



# Clinton County Health Department

133 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, New York 12901-2926

**“Working Together for a Healthier Community”**

[www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org)



**Public Health**  
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**Administration Division**

**Phone: (518) 565-4840**

**Fax: (518) 565-4717**

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## News Release

Date: January 15, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Health Benefits of Proposed Tobacco Legislation Lauded

Plattsburgh, NY. The Clinton County Health Department foresees significant health benefits associated with Governor Cuomo’s proposed legislation to curb the use of tobacco and e-cigarette products.

“Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death in New York State, even after years of education and policy changes,” states Karen Derusha, Supervising Public Health Educator at the Clinton County Health Department. According to Ms. Derusha, the addictive component in tobacco, which is also found in most electronic cigarette products, leads those who smoke or use other nicotine containing products to continue use, even though the harms associated with them are well documented. “That’s why Governor Cuomo’s proposed legislation to raise the age of sale of tobacco products from 18 to 21 is being so well received in the Public Health community” she adds. She cites well known statistics, pointing out that approximately 96% of smokers begin before the age of 21; and that smokers frequently transition from experimentation to addiction between the ages of 18 and 21.

“The news is especially good for our area”, according to Ms. Derusha “While smoking rates in New York State have dropped, Clinton County and the North Country region have some of the highest smoking rates in the state. Added to that, the number of young people who are vaping, here and across the nation has exploded”. Vaping is the term used to describe the use of an electronic device to heat and inhale substances which very often contain nicotine. In New York State, use of e-cigarettes among youth 18 and under doubled between 2014 and 2016 (from 10.5 to 20.6). Statistics from the New York State Health Department’s Bureau of Tobacco Control put the vaping rate in New York State for all ages at twenty-seven percent (27%).

Public Health advocates believe that raising the age of sale will not only protect those between the ages of 18 and 21, but will also have an impact on access to tobacco products for younger teens. Youth often report that they get cigarettes from friends who are old enough to purchase under the current law. “Having friends who are 18 may be common for some younger teens, but they are less likely to associate closely and routinely with people over 21” stated Ms. Derusha.

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

The Health Department applauds other measures within the Governor’s proposed legislation. “As more and more pharmacies are expanding their role in the delivery of health care in our communities, ending the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies sends a positive health message. Tobacco products have no place in a health promotion setting” states Ms. Derusha. Health advocates have been in favor of the other components of the Governor’s legislation for many years. Tobacco display restrictions, banning flavored products, restricting discount strategies that reduce the effectiveness of high excise taxes, and licensing of sales, are all strategies that the health community has cited as effective in reducing the number of young people who initiate tobacco use. “Fewer tobacco users equates to fewer tobacco related deaths over time and that’s a good thing” stated Ms. Derusha.

**About the Clinton County Health Department:**

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## News Release

Date: January 29, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Health Assessment Survey

#### Residents asked to complete survey about health issues affecting Clinton County

Through the end of February, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) and the UVM Health Network-CVPH (UVHN-CVPH) are asking residents what they see as the most pressing health concerns in our community. Residents can take part by responding to the survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/CHA2019](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CHA2019).

The survey is one of the first steps in the year-long Community Health Assessment process. CCHD and UVHN-CVPH undertake a community health assessment every few years. For the past two assessments, residents have been asked for their input through a community survey. The 2019 survey asks residents to weigh in on health challenges for themselves and their families as well as what they see as health issues in the community.

“The resident feedback received in 2016 has been instrumental to community health improvement over the past few years. Considering taking the survey is one of the easiest ways to participate in the process, we increased our goal this time to collect 2,000 surveys from residents,” states Molly Flynn, Senior Public Health Educator in the Division of Health Planning and Promotion for the Clinton County Health Department.

The survey is anonymous and takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. It is available online and can be completed on a computer, tablet or phone. Residents can find the link to the survey on the Clinton County Health Department’s Facebook and Twitter pages or by looking for the news release on the Health Department website at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org). Paper copies of the survey are also available for those without access to the internet.

Flynn adds, “This is a chance for our community to have a voice in the process. Input will help shape our goals for future community health initiatives.” Results will be shared back directly to the community this summer by CCHD and will be used to help identify health priorities in the 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan.

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## News Release

Date: March 5, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department Rabies Vaccination Clinic

On **April 2, 2019**, the Clinton County Health Department is hosting a **free** Rabies Vaccination Clinic for dogs, cats, and ferrets. New York State law requires pets to have their first rabies vaccination by 4 months of age. Pets may be vaccinated as early as 3 months of age.

The event will be held from **6pm to 8:30pm** at the **City of Plattsburgh Department of Public Works building located at 215 Idaho Ave, Plattsburgh, NY**. Interested residents should bring their pets on a leash or in a secure carrier. Pets that have received a previous rabies vaccination are eligible to receive a three-year certificate. Please bring your pet’s most recent rabies vaccination records (previous certificate), otherwise, a one-year certificate will be provided.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that can affect all mammals, including humans and pets. Rabies is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating your pets. As a precaution, never pick up wildlife, including stray animals, and wear thick protective gloves if you must handle these animals. If you are bitten (teeth breaking the skin) by an animal, including domestic animals, seek medical attention and notify the Clinton County Health Department.

“This is a great opportunity to save your pet’s life and prevent the spread of rabies”, states Judy Ross, Principal Sanitarian for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety. “Don’t miss this chance.” Donations are accepted and appreciated. The Department will hold six (6) additional Rabies Vaccination Clinics in 2019. Dates will be posted on the Health Department’s website at [www.clintonhealth.org/rabiesclinics](http://www.clintonhealth.org/rabiesclinics). Additional information about rabies can be found on this web page and at <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>. Follow Clinton County Health Department on Social Media to receive notice of upcoming clinics dates and locations.

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## News Release

Date: March 11, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Tobacco Use and Vaping Community Forum

**Plattsburgh, March 10, 2018.** In response to rising community concern, the *Clinton County Tobacco Use Reduction Task Force* has added information on vaping to a presentation about the health benefits of raising the age of sale for tobacco products. ***Tobacco Use and Vaping: Policy Solutions to Protect Youth Health*** will take place at 4:30 PM on Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at the Government Center Meeting Room, 137 Margaret St., Plattsburgh.

The one hour session will address the public health concerns associated with tobacco use and vaping; trends in the use of these products; and tactics employed by the tobacco and vape industries to entice youth. Health care providers, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders will share their perspectives. The *Tobacco Use Reduction Task Force* will present policy solutions to reduce youth initiation of tobacco use.

“Smoking is still the primary cause of preventable death in New York State, claiming over 26,000 lives each year,” states Karen Derusha, a supervising public health educator, who represents Clinton County Health Department on the Task Force. “The adult smoking rate in Clinton County is currently 24.7%, a full 10 points higher than the State average of 14.2%.” She also notes that vaping rates among youth in New York State doubled between 2014 and 2016. “We are witnessing a whole new generation of young people addicted to nicotine and likely to suffer the health harms associated with the use of these products.”

Vaping is the term used to describe the use of electronic devices to inhale nicotine and other substances. Vaping is relatively new but use of these electronic devices has exploded in the last few years. According to Dana Bushey Isabella, program director for *Tobacco Free Clinton Franklin and Essex* also known as *Tobacco Free CFE*, “These vaping products are addicting youth, exposing them to harmful chemicals, and leading to a rise in tobacco use rates for the first time in since 2014. Communities have the power to control the time, manner and placement of tobacco and vaping products at the local level. Policies for the retail environment, outdoor spaces and multi-unit housing de-normalize highly addictive products.”

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Nicotine, the addictive ingredient in tobacco, is a component of most vaping products. “Youth who vape are becoming addicted to nicotine. With that addiction, we are concerned about a future reversal of the downward trend in youth smoking.” Ms. Bushey Isabella warns,

One strategy to reduce the potential harms associated with tobacco use and vaping that has gained traction across the nation and in other parts of New York State is an effort to raise the minimum age of sale for tobacco products, including e-cigarettes from 18 to 21. Studies show that 96% of smokers start using tobacco products before the age of 21. Raising the legal age of sale for tobacco products, has the potential to lower the rate of tobacco use by 12% resulting in over 200,000 fewer premature deaths nationwide.

New York State is considering *T-21* as part of the current budget process. If the legislation passes, the *Tobacco Use Reduction Task Force* will help to educate the public about its implementation. If the State does not sign *T-21* into law, health advocates will continue to educate on its health benefits, knowing that local legislation is a viable alternative. Essex County passed a *T-21* law that went into effect in January. “That could be done in Clinton County too,” noted Ms. Derusha and Ms. Bushey Isabella.

### **About the Clinton County Tobacco Use Reduction Taskforce**

**The *Clinton County Tobacco Use Reduction Taskforce* is part of a larger regional effort led by the *Adirondack Health Institute’s Population Health Improvement Project*. The *Task Force* includes representatives of Clinton County Health Department, Tobacco Free CFE & Reality Check, Healthy Heart Network, and University of Vermont – CVPH Health Network.**

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## News Release

Date: April 2, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Public Health Week Highlights Rural Health

**Plattsburgh, April 2, 2019.** On Wednesday, as part of *National Public Health Week*, a team from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will be in Plattsburgh. They will meet with staff of the Clinton County Health Department's Healthy Neighborhood Program (HNP). During their visit, they will join HNP staff on a routine home visit to assess and address health and safety concerns.

"National Public Health Week is a time to celebrate the power of prevention, support health across all policies, share strategies for successful partnerships and champion the role of a strong public health system," according to Loretta A. Santilli, M.P.H. Director, Office of Public Health Practice and the NYSDOH Coordinator for Public Health Week. "Each day of National Public Health Week focuses on a particular public health topic. The focus for Wednesday is Rural Health."

Ms. Santilli notes that the Clinton County Healthy Neighborhoods Program is unique among the 19 other grant funded projects in New York State. "Most of the other Healthy Neighborhood Programs around the State work in more urban settings. A rural community like Clinton County presents unique challenges and the opportunity for innovative solutions to public health issues."

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program has existed in Clinton County since 1985. Public Health Educators meet with individuals and families in their homes. They conduct an assessment survey at each home they visit. Safety products may be supplied but the greatest benefit is the time that outreach staff spend educating, and providing resources that are specifically geared to each household's needs. After the visit, referrals can be made for additional services that might benefit household members.

While outreach staff tailor education to the individual household, there are five main topic areas that Healthy Neighborhood staff are specifically trained to address. These are: injury prevention, fire safety, lead poisoning prevention, indoor air quality and asthma. The program is free to all Clinton County residents. Contacts are made through referrals from other organizations, self-referral or door to door outreach efforts. The program focuses on one municipality in Clinton County per quarter although referrals from anywhere in the County are accepted any time. Approximately 400 homes are visited annually.

For more information about the Healthy Neighborhoods visit [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org), or to schedule an appointment, contact the Health Department's Environmental Health and Safety Division (518) 565-4870.

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**National Public Health Week 2019 DAILY THEMES**

Monday - Healthy Communities  
Tuesday - Violence Prevention  
Wednesday - Rural Health  
Thursday - Technology and Public Health  
Friday - Climate Change

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## News Release

Date: 4/11/19  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

**Clinton County Health Department  
Press Release  
"Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood"  
(April, 2019)**

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of Plattsburgh during the months of April, May and June. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. The Healthy Neighborhoods Program may provide home safety products depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education will be provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information about community resources and referrals to other programs are offered as needed. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870, visit us on the web at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org) or click link <https://www.jotform.com/Clintonhealth/home-survey-request-form>.

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## News Release

Date: May 10, 2019

For Immediate Release

Contact: 518-565-4840

### **Measles: What North Country Residents Need to Know and Do**

**Plattsburgh, May 10, 2019.** The measles outbreak affecting almost half of all US states, including New York, has not made its way to the North Country but the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is choosing to be proactive by asking people to check their vaccination history. A *Frequently Asked Questions* document (Measles FAQ) has been posted on their website at <http://www.clintonhealth.org/immunizations>. This information can help residents determine whether they are protected from measles or if they need to get the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. The website’s main page also includes the New York State Health Department’s Measles Hotline number (888-364-4837) and links to additional information.

Measles is a respiratory disease that is easily spread when a person infected with the measles virus breathes, coughs, or sneezes. The measles virus can live for up to two hours in airspace where an infected person has coughed or sneezed and can be passed from an infected person even before they show a measles rash. “Measles is a highly contagious illness,” according to Nichole Louis, a Supervising Public Health Nurse at CCHD. “Ninety percent of unvaccinated people exposed to the virus will become infected. On the other hand, the recommended two doses of MMR vaccine are about ninety-seven percent effective at preventing the illness.”

If you don’t know whether you have ever received the MMR vaccine, check with your healthcare provider. If you don’t have a healthcare provider or if your current provider does not have your vaccination history, there are a few other places you can check. Vaccines given in New York State in the last eight years may have been entered into the *NYSIIS* database. Your current healthcare provider can access this information. Schools and some employers keep vaccination information. They may be able to let you know whether you ever provided them with proof of MMR vaccination.

If you can’t find a record of having received the vaccine; documentation of having had measles; or other proof of immunity; schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider. If your provider does not offer the MMR vaccine, contact the Health Department at 518-565-4848. There is no harm in getting another dose of MMR vaccine even if you are already protected against measles (or mumps or rubella).

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Measles affects the lungs and airways. It causes a rash and fever, and may lead to serious symptoms. Many people with measles have complications such as diarrhea, ear infections or pneumonia. Ear infections occur in about one out of every 10 children with measles and can result in permanent hearing loss. Measles can lead to a brain infection which can cause permanent brain damage. A small number of people who get measles will need hospitalization and if complications including pneumonia or encephalitis (brain swelling) occur, death can result. Measles during pregnancy increases the risk of early labor, miscarriage and low birth weight infants. Measles can be more severe in people with weak immune systems.

Measles outbreaks are occurring worldwide. International travelers who are not vaccinated or otherwise immune to measles and other communicable diseases run the risk of bringing these illnesses back home with them to affect their family and their community.

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## News Release

Date: 6/21/19

For Immediate Release

Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department

#### News Release

### "Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood" (July, 2019)

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of Schuyler Falls during the months of July, August, and September. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. The Healthy Neighborhoods Program may provide home safety products depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education will be provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information about community resources and referrals to other programs are offered as needed. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870, visit us on the web at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org) or click link <https://www.jotform.com/Clintonhealth/home-survey-request-form>.

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## News Release

Date: July 9, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department Rabies Vaccination Clinic

On **August 13, 2019**, the Clinton County Health Department is hosting a free Rabies Vaccination Clinic for dogs, cats, and ferrets. The New York State law requires pets to have their first rabies vaccination by 4 months of age. Pets may be vaccinated as early as 3 months of age.

The event will be held from **6pm to 8:30pm at the Saranac Volunteer Fire Department building located at 3277 State Route 3, Saranac, NY**. Interested residents should bring their pets on a leash or in a secure carrier. Pets that have received a previous rabies vaccination are eligible to receive a three-year certificate. Please bring your pet’s most recent rabies vaccination records (previous certificate), otherwise, a one-year certificate will be provided.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that can affect all mammals, including humans and pets. Rabies is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating your pets. As a precaution, never pick up wildlife, including stray animals, and wear thick protective gloves when handling these animals. If you are bitten (teeth breaking the skin) by an animal, including domestic animals, seek medical attention and notify the Clinton County Health Department.

“This is a great opportunity to save your pet’s life and prevent the spread of rabies,” states Amanda Finckel, Senior Public Health Sanitarian for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety. “Don’t miss this chance.” Donations are accepted and appreciated. Five additional Rabies Vaccination Clinics will be held on:

- September 17, 2019 – Peru Volunteer Fire Department;
- September 19, 2019 – Champlain Volunteer Fire Department;
- September 24, 2019 – Beckmantown Town Garage;
- September 26, 2019 – Black Brook Town Garage; and
- December 3, 2019 – City of Plattsburgh Public Works.

For more information, including future Rabies Vaccination Clinic dates, visit the Department’s website, [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>.

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## News Release

Date: July 17, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### **Measles: Potential Exposure at Parc Safari**

**Plattsburgh, July 16, 2019.** The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is aware of a potential measles exposure in the Feline Tunnel at Parc Safari in Hemingford, Quebec, Canada on Friday, July 12 specifically between the hours of 1:00pm and 3:15pm. In an effort to be proactive in ensuring the health of our residents, CCHD is asking any residents who visited the Feline Tunnel at Parc Safari on Friday, July 12 between 1:00 and 3:15pm to call CCHD at 518-565-4848 between 8am and 4pm, Monday through Friday. Additional potential exposure sites have also been reported by the Quebec Ministry of Health and may be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2NXeUt0>.

A *Frequently Asked Questions* document (Measles FAQ) has been posted on their website at <http://www.clintonhealth.org/immunizations>. This information can help residents determine whether they are protected from measles or if they need to get the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. The website's main page also includes the New York State Health Department's Measles Hotline number (888-364-4837) and links to additional information.

Measles is a respiratory disease that is easily spread when a person infected with the measles virus breathes, coughs, or sneezes. The measles virus can live for up to two hours in airspace where an infected person has coughed or sneezed and can be passed from an infected person even before they show a measles rash. "Measles is a highly contagious illness," according to Nichole Louis, a Supervising Public Health Nurse at CCHD. "Ninety percent of unvaccinated people exposed to the virus will become infected. On the other hand, the recommended two doses of MMR vaccine are about ninety-seven percent effective at preventing the illness."

If you don't know whether you have ever received the MMR vaccine, check with your healthcare provider. If you don't have a healthcare provider or if your current provider does not have your vaccination history, there are a few other places you can check. Vaccines given in New York State in the last eight years may have been entered into the *NYSIIS* database. Your current healthcare provider can access this information. Schools and some employers keep vaccination information. They may be able to let you know whether you ever provided them with proof of MMR vaccination.

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If you can't find a record of having received the vaccine; documentation of having had measles; or other proof of immunity; schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider. If your provider does not offer the MMR vaccine, contact the Health Department at 518-565-4848. There is no harm in getting another dose of MMR vaccine even if you are already protected against measles (or mumps or rubella).

Measles affects the lungs and airways. It causes a rash and fever, and may lead to serious symptoms. Many people with measles have complications such as diarrhea, ear infections or pneumonia. Ear infections occur in about one out of every 10 children with measles and can result in permanent hearing loss. Measles can lead to a brain infection which can cause permanent brain damage. A small number of people who get measles will need hospitalization and if complications including pneumonia or encephalitis (brain swelling) occur, death can result. Measles during pregnancy increases the risk of early labor, miscarriage and low birth weight infants. Measles can be more severe in people with weak immune systems.

Measles outbreaks are occurring worldwide. International travelers who are not vaccinated or otherwise immune to measles and other communicable diseases run the risk of bringing these illnesses back home with them to affect their family and their community.

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## News Release

Date: July 24, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Rabies Update

#### Bat in Town of Mooers Home Found to Have Rabies

A bat captured inside a Town of Mooers residence on July 18, 2019 has been tested for rabies and is positive for the disease. One person who was sleeping in the room where the bat was found is receiving rabies post-exposure treatment.

Rabies is a fatal viral infection, usually transmitted by an infected animal's bite. Humans can be exposed to rabies through a bite or scratch from a bat. **The virus is passed through the animal's saliva.** Treatment to prevent rabies is given if there is a reasonable chance that these types of contact occurred (for example, if a bat is near an unattended child or person with mental impairment, or in a room with a sleeping person). **Bat bites are small and hard to detect and treatment must be given before symptoms of rabies appear.** If anyone comes in contact with a bat or you find a bat in your home or camp, and are unsure about whether anyone has come in contact with the bat, capture the bat without damaging the head and contact your health department. In Clinton County, call 518-565-4870. For a quick video on how to properly capture a bat go to: [www.clintonhealth.org/batproofing](http://www.clintonhealth.org/batproofing) or [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mKdp8pV\\_Zs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mKdp8pV_Zs)

To keep bats out of your home, look for holes that might allow bats to enter and seal any openings larger than a quarter-inch by a half-inch. Use window screens, chimney caps, and draft-guards beneath doors to attics, and ensure that all doors to the outside close tightly.

Avoid doing bat-proofing from May through August. If there are young bats in your attic, many of them can't fly and keeping the adults out will trap the young who will die or try to make their way into your rooms.

Most bats leave in the fall or winter to hibernate, so these are the best times to "bat-proof" your home.

In addition to bat proofing, it is important to remember that pets, including indoor cats, must be vaccinated against rabies. New York State Public Health Law requires all dogs, cats and ferrets over four months old to be vaccinated. Vaccination of pets is one of the best ways to protect your family from rabies.

The Department has planned six (6) Rabies Vaccination Clinics being held from 6:00pm - 8:30pm on:

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- August 13, 2019 – Saranac Volunteer Fire Department
- September 17, 2019 – Peru Volunteer Fire Department
- September 19, 2019 – Champlain Volunteer Fire Department
- September 24, 2019 – Beekmantown Town Garage
- September 26, 2019 – Black Brook Town Garage
- December 3, 2019 – City of Plattsburgh Public Works

The schedule of Rabies Vaccination Clinics in Clinton County and other information about rabies can be found at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org).

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## News Release

Date: August 19, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Importance of Capturing Bats Found in Homes

The Clinton County Health Department is advising residents to capture any bats that come in contact with humans or pets. Most bats found indoors should be captured and tested for rabies.

Rabies is a fatal viral infection transmitted through an infected animal's saliva. It is spread to people and pets when they are bitten by an infected animal. If you see a bat enter your home, open windows so the bat can escape. However, if you don't know how or when the bat got in, capture the bat. Unless you saw the bat enter the home, it can be difficult to know if the bat came in contact with a person or pet. A person can be bitten by a bat or exposed to its saliva and not know it. Bats have small sharp teeth, which may not leave a visible bite mark, and a bite from a bat during the night may not awaken a sleeping person.

If you find a bat in your home or camp, and are unsure about whether anyone has come in contact with it, capture the bat without damaging the head and contact your health department. In Clinton County, call 518-565-4870. For a quick video on how to properly capture a bat visit: [www.clintonhealth.org/batproofing](http://www.clintonhealth.org/batproofing).

Use caution when capturing a bat.

- Close doors, windows and closet doors to keep the bat in the room.
- Turn on the lights if the room is dark.
- Wear gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather) and wait for the bat to land.
- Cover the bat with a coffee can or similar container with a lid.
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the can, trapping the bat.
- With one hand firmly holding the cardboard in place against the top of the can, turn the can right side up.
- Replace the cardboard with the lid (if no lid, tape the cardboard tightly to the can).
- **Call your local health department. In Clinton County, call 518-565-4870.**

If a bat is found in a room with person who is sleeping and the bat is released, the person will be advised to undergo rabies post-exposure treatment. This may also apply if the bat is found in a room with an unattended child, someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or someone with a mental disability. Most bats do not have rabies, but if a bat is released and not available for testing, it has to be assumed that it may have been rabid. You cannot tell if a bat has rabies by looking at it or by the way it acts. The only way to know if an animal has rabies is to send it for testing. For post-exposure treatment to be effective, it must be started BEFORE a person experiences symptoms of rabies.

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"Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations"

So far in 2019, the Clinton County Health Department has authorized post-exposure treatment for 40 people. Many of these authorizations were a result of not capturing the bat. “We cannot stress the importance of capturing the bat enough,” states Amanda Finckel, Senior Sanitarian for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety.

To keep bats out of your home, look for holes that might allow bats to enter and seal any openings larger than a quarter-inch by a half-inch. Use window screens, chimney caps, and draft-guards beneath doors to attics, and ensure that all doors to the outside close tightly.

Avoid doing bat-proofing from May through August. If there are young bats in your attic, many of them can’t fly and keeping the adults out will trap the young who will die or try to make their way into your rooms.

Most bats leave in the fall or winter to hibernate, so these are the best times to bat-proof your home.

In addition to bat-proofing, it is important to remember that pets, including indoor cats, must be vaccinated against rabies. New York State Public Health Law requires all dogs, cats and ferrets over four months old to be vaccinated. Vaccination of pets is one of the best ways to protect your family from rabies. Rabies clinics for the remainder of 2019 will be held on the dates and at the locations listed below from 6:00pm - 8:30pm.

- September 17, 2019 – Peru Volunteer Fire Department
- September 19, 2019 – Champlain Volunteer Fire Department
- September 24, 2019 – Beekmantown Town Garage
- September 26, 2019 – Black Brook Town Garage
- December 3, 2019 – City of Plattsburgh Public Works

For more information on rabies visit [www.cdc.gov/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies).

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## News Release

Date: September 6, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Vaping-Associated Pulmonary Illness

**September 6, 2019, Plattsburgh.** Clinton County Health Department wants to insure that local residents are aware of dangers that have been linked to vaping. Vaping is defined as the use of an electronic delivery system to inhale nicotine or other substances.

On September 5, 2019 the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) released a statement about their ongoing investigation into 34 cases of serious vaping-associated pulmonary illness in New York State ([https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2019/2019-09-05\\_vaping.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2019/2019-09-05_vaping.htm)). The State’s investigation parallels a wider investigation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) into 450 possible cases across the Nation including three deaths.

The release from NYSDOH quotes Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker saying, "The cases of pulmonary illnesses associated with vaping are continuing to rise across New York State and the country. We urge the public to be vigilant about any vaping products that they or any family members may be using and to immediately contact their health care provider if they develop any unusual symptoms. In general, vaping of unknown substances is dangerous, and we continue to explore all options to combat this public health issue."

The NYSDOH has received reports of severe pulmonary illness among patients ranging from 15 to 46 years of age. All patients were using at least one cannabis-containing vape product before they became ill, however, all patients reported recent use of various vape products. The investigation has uncovered high levels of Vitamin E acetate in nearly all of the cannabis-containing samples analyzed. In the New York State investigation, at least one Vitamin E acetate containing vape product has been linked to each patient who submitted a product for testing. However, the CDC investigation being conducted with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), has not identified a single common substance.

Karen Derusha, Supervising Public Health Educator at the Clinton County Health Department had this to say, "The increasing use of vape products, also known as e-cigarettes, especially among youth, is a concern for local health advocates. Many people see e-cigarettes as a safer alternative to traditional tobacco use. This attitude is leading to a new generation of young people addicted to nicotine and also exposed to the health harms associated with these products."

The release from NYSDOH states that testing of both cannabis and nicotine-containing vape products is part of this investigation. Vitamin E acetate is not an approved additive for New York State Medical Marijuana Program-authorized vape products. It advised that, "Anyone using vape products should never use unregulated products purchased ‘off the street.’ Cannabis-containing products are not legally available in New York State for recreational use. These unregulated products are not tested and may contain harmful substances. Users of vape products should never modify vape products or add any substances to these products that are not intended by the manufacturer."

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“This new threat of severe respiratory illness linked to vaping highlights how much is still unknown about the use of electronic devices to deliver nicotine or other substances to the bloodstream via the lungs.” states Ms. Derusha. “As we have learned from traditional tobacco use, inhaling foreign substances into the lungs can have devastating health consequences.”

CCHD advises those using any vaping products to cease. Parents are encouraged to educate themselves about the health hazards associated with vaping and share information about vaping-associated pulmonary illness with their children. CCHD further advises school personnel to become familiar with the variety of available vaping devices and to develop strong policies that include not only disciplinary action but also referral for cessation services. Health care providers are reminded to ask specifically about vaping when determining a patient’s tobacco use history.

Symptoms of vaping-associated pulmonary illness include: cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, fever, headache, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, anorexia, or weight loss. Residents should consult a health care provider if they are experiencing these symptoms and inform their provider if they have a history of vaping.

Additional information about unexplained vaping-associated pulmonary illness is available at [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html)

For more information about vaping and other tobacco use visit [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/index.htm)  
<https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/emerging-tobacco-products/e-cigarettes-facts-stats-and-regulations>

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## News Release

Date: 9/18/19

For Immediate Release

Contact: 518-565-4840

### Clinton County Health Department

#### Press Release

### "Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood" (October, 2019)

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of Beekmantown during the months of October, November and December. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. The Healthy Neighborhoods Program may provide home safety products depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education will be provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information about community resources and referrals to other programs are offered as needed. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870, visit us on the web at [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org) or click this link <https://bit.ly/2CWxrJu>.

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## News Release

Date: November 20, 2019  
For Immediate Release  
Contact: 518-565-4840

### Nicotine Addiction is Serious Business

**November 20, 2019, Plattsburgh.** To commemorate the Great American Smokeout, local health advocates are sharing these important messages. “Nicotine addiction is serious business,” according to Clinton County Health Department Supervising Public Health Educator, Karen Derusha. “The Great American Smokeout reminds us that tobacco users need help and support to quit and that we have a responsibility to protect youth from the health harms associated with tobacco.” Dana Bushey Isabella, Program Coordinator for Tobacco-Free CFE (Clinton, Essex and Franklin), adds “We cannot allow another generation of young people to become addicted to nicotine.” Both women represent their organizations as part of the TURN - Tobacco Use Reduction Network in Clinton County.

Ms. Bushey Isabella notes that “prevention is best.” Much of her work over the past 18 years has focused on reducing youth initiation of tobacco use. Research shows that 96% of smokers start before the age of 21. Strategies designed to keep youth from initiating tobacco use have helped smoking rates decline among all age groups. That is, until recently when the popularity of electronic cigarettes began to rise. Since 2014, the number of youth who use e-cigarettes, also known as vaping, has almost tripled. Vaping has led to a dramatic surge in young people addicted to nicotine. Along with increases in youth vaping, use of traditional cigarettes in this age group has stopped declining and New York State is beginning to see a slight increase in cigarette use among youth.

E-cigarettes, which are not currently regulated in the U.S., have been heavily marketed to youth. Additionally, surveys show that parents are sometimes unaware that electronic cigarettes or vape pods contain nicotine. One pod of vape juice can contain as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. Although nicotine is not the culprit in smoking-related illnesses like lung cancer, nicotine can elevate heart rate and have a detrimental effect on the adolescent brain. Students addicted to nicotine may have trouble focusing and concentrating in school and may be more susceptible to other drug use. Vaping devices are also used to inhale other substances. Recent cases of severe lung injury and death have been most closely associated with vaping THC, the hallucinogenic compound found in marijuana.

Ms. Derusha notes, “The health impact of using e-cigarettes including health harms from additives like flavorings and other chemicals have not been adequately tested.” According to the Truth Initiative website “At least 60 chemical compounds have been found in e-liquids, and more are present in the aerosol produced by e-cigarettes. Researchers have identified several substances which are either harmful or potentially harmful to e-cigarette users, including delivery solvents and propylene glycol, which can cause upper respiratory infections.”

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”

TURN offers this advice for celebrating the Great American Smokeout. “If you are the parent of a teenager, start talking with them about tobacco use and vaping. If your child already smokes or vapes, help them initiate a conversation with their pediatrician about cessation resources. Most of all, be supportive of attempts to quit. Breaking free from nicotine addiction, at any age, is serious business and difficult work but well worth the benefits.”

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### **About the Clinton County Tobacco Use Reduction Taskforce**

**The Clinton County Tobacco Use Reduction Taskforce is part of a larger regional effort led by the Adirondack Health Institute’s Population Health Improvement Project. The Task Force includes representatives of Clinton County Health Department, Tobacco Free CFE & Reality Check, North Country Healthy Heart Network, and University of Vermont – CVPH Health Network.**

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