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Around the State/Supporters
Growing a Better Future

In his 2004 bestseller, “The Great Influenza,” author John M. Barry tells the story of America’s response to the ‘Spanish’ flu epidemic that swept the nation—and the world—in 1918. As America mobilized to enter World War I, the most lethal virus in history appeared in an army training camp in Kansas. It incubated in troops moving east for deployment. It then exploded in American cities and towns. It crossed the ocean on troop ships. And, before it burned itself out, it claimed as many as 100 million lives around the world. It killed more people in 24 months than AIDS killed in 24 years, more in a year than the Black Death killed in a century.

The book also talks about how, during this period, American medicine, for the first time, embraced the scientific method. And it demonstrates the development of modern Public Health in the U.S., as a science and as a service.

Today, public health and growth are cornerstones of local government. Environmental health, nutrition, sanitation, community health, behavioral health, mental health, and occupational safety and health continue to be relevant topics as citizens of the Garden State are faced with challenges in finding paths to a better future. Concentrated efforts throughout the state are aimed toward creating healthy environments cleansed of contaminants and safeguarded for children, drug-free communities that have successfully overcome an epidemic-level opioid crisis, and a successfully employed next generation who are committed to the growth of their communities as well as themselves.

Our League President, Mayor Albert Kelly of Bridgeton, has identified community health and growth as points of emphasis for the League’s efforts this year. Resolving issues ranging from lead in homes and water sources and ending food deserts to the successful employment and retention of millennial workers in municipal offices and beyond are in the forefront of his and many municipal leaders’ minds.

In this issue of the magazine, we highlight some stellar municipal initiatives, launched in cooperation with research institutions, with state departments, and with non-profit and community-based agencies. These efforts will benefit today’s young generation as well as all of the members of the society they will inherit.

Achieving those goals may be the life’s work of you and many of your fellow municipal officials now and into the future, with some genuine success stories in the making happening in communities today. We hope to share those stories with your peers and help you in your efforts to succeed by providing legislative support, the latest local, state, and national information, and inspirational ideas for the future.

Michael Darcy
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What our graduates say:

“Being in a cohort, made us supportive of one another and assisted us with staying on top of key assignments. We became a family! We encouraged each other during the rough times, family incidents, tough assignments, and ensured we all graduated on time.”

— Chante’, 2015 graduate

“In addition to the knowledge and skills attained from the challenging coursework, I was able to approach my transition into a leadership role in government with greater confidence and a more informed perspective.”

— Mike, 2013 graduate
Childhood lead exposure remains an important public health challenge for New Jersey as well as the nation. The state, local health officials, and health care providers have created a strong foundation to combat lead and are building on this progress to further safeguard our children’s health.

Health officials and providers, through lead education and screening efforts, have helped the state and public health officials make strides in reducing the impact of lead on New Jersey’s children. Over the past 20 years, screening for lead exposure has increased 20-fold and the number of children found with elevated lead levels has plummeted. However, there is no safe level of lead in children.

Lead can disrupt the normal growth and development of a child’s brain and central nervous system. The normal behavior of young children, crawling, exploring, teething, and putting objects in their mouths can expose them to lead present in their environment. Exposure to lead, even at relatively low levels, is associated with decreased hearing, lower intelligence, hyperactivity, attention deficits, and developmental delays that may make learning harder.

Starting with Screening

New Jersey is one of 17 states that require universal lead screening of all children at ages 1 and 2. Other states target screening only to children at increased risk for lead exposure. New Jersey’s approach is far more protective. Primary care providers and local health departments are working hard to ensure children are screened. Ninety-five percent of children had at least one blood lead test before reaching 6 years of age.
State law also requires local boards of health to investigate all reported cases of elevated blood lead levels and to order the abatement of all lead hazards identified. The local board of health arranges for a home visit by a public health nurse to educate the parent or guardian about how to reduce elevated levels and steps to protect the child from further exposure. The public health nurse also provides ongoing case management services to assist the family, including receiving follow-up testing, medical treatment, and social services that may be necessary to address the effects of the child’s exposure to lead.

**HOT ZONES**

The Department tracks data on elevated blood lead levels and produces annual reports that provide data by county and for large municipalities. The department also shares data from Healthy People 2010 and Healthy New Jersey 2020. Those reports can be found at nj.gov/health/childhoodlead.

The Department and its partners are taking several steps to combat lead in our state. The Department of Health is proposing regulatory changes to strengthen New Jersey’s standard for intervening with education, case management, home visits, and other steps as appropriate to address health hazards caused by lead exposure and bring children’s blood lead levels down below the level of concern at the earliest possible time.

**Paint and other lead sources**

Lead paint in homes remains the largest contributor to elevated lead levels in children. Recognizing that, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs selected eight nonprofit organizations in the fall of 2016 as part of a $10 million pilot program to identify and remediate lead-based paint hazards in low- and moderate-income households, particularly where children and pregnant women risk permanent harm to their health.

The pilot program focuses on areas of the state with the highest level of need including Camden, East Orange, Elizabeth, Irvington, Jersey City, Newark, Passaic, Paterson, Plainfield, and Trenton. The nonprofits receiving funding are: PACO, Inc.; La Casa de Don Pedro; ISLES; PRAB, Inc.; PROCEED; Community Affairs and Resource Center; Greater Bergen Community Action; and the Saint Joseph’s Carpenter Society.

New Jersey’s diverse population, which is more than 20% foreign born, is at higher risk of exposure to lead hazards through non-paint sources of lead such as cosmetics, pottery, toys, jewelry, candy, spices, and other foreign products.”

While the primary source of lead exposure for children is lead-based paint in the home, a report Lead and Children, featured in Canadian Family Physician (ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2902938) notes that 30% of exposures come from other sources.

Last year, the problem of aging infrastructure and its contribution to elevated lead levels in children was in
Lead Exposure

the spotlight. Many schools in the state tested positive for increased levels of lead in their water.
Elevated lead in water alone does not necessarily lead to an increase in blood lead levels, however, lead in water, combined with other environmental exposures, can lead to elevated blood lead levels in children.

In response, Gov. Chris Christie directed the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) to address concerns about elevated lead levels in school water systems by strengthening regulations that already require the provision of safe drinking water to mandate lead hazard water testing in schools. On July 13, 2016, the State Board of Education adopted regulations regarding testing for lead in drinking water in public schools throughout New Jersey.

There are other lead sources beyond paint and water, such as imported goods. New Jersey’s diverse population,

#kNOwLEAD

Protect your child from lead exposure.
Know the sources of lead contamination:

**Lead based paint**
If your house was built before 1978

**Imported goods**
Some imported goods such as toys, cosmetics, candy, and spices

**Herbal remedies**
Some herbal remedies and folk medicines

**Leaded pipes**
Old water pipes with lead

**Ceramic pottery**
Lead has long been used in ceramic ware in glazes

Get your child tested at ages 1 & 2, and get the facts at nj.gov/health/childhoodlead or follow #kNOwLEAD

Community Campaign

To increase awareness of all lead hazards, the Department launched an education campaign in the fall of 2016 to ensure that the public understands not only that the threat of lead remains, but the steps everyone can take to safeguard their family’s health. The campaign includes corner store advertising in English and Spanish and bus ads in the most affected counties.

Campaign materials, in English, Spanish, and Hindi, are downloadable on the Department’s website at nj.gov/health/childhoodlead.

We hope that you will use these materials to educate your community of the dangers of lead and inform families about nontraditional sources of lead.

Please also follow the New Jersey Department of Health at twitter.com/NJDeptoFHealth and on Facebook at facebook.com/NJDeptoFHealth.

which is more than 20% foreign born, is at higher risk of exposure to lead hazards through non-paint sources of lead such as cosmetics, pottery, toys, jewelry, candy, spices, and other foreign products. These goods can be ingested or inhaled by children when traveling outside the United States or when they are imported from other countries.

Combating lead is a key priority of the Department and we look forward to working with local leaders to better protect New Jersey’s children.

New Jersey has made significant strides in reducing the number of children affected by lead, however there is still a significant amount of work that needs to be done. Collaboration among state and local government and health-care providers will pave the way for continued success in protecting our children from lead exposure.
The Timeless Challenges of Local Government

The health and welfare of the community is the basis for local governance. That’s timeless...and challenging. Just as New Jersey’s communities today face challenges in economic matters such as jobs and housing as well as social matters such as healthy water and plentiful food supply, so too was the struggle ongoing in the 1930s resulting from the Depression. Communities and their residents were re-learning ways to operate and working toward a better future with limited resources.

This month, we focus on Community Health and Growth and share thoughts on attracting the next generation to careers in public service and beyond. As these individuals grow up and into their adult professions, municipalities have the opportunity to teach them the importance—and the satisfaction—of working in and for their hometowns.

While in the 1930s community recreation was used to occupy the large number of unemployed young people, today’s communities are creating programs in which youth can intern and volunteer for insightful experiences that provide more than basic summer fun.

From opioid addiction to lead hazards, we also look at the health crises impacting our youngest citizens and our communities at large. We continue to take aim at society’s ills and help municipalities help their citizens to flourish.

Time Capsule: 1930-1940

Summer Camps
During the past year our own Health Department extensively surveyed 84 summer camps, and information at hand places us in an advantageous position to speak more authoritatively on the health questions involved. Fundamentals of a desirable camp must assure a source of water supply which is free from pollution, sanitary disposal of human wastes, refuse, and debris; food-handlers, who are healthy, and a camp routine calculated to restore rather than dissipate energy.

—J. Lynn Mahaffey, M.D., Director, State Department of Health
June 1936

Fighting the Killer Drug
Police authorities have been harassed in recent years by the nefarious trade in marihuana—a hemp leaf from which the vicious “reefer” cigarettes are made and frequently peddled among high school students...Marihuana is hashish—the killer drug... Its deplorable record includes many instances of murder and other crimes of violence, especially among young people...As an aid to police officials in identifying and stamping out this illicit crop our department of seed analysis last year furnished specimen plants to the New Jersey State Police. In co-operation with the Federal, state, and municipal law-enforcement agencies we have furnished speakers at police institutes and training schools as well as before civic clubs, parent-teacher organizations and similar groups. During the first year of the campaign, more than 30 such informational talks were given, eight potted plants and a large quantity of pressed specimens and photographs were distributed in aid for identifying the “Public Enemy No. 1.”

—William H. Martin, Dean and Director, NJ College of Agriculture and Experiment Station
November 1939

The Economy of Planned Recreation
It surprises me that some municipalities in this and other states have sought to economize at this time by making drastic cuts in their appropriations for recreation. In Bloomfield we are very clear that the “human services” of the government among which recreation is important, should be the last to suffer retrenchment programs.

—Charles H. Demarest, Mayor, Bloomfield
January 1933
The N.J. Board of Public Utilities (Board) has advanced the development of town center microgrids by opening the first 60-day application window on Jan. 25 for the Town Center Distributed Energy Resources Microgrid Feasibility Study Incentive Program (Program) and inviting qualified state or local government entities to apply for incentives of up to $200,000 to cover the expense of a feasibility study.

Town Center Distributed Energy Resources (TCDER) microgrids are capable of providing on-site power to connected critical facilities within a local area or town center setting during electric grid outages. Since New Jersey suffered devastating damage from the impacts of Superstorm Sandy, the Christie Administration has made it a priority to improve energy resiliency and emergency preparedness and response. Therefore, the Administration’s Energy Master Plan (EMP) Update, released in December 2015, consists of a new section addressing the high priority areas of protecting critical energy infrastructure, improving the electric companies’ emergency preparedness and response, increasing the use of microgrid technologies and applications for distributed energy resources (DER) and creating long-term financing for resiliency measures.

“This is an exciting step in implementing the Christie Administration’s EMP policies supporting the development of town center microgrid systems,” said Richard S. Mroz, President, N.J. Board of Public Utilities. “These onsite powerhouses will provide communities with the ability to operate critical facilities, such as government buildings, police and fire operations, hospitals and shelters, independently of the grid.”

The Board established a Program budget of $1 million to incentivize the preparation of feasibility studies, which is expected to fund five to 12 proposed studies. Initial incentives are capped at $200,000. The Program will be managed in two phases; first, the feasibility study, then selected applicants will move to the detailed engineering design phase.

This current application window is only for the first phase of incentivizing feasibility studies. To apply for a feasibility study incentive:

- A local government or state agency must be the applicant.
- The applicant must be a government entity that owns or manages critical facilities.
- The BPU seeks applicants which demonstrate a high degree of planning and ability to implement every aspect of a microgrid proposal.
- The Program is initially open to potential TCDER microgrids identified by the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) in its report of potential microgrids within FEMA’s nine Superstorm Sandy disaster designated counties or similar Town Centers which satisfy the screening criteria as set forth in the NJIT Report.

Through the Program, the Board will establish statewide microgrid policy for connecting multiple customers across multiple rights of ways (ROW) that can include both electric and thermal energy. The focus in this initial program is on critical facilities at the local level classified as:

- A public facility, including any federal, state, county, or municipal facility,
- A non-profit and/or private facility, including any hospital, water/wastewater treatment facility, school, multifamily building, that could serve as a shelter during a power outage.

The Program is exclusively intended for projects that include multiple critical facility customers in a single municipality developed as a TCDER microgrid. The TCDER microgrid must have a nucleus of critical buildings and offer emergency energy services under “dark sky” conditions, as well as operate in a cost effective manner during typical “blue sky” conditions. Applicants must demonstrate an ability to incorporate multiple critical facility stakeholders into the TCDER microgrid.

To view the full Microgrid Report please visit nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/announcements/pdf/20161130micro.pdf
Attention Municipal Clerks!

The League is conducting its biannual compilation of wages and salaries. Clerks, please respond to survey requests and help us gather this data!

On average the online survey takes 9 minutes to complete. If you do not have time to finish the survey in one sitting, there is an option to save your progress and return later. When choosing the “Save Page and Continue Later” option, an email will be sent to you from QuestionPro containing a link to re-enter the survey. Be sure to check your spam box and save this email for future use.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in making this survey possible! Questions? Contact Taran B. Samhammer at tsamhammer@njsalom.org or 609-695-3481, Ext. 124.
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