



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 18, 2014
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Communicable Disease and Health Hazard Investigations Semi-Annual Report, January 1, 2014-June 30, 2014 - BOH14029 (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Michelle Baird (905) 546-2424, Ext.3529 Ashley Vanderlaan (905) 546-2424, Ext.4718
SUBMITTED BY:	Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

This report fulfils the Board of Health (BOH) policy on communication between the Medical Officer of Health and the BOH, as outlined in Report PH06038.

Background Information:

This is a summary report covering the period from January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014 (Q1 & Q2, 2014). The Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) are the guidelines for the provision of mandatory health programs and services for Boards of Health in Ontario. Investigations completed by program areas for Infectious Diseases and Environmental Health in the OPHS are the focus for this report. These program areas are:

Infectious Diseases

Includes Reportable Diseases under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)*:

- Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control
- Rabies Prevention and Control

- Sexual Health, Sexually Transmitted Infections, and Blood-borne Infections (including HIV)
- Tuberculosis Prevention and Control
- Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Environmental Health

- Food Safety
- Safe Water
- Health Hazard Prevention and Management
- Vector borne Diseases Control
- Tobacco Control

Reportable Disease cases are reported on individuals who reside in the City of Hamilton at the time of their diagnosis. The information in Appendix A has been extracted from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) database and are subject to change due to case follow-up procedures and/or delayed diagnosis.

Q1 & Q2 (2014) Program Highlights – Infectious Diseases

Measles Outbreak

In March 2014, an outbreak was declared in Hamilton when three cases of red measles were identified. The first case was a Hamilton resident who acquired the disease abroad. The other two cases acquired measles from the first case (one Halton case; one Hamilton case). In response, Public Health Services (PHS) activated its Incident Management System for 11 days; at which time, 46 staff was temporarily re-assigned from their official roles to support measles contact management. During this outbreak, PHS investigated 285 Hamilton contacts. Of these contacts, the immunization status was unknown or not up-to-date for one in five individuals. Any susceptible contacts associated with a health care, day care or school setting were excluded from these places until their immunity was proven, or enough time had passed to determine they were not a case.

Gastrointestinal Illness Outbreak

In June 2014, an outbreak investigation was initiated after PHS was notified of reports of vomiting and diarrhea among individuals attending an elementary school event. A total of 43 individuals were interviewed and of these, 10 cases reported having experienced gastrointestinal illness since the event. Based on available evidence, viral gastroenteritis (such as norovirus) was suspected as the cause of illness. This virus can be spread directly from person-to-person, and indirectly from contaminated food or

water. An analysis indicated that the event cake was the most likely source of illness, but it was not possible to determine whether the cake was contaminated while being made or by a sick individual during the event. PHS became aware that the event's cake maker's home-base operation was not in compliance with the Food Premises Regulation, Reg. 562; and was served an Order under the *HPPA* to cease production. Since this time, PHS staff has followed up to ensure compliance with the Order.

The results of the outbreak investigation were communicated to the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, the event establishment and the cake maker. A letter explaining the outbreak findings was mailed to attendees and persons who had been interviewed by PHS staff.

HOPE Program

In May 2014, the Harm Reduction program launched the HOPE program (Hamilton Overdose Prevention and Education). This program trains people who use opioids, along with their families and friends, to administer naloxone in the event of an opioid overdose. Naloxone is a drug that can immediately, though temporarily; reverse an opioid-related drug overdose. This buys time for emergency medical services to reach a person who is overdosing.

In the first two months of the program, 29 people who use opioids and 20 family members and friends, were trained to administer naloxone. So far, two people have given naloxone to reverse opioid-related overdoses.

Needle Pick-Up

The Community Points program, in partnership with The AIDS Network, was developed in response to community demand for injection drug equipment clean-up in public spaces, private property and other areas where the City of Hamilton is restricted from providing scheduled and on-call garbage collection service. This program has garnered support from community partners and neighborhood associations throughout downtown Hamilton. In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, this harm reduction program has kept the community safe by successfully:

- Retrieving over **6,400** discarded needles
- Addressing **20** service calls
- Visiting **40** hot spots
- Retrieving safer injection materials, such as water ampules, cookers and filters
- Distributing almost **30** sharps containers

Q1 & Q2 (2014) Program Highlights - Environmental Health

Translation of Food Handler Training Materials

The Food Safety Program is working on translating the Food Handler Training Manual and exams into additional languages. The limited availability of translated materials is a barrier for those whose home language is not English.

The Food Safety program is working with a Determinants of Health Nurse to determine what resources are available across the province. As a cost saving measure, these existing resources will be considered before PHS decides to translate the manuals and exams by an external translator.

Clean Air Hamilton Update

In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, the Health Hazards program continued to address initiatives identified by the Air Quality Task Force, formed under Clean Air Hamilton (CAH). These initiatives included:

- Preparation for an air shed modelling project
- A review of the City's Streets By-law
- Preparation of the CAH 2013 Annual Report

In addition to these initiatives, staff promoted the Air Quality Health Index tool to at-risk community residents through in-person information sessions and developed project plans to procure, deliver and operate two new air monitoring stations in East Hamilton (Ward 5), beginning in Q4 of 2014.

Water Well Contamination

In March 2014, the Safe Water program investigated a local private water well that was heavily contaminated with bacteria. It was suspected that the well may have been contaminated when cattle manure was inappropriately spread onto nearby fields.

As a result, the occupants of the house vacated the premise until an alternate water supply was provided and the plumbing system disinfected, re-tested and found to be free of E. coli bacteria. The Safe Water program provided water sampling kits to nearby residents and strongly recommended well water testing. Due to this action, 7 out of 10 residences submitted water samples for testing and about half of these samples were positive for total coliform and/or E.coli bacteria.

As a result of this incident, the Safe Water program has obtained the locations of all large manure spreading operations in Hamilton and is assessing the well water quality near these locations.

Freelton Boil Water Advisory

On May 28 2014, PHS issued a boil water advisory for the Freelton Municipal Drinking Water System after receiving laboratory test results that showed bacterial contamination. Follow-up sampling by the City’s Water department indicated the contamination was limited to a short piece of plumbing where water samples are collected from the water tower. As a result, the piping was replaced with a new pipe. This advisory was issued to inform users of the Freelton Municipal Drinking Water System and to take precautionary measures until the advisory was lifted.

Tobacco Enforcement

In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, Tobacco Enforcement was successful in the following actions:

Provincial Legislation/Municipal By-law	Action	#
Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA)	Inspection/enforcement checks for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco Vendors • Schools • Public Places • Work Places 	1062
Provincial Offences Act	Charges issued for non-compliance with the SFOA. This includes selling tobacco products to anyone under 19 years of age, retail display violations, smoking occurring in prohibited public places and workplaces. 100% conviction rate for cases appearing before the court.	61
SFOA, Section 3: Selling or Supplying to persons under the age of 19	Automatic Prohibition Orders issued and enforced against tobacco product retailers who have 2 or more registered convictions for non-compliance with the SFOA, Section 3	4
Automatic Prohibition Order Applications	Prepared by PHS and submitted to the Ministry in Q2. Currently pending review and approval	10
City of Hamilton PHS’ By-law 11-080: Prohibiting Smoking within City Parks and Recreation Properties	Proactive inspections/enforcement checks	36

Provincial Offences Act	Charges issued for non-compliance with By-law 11-080 (resulting from proactive <i>and</i> complaint-based enforcement)	37
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<p>City of Hamilton PHS is exceeding the MOHLTC target of 90% for:</p> <p>Accountability Agreement Indicator #11 (% of tobacco vendors in compliance with youth access legislation at the time of last inspection);</p> <p>With a compliance rate of 94%</p>
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The 2014 festival and events season has witnessed increased cooperation and compliance from festival and event organizers. Promotion of the City's By-law #11-080, as well as the use of temporary festival and events signs from PHS, has resulted in greater levels of compliance.

APPENDICES

Appendix A to Report BOH14029 – Infectious Disease and Environmental Health Report: Q1 & Q2 2014