

**TOWN OF LYNDON HEALTH OFFICER REPORT
2012**

Respectfully submitted by Lorraine C. Matteis
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Every three years, the town select board must recommend a Town Health Officer for appointment. The Town completes the Recommendation Form and the Oath/Affirmation for THO's and returns these to the Vermont Department of Health. Health Officers are appointed by the Commissioner and are sent a certificate by the Vermont Department of Health. It is in the authority of the Town Health Officer to hear complaints and investigate/intermediate those complaints of public health hazards. Public health hazards are defined in law [18 VSA : 2 (9)] "...potential harm to the public health by virtue of any condition or any biological, chemical, or physical agent." Furthermore, your Town Health Officer *may* conduct inspections on rental housing. We strive to work with property owners toward voluntary understanding of Rental Housing Health Codes and compliance with such codes.

Some issues that come to the attention of the Town Health Officer may relate to sanitation (sink access, hot water, garbage, water supply, flush toilet, etc.), sewage and 'garbage' disposal, insect and rodent infestation, adequate heating and ventilation systems, and other public health issues. There are times when the Health Officer may need to notify the fire marshal other safety departments in the state. And there are times when a complaint can result in "no violation". Many factors are considered in determining whether a complaint is in fact a public health hazard.

It is the responsibility of the Town Health Officer to keep records of reported dog bites in his/her jurisdiction. These are kept for historical reference and have substantially declined with the enforcement of town dog licensing requirements. We regularly receive rental housing health complaints and we are vigilant to avoid becoming involved in tenant/landlord issues. In Lyndon, the Select Board, Municipal Administrator and Town Health Officer work closely with clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each office.

The Vermont Department of Health has a thorough website with much information regarding public health, rules and regulations, and division programs. That address is: <http://www.healthyvermonters.info>. Another good resource in the state is: <http://healthvermont.gov>. Of course, I am available to answer questions and provide support to the extent of the Health Officers' jurisdiction. Thank you for the opportunity to serve this community these past years.

Lorraine C. Matteis