

Connecticut H₂O Operator

A Newsletter for Certified Operators

The Connecticut Department of Public Health Drinking Water Section

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Swine Flu, Drinking Water and You

By: David Cooley, P.E., Supervising Sanitary Engineer, South Region

The recent outbreak of H1N1, or Swine Flu, should be a reminder to all public water systems and certified operators that a future pandemic is a certainty, not a possibility. The real question is “When will a pandemic occur?” and “How severe will it be?” Public water systems must continuously plan for a pandemic in order to keep critical operations and services running in the event of diminishing personnel, material and equipment resources. Estimates identify the possibility for an absentee rate of 30% to 40% due to those who are ill, those caring for ill persons, those caring for others such as children when schools are closed, and those who will be fearful of exposure. Continuity of business plans will become a necessity to guide public water systems through a prolonged emergency event, such as a pandemic. A pandemic will not be bias in selecting its victims, therefore any size drinking water utility can and will be affected. In fact, the smaller systems are even more susceptible to the impact of a pandemic. For instance, a company that contracts with thirty small public water systems to provide operator services and employs two staff members that are certified with the Department of Public Health would most likely lose at least one of its certified staff members to a pandemic for an extended period of time. Therefore, the thirty small public water systems would essentially lose 50% of their operations staff with the loss of one individual. The loss of one individual at a large utility with ten certified operators on staff would only equate to a 10% loss in personnel resources. The time is now to plan for the next pandemic event! For updates on the current H1N1 outbreak, please refer to the DPH’s webpage <http://www.ct.gov/dph/>; for information on continuity of business planning please refer to the DWS’s Security and Emergency Response webpage at www.ct.gov/dph/publicdrinkingwater.



Connecticut Department of Public Health

To Report a Water-Related Emergency...

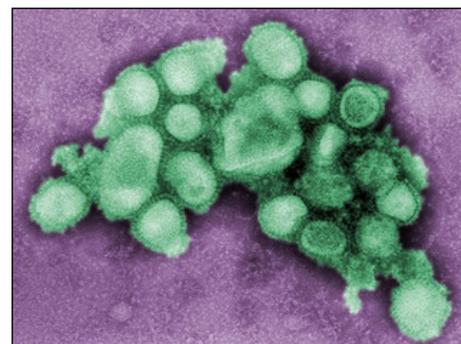
CALL (860) 509-7333
(M-F 8:30a.m.-4:30p.m.)

OR...

CALL (860) 509-8000
(After Hours)



The Center for Disease Control also has useful information on the H1N1 virus- visit their webpage at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>



“Drinking Water and Environmental Careers” Event is a Big Success!

The CT Department of Public Health (CT DPH), Drinking Water Section along with member agencies of the Connecticut Water Planning Council and the CT Section of the American Water Works Association hosted its third annual forum to increase the awareness of students, teachers, guidance counselors and other school officials about career opportunities in the drinking water and environmental fields. Mr. Jack Betkoski, Chairman of the Water Planning Council and Vice-Chairman of the CT Department of Public Utility Control, moderated the event.

The forum, held on April 22, 2009, emphasized future career opportunities in the drinking water and environmental arenas. Over 250 attendees were made aware of the impending shortage of workers in the drinking water and environmental industries. Eric Thornburg, CEO of Connecticut Water Company, returned as keynote speaker and described interesting and secure career opportunities. Betsy Wingfield of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) presented about environmental careers. Several students also spoke- one about recently graduating from Grasso Technical High School and becoming an operator for Groton Utilities and two others from Portland High School’s groundbreaking “Water and People” class. There were also exhibitor areas where students learned about water utilities, the type of jobs available and the education needed to enter these fields.

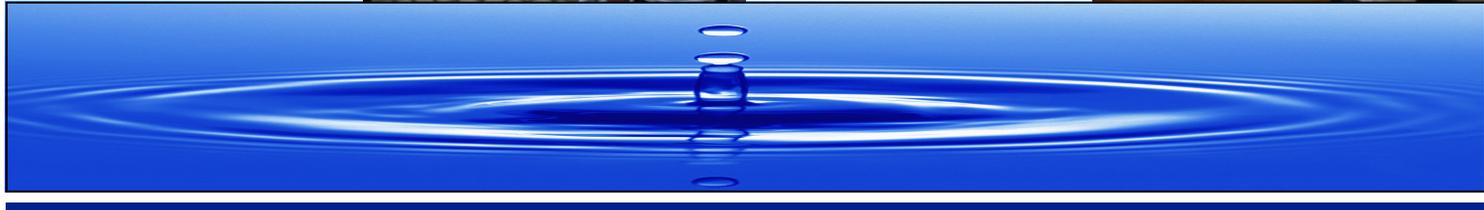
Deputy Commissioner Gyle presented awards to three worthy recipients. Tom Chaplik of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority received an award for his outstanding service in the creation and tireless championing of the Connecticut Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (<http://ctwarn.org/>). Deputy Commissioner Gyle also presented awards to two outstanding students, Taylor Kohnstam and Justin Rose, for receiving the highest scholastic averages in Portland High School’s innovative “Water and People” class.

The forum concluded with attendees viewing live demonstrations of the following:

- ◆ *Water main tapping by Connecticut’s All-Star Tapping Team*
- ◆ *Testing of a backflow device*
- ◆ *Water testing demonstration by the DPH Laboratory*
- ◆ *“Walter the Water Saver”*
- ◆ *CT DEP’s Mobile Lab and Geoprobe*

DEP’s Groundwater Model and Enviroscope were also on hand to educate students in regards to the environment.

The forum was a great success and the Department of Public Health thanks all who participated!



Lead and Copper Rule - Lead Tap Results Notification Requirement



By: Richard Iozzo, Environmental Analyst 2, Enforcement and Certification Unit

As a result of the 2007 short-term revisions of the Lead and Copper Rule, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has amended the public education requirements, and added new notification requirements to CFR 141.85(d). This addition requires all Community and Non Transient Non Community (NTNC) public water systems to provide consumers who occupy homes or buildings that are part of the utilities monitoring program with the sample results when their drinking water is tested for lead (including those who do not receive water bills). In addition to the sample results, the notifications will include an explanation of potential health risks associated with lead in drinking water, methods for reducing risks, contact information for the utility, and the 90th percentile lead level for the most recently completed compliance monitoring period reported to the State. The system will be required to provide notification within 30 days of when the system learns of the results. This new requirement must be implemented regardless of an Action Level exceedance or in addition to lead educational materials where an exceedance has occurred. Community and NTNC public water systems are also required to submit a sample copy of the notification and certification to the Department of Public Health within 3 months following the end of the monitoring period. Templates for the notifications and certification are available upon request.

Picture Quiz

Question:

Sometimes the overarching issue with a well is not found in the “Water Supply Wells and Springs” Section (19-13-B51) of the Public Health Code. The situation pictured above clearly shows a significant and immediate safety issue. What other health code requirements are not met?

Answer:

Section 19-13-B51(f)(b): “The casing or side walls of a dug well shall be constructed of watertight concrete at least four inches thick to a depth of at least ten feet below the ground surface...” It would be difficult to argue that this dug well is watertight to 10 feet below grade. Keeping mice out of these types of old dug wells can also be difficult since the little critters are afforded many opportunities to enter the well between the loosely laid rocks and even when there is a standing structure over the well, mice can usually easily enter through vents or crack in the framing or siding (after all they only need a dime-size hole to enter).

Section 19-13-B51g: “The cover of the dug well shall be made of substantial reinforced concrete at least four inches thick. Other material approved by the commissioner of health may be used. It shall be of sufficient diameter to overlap the casing or side walls by at least two inches. A tight joint shall be provided between the casing and cover. ...” Clearly cover requirements are not met for this well. For a large diameter well such as this one, typically the cover would feature a curbed manhole since the cover slab cannot be readily be removed- this is allowed in this section of the code.



An Important Reminder for Systems that Disinfect and Serve Less than 50,000 People

The Drinking Water Section wishes to remind public water systems of important deadlines coming up in regards to conducting an Initial Distribution System Evaluation in the Stage 2 Disinfection By-Products (DBP) Rule in 2009 and 2010. More information including monitoring requirements for Haloacetic Acids and Total Trihalomethanes can be obtained in the document at this link:

[Stage 2 DBP Rule IDSE Report Reminder for Schedule 3 & 4 Systems](#)

Don't forget about the two remaining sessions of the "Basic Class for all Water Operators"! The dates and locations are as follows:

**September 3 and 9, 2009 in Newington, CT
December 9 and 10, 2009 in Berlin, CT**

*Classes are free and the Training Contact Hours can be applied to any operator certification type.
Registration conducted through TrainConnecticut as noted below.*

Training Registration Information



All training registrations must be completed on the Training Finder Real-time Affiliate Integrated Network (TRAIN). TRAIN is a training resource for professionals who protect the public's health. Visit the TRAIN web site, <https://ct.train.org/DesktopShell.aspx> to create a free user account and view upcoming certified operator events.

Be sure to check out the DWS's web site, www.ct.gov/dph, for the latest information on trainings, events, and more!

If you have any questions or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Vicky Carrier via email at vicky.carrier@ct.gov.

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