiting your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.

TRY TO AVOID CONTACT WITH TICKS

Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. Walk in the center of trails.

TREAT CLOTHING AND GEAR

Use products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and repel ticks and mosquitoes through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.

CHECK FOR TICKS:

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside body folds
- Back of the knees
- In and around hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist

USE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)-REGISTERED MOSQUITO REPELLENTS

Look for DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Always follow product instructions.

Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.

EXAMINE SKIN AND PETS

Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person, pet, or livestock. Examine your skin, clothes, and pets for ticks.

SHOWER WITHIN 2 HOURS

Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tickborne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

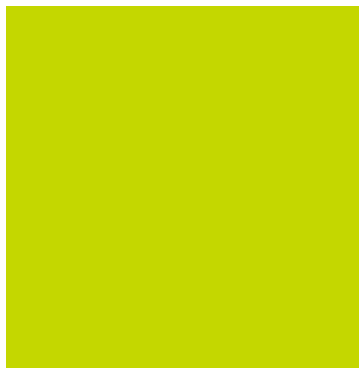
Protect Yourself From H5N1 (Avian Influenza A)

- 1. Avoid Contact with Sick or Dead Animals:** Infected birds shed virus in their saliva, mucus, and feces and other infected animals may shed virus in their saliva or respiratory secretions and other body fluids. Stay away from sick or dead animals.
- 2. Wear PPE:** If you must have direct contact with sick or dead animals, poultry, or other animals, wear recommended personal protective equipment (PPE). If possible, wear gloves, a N95 respirator if available, or a full-face respirator, and wear long-sleeved clothing and pants.
- 3. Avoid Raw Milk:** Do not touch or consume raw milk or raw milk products, especially from animals with confirmed or suspected avian influenza A virus infection. Pasteurized milk is safe to consume.
- 4. Prepare Meat and Poultry Carefully:** Cooking poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165°F kills bacteria and viruses, including avian influenza A virus. Cooking beef to the internal temperature of 160°F kills bacteria and viruses, including avian influenza A virus.
- 5. When Traveling:** Do not visit public farms, bird markets, or other places where live poultry are raised, kept, or sold. If possible, if you must visit such places, wear personal protective equipment and avoid touching poultry or other birds. Do not visit dairy farms with sick cows. Do not visit or use an undercooked meat poultry or eggs.

Report sick birds or other animals

People should report sick birds or other animals to a local health department or to the state or the federal government, either through state veterinarians or by calling USDA's toll-free number at 1-866-635-7953.

CDC has updated guidance related to post-exposure prophylaxis and testing for farm workers exposed to avian infected with or potentially infected with H5N1. These guidance updates can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/s0508-h5n1-guidance.html>

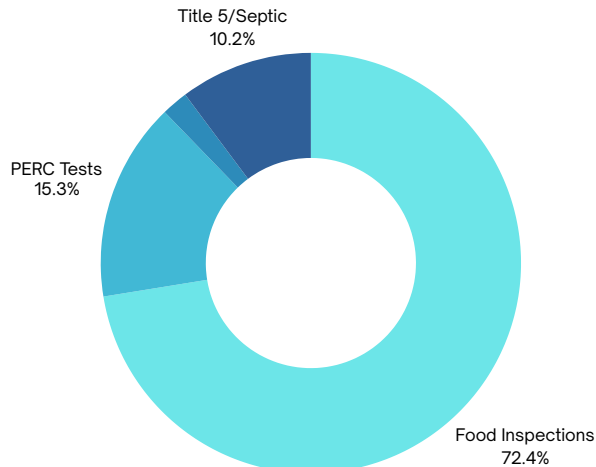
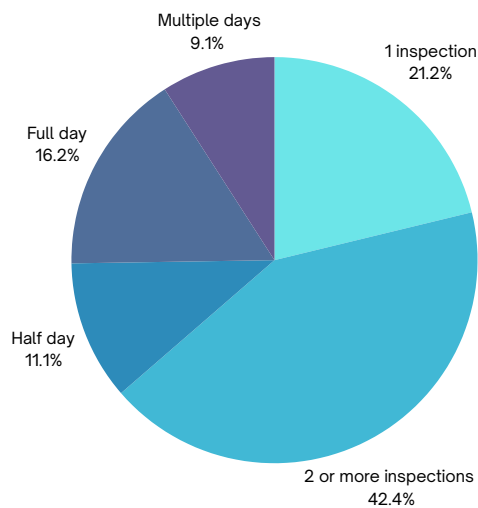


Environmental Health Services

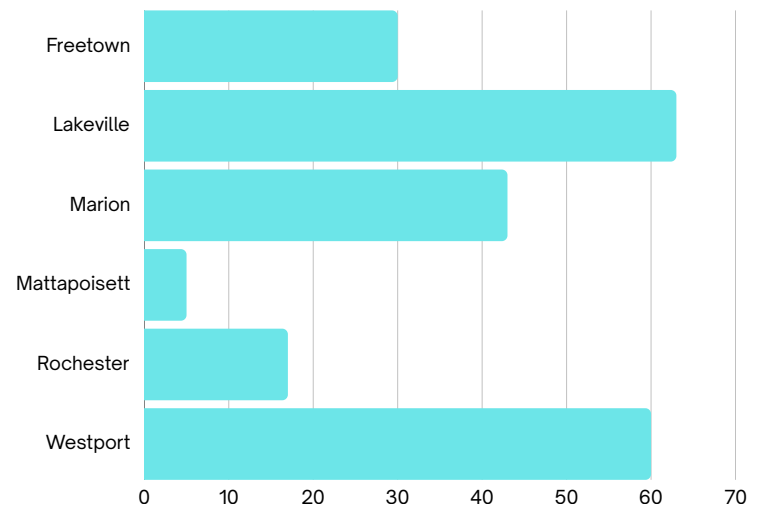
Our two Shared Health Specialists ensure community safety by conducting inspections and supporting environmental health initiatives.



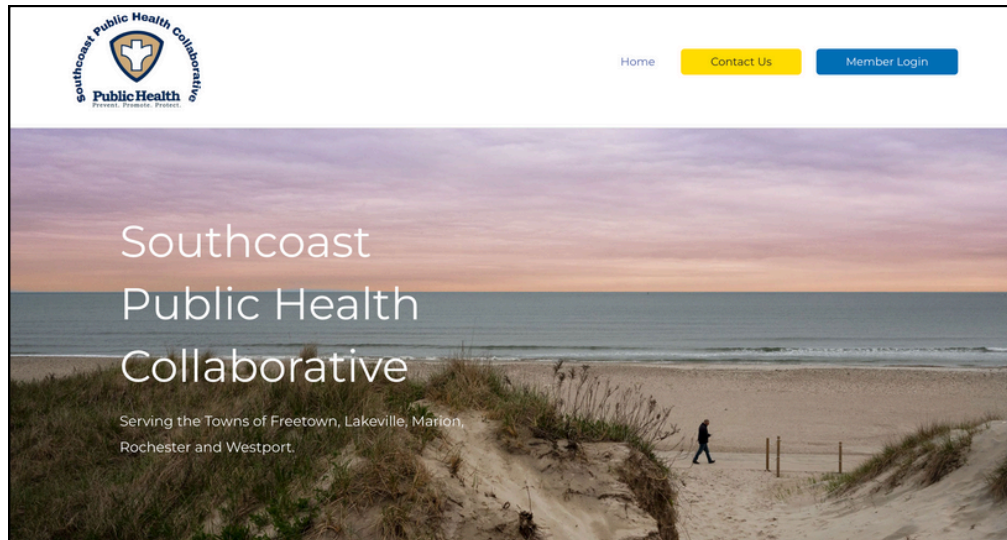
Amount of time requested



Inspections Requested



SCPHC Website



The important work of public health professionals is often overlooked. These dedicated individuals play a crucial role in safeguarding our communities by preventing public health disasters. Their efforts, although vital, often go unnoticed and unappreciated. Take a moment to recognize and appreciate the daily work of the professionals at your local Health Department who are committed to protecting you, your family, and the environment!

OUR MISSION

The Southcoast Public Health Collaborative (SCPHC) is dedicated to fostering a healthier future for our communities by working together to optimize public health initiatives, promote equitable access to healthcare resources, and enhance community well-being. Through collaboration, innovation, and inclusive practices, we aim to proactively address health inequities, cultivate resilience, and create a supportive environment where every individual can thrive. Together, we strive to build a healthier, more adaptable Southcoast for generations to come.

Our Main Responsibilities Include:

Community Engagement, Improving Health Equity, Health Data & Analysis, Policy Development, Vaccination Programs, Disease Prevention & Control, Health Education & Promotion, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Environmental Health, and Inspections & Regulations.

Events & Announcements

****Extreme Heat Advisory****

****Know Your Rights: Immigrants' Rights****

Important Links

- Air Quality
- Avian Influenza
- Crisis Resources
- Councils on Aging
- Drought Information
- Environmental Justice
- Food Insecurity
- Foreclosures/Legal Resources
- Green Burials
- Housing
- Mental Health Resources
- Poison Control
- Shelters
- Substance Use and Harm Reduction
- Suicide Prevention
- Tick and Mosquito Protection

[Resource Library](#)

Sign Up For Our Alerts

1. Click or tap on a city below to display the available alert types.
2. Select either ☐ Email, ☐ SMS (Text Message), or both alert types for our collaborative cities.
3. Enter your contact information.
4. Submit your request.
5. Confirm your mobile number via the double opt-in form if you signed up for SMS alerts.

[SMS Double Opt-In Form](#)

Freetown

Lakeville

SCPHC Events and Training

The SCPHC is proud to plan and host multiple trainings each year on a diverse selection of topics that are critical for public health professionals, as well as numerous health fairs, vaccine clinics, blood drives, and blood pressure clinics to serve our communities.

Safety Training and Workshop with MIIA

Partnership with MIIA about managing safety and health on the job.

“End the Stigma Now” - Stigma and Harm Reduction Training & Panel

Partnership with SSTAR, the FR-CARA Project, Southcoast Health, Peer2Peer, UMASS Dartmouth College of Nursing & Health Sciences. Two CEU's were available for EMT's.

Tick Biology, Entomology, Epidemiology & Management

A presentation and workshop with:

- **Blake Dinius**, Entomologist Educator, Plymouth county extension
- **Larry Dapsis**, Entomologist, New England Center of Excellence in Vector-borne Disease (NewVEC)
- **Matthew Osborne**, Epidemiologist, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Freetown Public Health Fair

Numerous Blood Drives, Stroke Awareness Events, Vaccine Clinics and Blood Pressure Clinics

Past trainings and events:

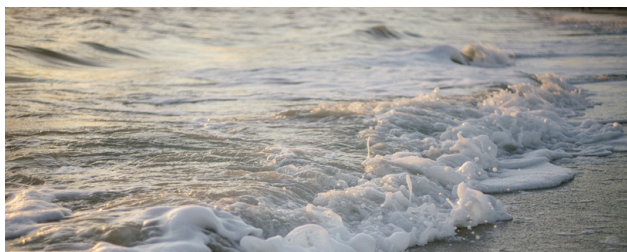
- ServSafe
- Mental Health First Aid
- Social Media and Your Childs' Mental Health with Katie Greer
- Minimum Standards for Human Habitation with Paul Halfmann
- MA Food Code and HACCP with Berger Food Safety Consulting
- Speaker Chris Herron

SAPHE 2.0 & Career Development

The Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community (SAPHE 2.0) Act, which was signed into law in 2024, establishes workforce standards, including, but not limited to, education and training standards for municipal and regional public health officials and staff; and expands access to professional development.

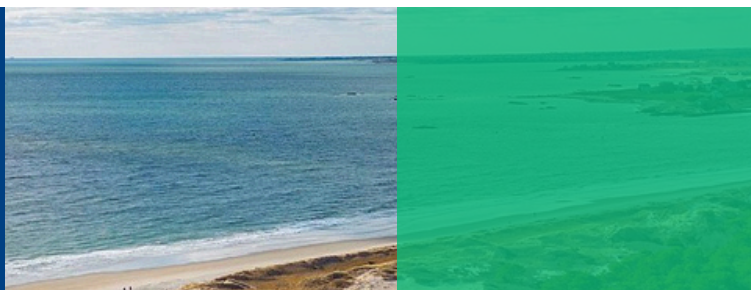
In accordance with SAPHE 2.0, SCPHC regional staff and local department staff members participated in many educational conferences, classes, seminars and training sessions in FY25, including but not limited to:

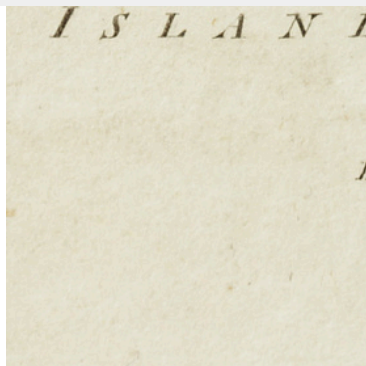
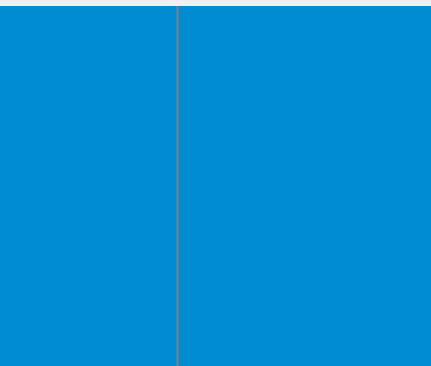
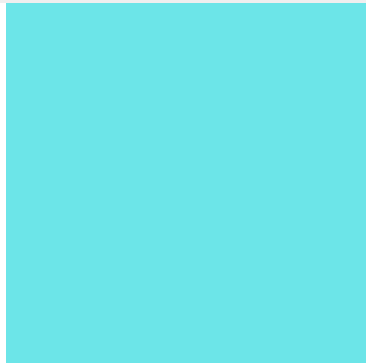
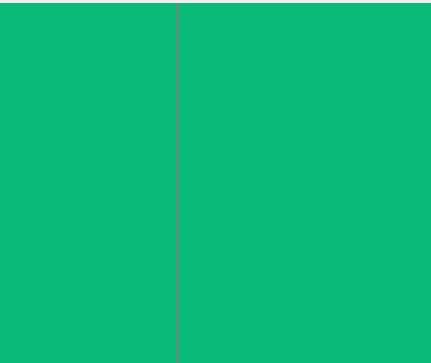
- MHOA Conference
- MHOA Green Burials Seminar
- MHOA/MDPH 2025 Spring Seminar
- Rat Explosion Educational Seminar
- MEHA Title 5 Conference
- MassRecycle Conference
- Title 5 Exam
- Tier 2 Training- Food
- Administrative Search Warrants
- Nuisance Control Abatement & Removal
- Public Health Law & Legal issues in MA
- Food Protection for Regulators
- Health Promotion & Health Equity
- Public Health Workforce Protection
- How to Hold a Public Hearing in MA
- Safety: Practical Strategies While Doing Field Work
- The 10 Essential Public Health Services in Action
- Food Microbiological Control Training: 12 Part Series
- Solid Waste & Recycling
- Bed Bugs: A Special Housing Topic
- Hoarding: A Special Housing Topic
- Mold: A Special Housing Topic



FY25 Highlights

- Created a website with the capacity to send out text and email alerts to subscribers.
- Streamlined the inspection request process.
- Installed 3 SAMboxes (boxes with Narcan and information about the MA Good Samaritan Law) in Westport.
- Facilitated 4 trainings and workshops with community partners.
- Attended numerous professional development trainings and conferences.
- Hosted Narcan trainings throughout the SCPHC.
- Digitized files in 3 communities.
- Successfully applied for the Reduce, Reuse, Repair Microgrant, the Massachusetts Air Sensor Grant, and the Stroke Awareness Grant.
- Installed 6 PurpleAir Sensors throughout Westport to measure air quality in environmental justice zones.
- Assisted with the creation of the Town of Westport Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Committee.
- Hosted vaccine clinics, blood pressure clinics, and stroke awareness events throughout the SCPHC.
- Completed the Foundational Public Health Services review.
- Built web pages to provide information to the public about Air Quality, Avian Influenza, Environmental Justice, Food Insecurity, Drought, Green Burials, Housing, Mental Health Resources, Poison Control, Shelters, Substance Use and Harm Reduction, Suicide Prevention, Tick and Mosquito Protection, and more!





Thank You!

We appreciate your support and look forward to more good things in FY26:

- Continued training opportunities and professional development
- 2 new SCPHC shared team members to increase capacity for inspections and community health
- Creation of a Hoarding Task Force for the SCPHC communities
- Emergency Preparedness communications and resources
- Increased access to Narcan
- New web pages added to the SCPHC site