Representative Policy Board Land Use Committee South Central Connecticut Regional Water District Via Remote Access**

AGENDA

Regular Meeting of Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

- 1. Safety Moment
- 2. Approval of Minutes February 9, 2022 meeting
- 3. Discussion re 1901 typhoid epidemic: J. Triana
- 4. Updates on other land and RWA properties, including invasive species update
- 5. Other Land items
- 6. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
- 7. Adjourn

Members of the public may attend the meeting via remote access. For information on attending the meeting and to view meeting documents, please visit <u>https://www.rwater.com/about-us/our-boards/board-meetings-</u> <u>minutes?year=2022&category=1435&meettype=1463&page</u>=. For questions, contact the board office at 203-401-2515. **Representative Policy Board

Land Use Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting Instructions:

Call in (audio only)

+1 469-965-2517,,270804348# United States, Dallas

Phone Conference ID: 270 804 348#

Find a local number Reset PIN

Learn More | Meeting options

For questions, contact the board office at 203-401-2515 or by email at jslubowski@rwater.com

SAFETY MOMENT MARCH – MOLD PREVENTION

Molds are part of the natural environment. Outdoors, mold breaks down dead organic matter such as fallen leaves and dead trees, but indoors, mold spores can cause health problems such as allergic reactions, asthma attacks and irritate the eyes, nose, skin and lungs.

Tips to Prevent Mold:

- Repair water leaks quickly
- Clean and repair roof gutters regularly
- Keep air conditioning drip pans clean
- Keep indoor humidity low
- Wipe down condensation that collects around windows and doors.

Service - Teamwork - Accountability - Respect - Safety

Safety is a core company value at the Regional Water Authority . It is our goal to reduce workplace injuries to zero.



TapInto

Safety





Representative Policy Board Land Use Committee South Central Connecticut Regional Water District

Minutes of February 9, 2022 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District ("RWA") took place on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, via remote access. Chair Betkoski presided.

Present: Committee Members: P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, M. Levine,

	G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young
Authority:	C. LaMarr
Management:	L. Bingaman, S. Lakshminarayanan and J. Triana
UCONN:	S. Trumbo
RPB Staff:	J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Horbal, the Committee approved the minutes of its January 12, 2022 meeting.

At 5:32 p.m., Mr. Levine entered the meeting.

Mr. Trumbo, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCONN, provided an update on Carrion ecology and forensic entomology, which included:

- Beetle variations and differences •
- Locations and trapping methods
- Social behavior research
- Chemical ecology and lab analysis
- Trapping methods •

Discussion took place regarding reasons for the study, ecosystem benefits, beetle diversity, animal attraction, and predators.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – J. Triana, the RWA's Real Estate Manager, reported:

<u>Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)</u>						
	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status		
January 31, 2022	87%	85%	77%	None		

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<u>Rainfall (inches)</u>						
	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average			
January 2022	2.68	1.23	3.56			
Fiscal YTD (6/1/21 – 1/31/22)	33.81	26.33	30.70			

Dainfall (in ale as)

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Madison Corresponded with property owner of 19+/- acres.
- Madison Corresponded with property owner of 23+/- acres.
- North Haven Corresponded with property owner of 14+/- acres.
- Branford Corresponded with property owner of 12+/- acres.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Pomps La. properties (NB 4 and NB 4A) Appeared at zoom meeting with Bennett and Smilas staff along with town staff to discuss how to split off the parcels. Authorized B&S to revise the maps and file on the land records.
- Branford, Brushy Plain Rd. (BR 7) Met with First Selectman of Branford to discuss the possible sale of ~30 acres to the town for open space. He said he would discuss with the town council.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 95 Ives St. (HA 13) Executed the P&SA. Received title report from the buyer. Executed the signature pages for the closing.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. Received revised plans from the Tarlowski's. Sent letter of approval for the amended plans.

Forestry Update

- Guilford West of Sugar Loaf ash salvage (GU 4) 40% complete
- Killingworth East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) 25% complete.
- Hamden Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) Not started yet. Looking to grant extension.
- Madison Nathan's Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) 95% complete.
- Seymour Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) 50% complete.
- Killingworth N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) Bid awarded.
 - Responded to email with questions and complaint from Seymour First Selectwoman about the harvest on Silvermine Rd.
 - > Responded to questions with two abutters of the Silvermine Rd. timber harvest.
 - ➢ New Forester starting February 7th.

Recreation

- Submitted annual report to DPH in accordance with our DPH permits.
- Held New Year's Day hike at Lake Bethany with 15 people.
- Continued process to hire new people for next year's fishing season. Had multiple candidates not show up for their interviews.
- Acquired two aluminum boats for the 2022 fishing season at Lake Saltonstall.
- Prepared next newsletter for publication.

	Janu	uary	Dece	mber
	2022	2021	2021	2020
Permit Holders	5,605	6,129	5,655	6,016

Special Activity Permits

• CT Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Jeff Ward, et al) - General forestry and wildlife research, tick/Lyme Disease studies - Lake Gaillard, North Madison, Prospect, Seymour, Branford, Bethany (1/06/2022 – 01/06/2023).

• New Haven Bird Club (Patrick T. Leahy) – Maintain and monitor bluebird nesting boxes on 7 sites – Downes Road, Bethany, adjacent to Lake Bethany property and field below Lake Dawson dam, Woodbridge, farm field on Sperry Road and Lake Chamberlain below the dam, Lake Watrous and other properties – (1/1/22–12/31/22).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements
 - Agricultural agreements Signed agreement with Kay for bee hives in Prospect (PR
 6). Spoke to Baldelli about possible use of the Parish Farm Rd. fields for Christmas trees (BR 19). Received Christmas tree reports from Urbano, Miscio, and Jaynes.
 - East Haven, 167 Saltonstall Parkway (Route 1) (EH 7) Corresponded with Murtha staff about progress. Sent letters to Lucido's attorney. Reviewed draft of complaint. Marshall served the complaint to Lucido. Discussed the legal hold of materials with Murtha and RWA staff.
 - Cheshire, 264 Harrison Rd. (CH 2) Executed license agreement for lawn and fence.
 - Seymour, 8 Maiden La. (SE 3) Sent draft license agreement to new owner of the property.
 - New Haven, 1201 Whalley Ave. (NH 5) Executed new license agreement with Spinaci for the parking lot next to the PRV.
 - Madison, 81 Suffolk Dr. (MA 12) Kuck called to say that they would move the fence once the weather warms up.
- Invasive plants Submitted grant application to DEEP for water chestnut harvesting project. Documented invasive populations in West Haven and Hamden.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	8.36 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	0 acres

- Deer hunt Annual report submitted to DPH. From the post-hunt survey, we estimate total man-days spent scouting were 265 days. Man-days spent hunting were 927 days, while the total man-hours were 4,745 hours.
- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain Discussed draft easement and survey with Murtha and Juliano staff. Submitted draft of each to East Haven town staff to review.
- Hamden, New Haven Country Club (HA 5) Discussed the request with Murtha. Decided that we would not sign the assignment since it was not in our best interest.
- Guilford, Rockland Rd gate (GU 15 and 18) Notified by abutters that the pin of the gate was cut and the gate was open. Submitted work request to repair.
- Seymour, Haddad Rd. and Silvermine Rd. parcels (SE 9 and 10) Spoke to town staff about possible sale of these parcels. Informed them it was not possible since the town wanted to develop them.
- New Haven, Yale Golf Course Participated in zoom meeting with YGC staff and consultants to discuss planned work on the golf course.
- East Haven, 180 Borrmann Rd. (EH 2) Checked on complaint from abutter regarding flooding in his backyard coming from the ridge. Water from seeps were not going to the intended storm sewer pipes.
- Farm River greenway trail Attended zoom meeting about plans for greenway trail along Farm River in North Branford and East Haven.

Mr. Bingaman, the RWA's President & Chief Executive Officer, reported that he and members of leadership would tour the watershed next week with Mr. Triana to review critical areas.

The next regular meeting of the committee is on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:20 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Harvey, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman







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February 9, 2022 Land Use Committee Meeting

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
February 28, 2022	97%	89%	82%	None

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
February 2022	4.40	3.83	3.35
Fiscal YTD (6/1/21 – 2/28/22)	38.21	30.16	34.05

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Madison Corresponded with property owner of 19+/- acres.
- Madison Corresponded with property owner of 23+/- acres.
- North Haven Corresponded with property owner of 14+/- acres.
- Cheshire Received draft survey from Juliano for the 30+ unaccounted for acres off of Mountain Rd. Received title report from Murtha. Murtha contacted the town attorney to discuss how to correct the record.
- Cheshire, Ricci property Contacted Cheshire town staff about progress toward getting the OSWA grant money.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Pomps La. properties (NB 4 and NB 4A) Forwarded a request from NBLCT to walk the property to Linda. Talked to an abutter on Pomps Lane about the surveying activity.
- Branford, Brushy Plain Rd. (BR 7) Spoke to Richard Shanahan about the discussion I had with the First Selectman. Forwarded a request from him to walk the property.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 95 Ives St. (HA 13) Closed on the property. Worked out transferring the electric bill. Working on fixing the assessor's record since they show that the entire 63 acres was conveyed to Butterly. Authorized Juliano to set pins at the corners.
- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) Emailed Assistant Town Attorney for a status update, but never got a reply.

Forestry Update

- Guilford West of Sugar Loaf ash salvage (GU 4) 40% complete
- Killingworth East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) 25% complete.
- Hamden Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) Not started yet. Looking to grant extension.
- Madison Nathan's Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) 95% complete. Slash wall complete and awaiting gate installation.
- Seymour Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) 90% complete.
- Killingworth N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) Not started yet.
 - Casey Cordes first day was February 7th. He worked primarily with assigned onboarding partner, Invasive Species Management Technician, learning properties, procedures, systems, and ongoing operations.
 - Responded to call from Seymour town staff about the harvest on Silvermine Rd.

- Sent letter to McDonald revoking his firewood permit.
- > Attended walk with Jerry Milne to see DEEP timber sale in Naugatuck SF in Hamden.
- Prepared permit renewal packets for ~175 commercial or non-commercial firewood harvesting permittees and/or maple tree tapping permittees.

Recreation

- DPH horseback riding permit for Lake Chamberlain was sent for renewal.
- Of two candidates for the recreation positions, only one accepted the offer. Search for additional staff continues.
- Discussed issuance of permit to Air B&B owner.
- Monitored new fishing regulations promulgated by DEEP.
- Entries for the photo contest were received and processed.
- Discussed replacing fence at Clark's Pond fishing area.

	Febr	uary	January			
	2022	2021	2021	2020		
Permit Holders	5,601	6,131	5,605	6,129		

Special Activity Permits

- UConn, Dept of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (Dr. Mark Urban) Research on pond amphibians Totoket mountain in Northford; ridge north of Lake Gaillard; 60 ponds distributed to the west and east of Big Gulph Brook (3/1/2022 - 3/1/2023)
- McLaren Engineering Group (Craig Plate) Perform a routine and underwater inspection at Waite Street Bridge over Lake Whitney; contracted by CTDOT to perform the inspection; (2/16/2022).
- North Branford Land Conservation Trust (David Sargent, President) To allow North Branford Land Conservation Trust board members the opportunity to walk the parcels they intend to purchase Beech Street and Pomps Lane (03/01/2022 03/31/2022).
- Yale University School of the Environment- (Dr. Craig R. Brodersen) Field trips in field botany and forestry. North Madison Cedar Swamp off of Rt. 80, 2/09/2022 5/31/2022 (actual use Spring Semester 2022).
- Allingtown Fire Department (Deputy Chief Michael Esposito) cold water rescue training, Maltby Lakes, West Haven 2/14/22 2/25/22.
- Bethany Cub Scout Den 1 (Kristine Sullivan) cub scout hike required three miles, Lake Chamberlain Trails, (2/13/22).
- Krueger-Hadfield Evolutionary Ecology Lab, (Sarah Shainker Connelly) research focuses on freshwater red algae from streams across the Northeast, Maltby Lakes (4/3/22).
- Stephen Trumbo, Ph.D. (Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, UConn Waterbury) Continue research on the behavior and ecology of burying beetles.- Off Route 42 (near the Cheshire-Bethany-Prospect line) just east of traffic light at Rt.69-Rt. 42 juncture (5/10/2022 9/25/2022)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements
 - Agricultural agreements Received Christmas tree report from Cave. Discussed ideas for preventing trespassers entering the fields off of Totoket Rd. in North Branford.
 - East Haven, 167 Saltonstall Parkway (Route 1) (EH 7) Claims handler contacted Murtha to ask for extension which was granted.
 - Seymour, 8 Maiden La. (SE 3) Corresponded with new owner of the property regarding the license agreement for parking.

- North Haven, Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) Contacted by Mobile asking to install generator for emergency power. Started reviewing plans.
- Hamden, 95 Riverside Dr. (HA 12) Notified by neighbor that Byrd passed away. Spoke to attorney for Byrd's estate about how the license agreement works.
- Invasive plants Documented invasive populations in Madison and Bethany. Signed contract for the water chestnut harvesting for this summer.

Invasive Species Documented/Mapped	61 acres
Invasive Species Treated	0 acres

- Deer hunt Held meeting to discuss safety in 2022 hunt. Secured meeting space for pre-hunt meetings in September 2022. Preparing to send out hunt applications in March of this year.
- Guilford, Rockland Rd gate (GU 15 and 18) Notified by abutters that the pin of the gate was again cut and the gate was open. Submitted work request to repair.
- Boundaries Remarked boundaries in Hamden, Bethany, Guilford, North Branford, and East Haven. Worked on encroachment reports for Guilford and East Haven.
- Shingle Hill Tanks site (WH 7) Responded to question from Elisabeth Moore of CT Farmland Trust about easements and fee simple property we own around the Dwyer property.
- EH 1A and BR 17 property line Sent information to Engineering about the property line since they were planning on work at the Furnace Pond outflow.

Attachments

- January 31, 2022 Lake Whitney dam, built in 1862, closer to being brought into 21st century New Haven Register
- February 2022 Wetlands: 'Unsung heroes' of the climate crisis United Nations Website
- February 9, 2022 VP Kamala Harris returns to N.J. Friday to highlight federal push to remove lead water pipes NJ.com
- March 3, 2022 Lamont, in visit to New Haven, announces bill that would provide \$70 million for lead abatement NH Register
- February 19, 2022 Monitoring The Salt In Local Waterways Cheshire Record-Journal
- February 11, 2022 Crews Respond to Hazmat Incident After Oil Truck Rolls Over in Cheshire NBC 30

<u>Upcoming Agenda Items</u> April 2022 –

Lake Whitney dam, built in 1862, closer to being brought into 21st century

New Haven Register - Jan. 31, 2022

HAMDEN — The 160-year-old Lake Whitney dam likely will be restored to last many more years now that the Regional Water Authority has been invited to apply for up to \$20 million in infrastructure money.

U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-3, visited the Whitney Water Purification Facility Monday near the dam, and said the dam is among 43 projects in 24 states invited to apply for \$6.7 billion in money from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

DeLauro said she expects the rest of the \$40 million to come from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed in November.

"Lake Whitney is critical to Connecticut's families for clean, reliable, drinking water," DeLauro said. The lake, the secondlargest reservoir in the water authority's system, is part of the Mill River.

"The dam is 160 years old, so if you had a breach that occurred, any flooding downstream would be a disaster," she said.

The \$40 million project is sorely needed, according to April Capone, director of public affairs for the water authority. "This is a critical piece of infrastructure and it has to be maintained," she said.

"The EPA tells you you are eligible to apply but they really don't ask entities to apply unless you are a very good contender for the program," Capone said.

"This dam project is very exciting, interesting. I absolutely love it," said Mayor Lauren Garrett. "This very old dam is going to have stabilization put behind it with a new dam put in place."

The project will meet stability guidelines set by the Army Corps of Engineers and improve its spillway capacity. Since the dam is a historic structure, the project must meet state historic-preservation guidelines.

In addition to extending the life of the dam, "By doing this work I think it helps the local communities for better water quality, transmission, as well as protecting the watersheds and aquatic life for generations to come," said Sundar "Sunny" Lakshminarayanan, vice president of engineering and environmental services for the water authority.

He said the design is underway, construction is expected to start in 2023 and will take two to three years to complete.

Lakshminarayanan said there is a more recent concrete dam behind the original stone dam, and a new concrete dam will be built behind that. "It needs work, but it doesn't necessarily mean it's a dam that's failing," he said. "There are improvements that are required to bring the dam into compliance" with modern standards.

Capone said every \$1 million received from state and federal grants "equals 1 percent of a rate increase that doesn't have to happen ... that we won't have to put on our ratepayers. For a \$40 million project, that's quite significant."

While she expects the total to be received from the federal government, Capone said, "Our hope is we do not have to shift the cost onto our ratepayers."

Lakshminarayanan said in the unlikely event that the EPA does not issue the \$20 million to the water authority, "we would still go ahead. Regional Water has actually gone and raised bonds in the past." However, he said, "once they accept you then typically you are almost assured of funding."

United Nations Website

Wetlands: 'Unsung heroes' of the climate crisis

For the first time, the United Nations on Wednesday celebrates World Wetlands Day, recognizing that these fragile ecosystems make a crucial contribution to biodiversity, climate mitigation, freshwater availability, and economic resilience.

A broad definition of wetlands includes ecosystems such as lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps, coral reefs, and many others; but also, human-made artificial sites such as fishponds or reservoirs.

Though they cover only around 6 per cent of the Earth's land surface, 40 per cent of all plant and animal species live or breed in them.

Wetlands are also vital for human wellbeing and security. More than a billion people across the world depend on them for their livelihoods, about one in eight people on Earth.

According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), these ecosystems are also the unsung heroes of the climate crisis.

In fact, they store more carbon than any other ecosystem, with peatlands alone storing twice as much as all the world's forests.

And inland wetland ecosystems absorb excess water and help prevent floods and drought, something critical to help communities adapt to a changing climate.

In the words of Leticia Carvalho, Principal Coordinator for Marine and Freshwater at UNEP, healthy wetlands "punch above their weight in terms of benefits."

The theme for the very first World Day is "Wetlands Action for People and Nature".

It serves as an urgent call to act and to invest financial, human and political capital, to save the world's wetlands from disappearing altogether - and to restore those areas already lost.

Wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests and are Earth's most threatened ecosystem. In just 50 years - since 1970 - 35 per cent of the world's wetlands have evaporated.

Human activities that have fueled this include agriculture, construction, pollution, overfishing and overexploitation of resources; together with invasive species upsetting the balance, and climate change.

Some 85 per cent of wetlands present in 1700, were lost by 2000, many drained to make way for development, farming or other "productive" uses.

This is why, Ms. Carvalho explained, their protection is a priority for UNEP and a special focus of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

According to the expert, the UN Climate Conference (COP 26), last November, "started to shine a spotlight on the role of finance and political will."

"[But] more of both need to be channeled towards wetlands, enshrined in countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and better integrated into development plans", she said.

Teeming with different species, wetlands are also a key ally in the fight to stop biodiversity loss.

Over 140,000 species, including 55 per cent of all fish, rely on freshwater habitats for their survival. Freshwater species are important to local ecosystems, provide sources of food and income to humans, and are key to flood and erosion control.

Despite this important contribution, wetland species are going extinct more rapidly than terrestrial or marine species, with almost a third of all freshwater biodiversity facing extinction.

According to UNEP, the good news is that protection, sustainable management and restoration of wetlands work, and this damage can be reversed.

One project in the Baltic, for instance, aims to improve water quality in lagoons polluted by fertilizer run-off by using floating, vegetation-rich, wetlands to remove nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus.

In 2015, under Sustainable Development Goal 6, Target 6, all countries committed to protect and restore wetlands, by 2030.

The World Day, 2 February, also marks the anniversary of the Convention on Wetlands, which was adopted as an international treaty in 1971.

VP Kamala Harris returns to N.J. Friday to highlight federal push to remove lead water pipes

Feb. 09, 2022, By Jonathan D. Salant | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

Vice President Kamala Harris on Friday will make her second official trip to New Jersey, where she will highlight Newark's efforts to replace its lead water pipes, according to a White House official.

Harris will be joined by Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan, Gov. Phil Murphy, and Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, according to the official, speaking on condition of anonymity in advance of the official announcement of her visit to the Garden State. Rep. Donald Payne Jr., D-10th Dist., also is expected to join Harris on her visit.

President Joe Biden's \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure law included \$1 billion over five years for New Jersey to help cover the cost of replacing its 350,000 lead water pipes, which American Water Works Association estimated would cost \$2.3 billion. The state Legislature has passed legislation requiring that every lead water pipe be replaced.

Newark has seen first-hand the impact of lead in water, as residents in August 2019 started lining up for bottled water because of high lead levels. City officials said their task of replacing about 23,000 lines is all but complete, funded by a \$120 million loan from Essex County that was raised through a bond issue.

Harris also has touted the infrastructure law in other visits across the country, including in Cincinnati; Milwaukee; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Oakland, California.

The vice president last visited New Jersey in October before the state's gubernatorial election, touring a day care center at Montclair State University in Little Falls to tout legislation that would reduce child care costs. The measure, known as the Build Better Act, also would fight climate change and expand health care coverage. It passed the House but has stalled in the Senate.

On the trip, she also visited a vaccination site at Essex County Community College in Newark, where she urged Americans to be protected against COVID-19, and made an unscheduled stop at Tonnie's Minis, a Newark bakery.

Lamont, in visit to New Haven, announces bill that would provide \$70 million for lead abatement

NH Register - Mark Zaretsky - March 3, 2022

NEW HAVEN — Lead paint has been a problem affecting the health and development of children, particularly minority and poor children, for too long and it's time for the state to step up and do more to help, Gov. Ned Lamont, Mayor Justin Elicker and other officials said Thursday.

"We're beginning to make a down payment to see what we can do to get the lead out of these old buildings," said Lamont, surrounded by about 20 preschool children as he announced a proposed new \$70 million, federally-funded program to fund local inspection and abatement efforts.

He made the announcement in the Catholic Charities St. Francis & St. Rose of Lima Child Development Center at 425 Ferry St. in the Fair Haven section, thanking U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-3, for her work to land the funds. The building, adjacent to St. Francis Church, is in use now because of lead abatement work done in 2018, said Lamont and child development center Director Martha Canas.

"For too long, Connecticut has failed to address the problem of lead poisoning in our children, a problem that impacts most deeply minority families and disadvantaged communities of our state," Lamont in a subsequent release. "Childhood lead poisoning has catastrophic impacts on health and development, including irreversible learning and developmental disabilities."

Two years ago, "2,994 young children had enough lead in their blood that the CDC would have recommended an investigation of their homes," Lamont said. "Our statutes required only 120 investigations. That means thousands of children are not receiving the treatment and health interventions that they need. Connecticut's standards for lead testing and treatment fall well behind the best practices and the time is now to take action."

The General Assembly's Public Health Committee will hold a public hearing on House Bill 5045 on Monday at 9 a.m. Lamont urged people to contact their legislators or write a letter to the committee to express their support.

Elicker, father of a 3-year-old and a 7-year-old, said "it's really exciting to be here to talk about one of the most exciting things we can do" to support young people.

Monitoring The Salt In Local Waterways

February 19, 2022 - by Joy VanderLek, Special to the Record-Journal

After a devastating fish kill resulting from prolonged winter ice and snow a few years ago, Julie Hawthorne took more of an interest in the health of South Pond, which is located near her Cheshire neighborhood.

That's why she and her daughter Natalie signed up for the Winter Salt Watch project, organized locally by Coalition for a Sustainable Cheshire.

Salt Watch is a citizen science project that tests chloride levels in local waterways over the course of the winter.

While salt in waterbodies can be a natural occurrence, there is a need to protect our drinking water from excessive winter road salting. About 20 million tons of salt is used to treat ice in the United States each year.

As for taking on a citizen science project with her daughter, Julie Hawthorne calls it "a wonderful opportunity to involve young kids both in the science and sustainability of our environment."

The Winter Salt Watch is administered on a national level by the Izaak Walton League of America, a non-profit conservation organization based in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Volunteers from Oregon to Maine, through New England and into the Carolinas, sample chloride levels in the streams, rivers, and ponds where they live.

"This is our fastest-growing year of Salt Watch yet," said Emily Bialowas, Salt Watch Outreach Program Coordinator. "We have received over 1,600 Salt Watch results and sent almost 3,000 kits to people across the country, which is amazing."

Volunteers are given a free kit containing four test strips. Volunteers can monitor a waterbody of their choice. A baseline test is done before road salt has been applied, followed by testing after salting, the first snowfall and subsequent rainfall or warm-ups. Volunteers upload results to the Salt Watch database after each test.

The Coalition for a Sustainable Cheshire is testing freshwater streams, rivers and ponds throughout the Mill and Quinnipiac river watersheds in Cheshire, Southington and Wallingford.

"We have volunteers who are board members, environmental organizations and residents who are concerned about the water quality in their towns," said Fiona Pearson, Coalition for a Sustainable Cheshire co-chair.

Pearson is testing water samples in the Mill River behind Bartlem Park.

"Most people don't realize that road salt washes off the roads and into waterbodies and it doesn't go away. It's a long-term problem," she said. "Excessive salt affects aquatic creatures including salamanders, turtles and fish. It also can harm wildlife, kill trees and adversely affect the soil."

A chloride reading of 230 ppm is toxic to aquatic life. In an unpolluted stream, the strip should read zero.

"This is why Salt Watch is important – it can help us identify hotspots in areas that are otherwise only being monitored for chloride in a few key places in a watershed," said Bialowas. "Volunteers can then address their concerns with local authorities, including town councils and health departments. Outreach can be as simple as talking to neighbors and friends about the harm of excessive chloride."

Raising awareness within communities about road salt overuse is key to successfully reducing the amount of chloride that goes into our waterbodies, Bialowas said.

"Salt Watch educates residents on how to use salt effectively to provide winter protection as needed for driving and walking, but to do so in a way that is less harmful to the environment.

Sharing best practices for salt use by landscapers, private contractors and municipalities is another facet offered by the Izaak Walton League and Salt Watch," said Bialowas.

Cheshire's Highway Superintendent Mark Cunningham and George Noewatne, the director of public works and engineering, attended local winter road salt best-practice seminars this year.

"There is a protocol in place," Noewatne said of the town's salt protocols, adding that it is based on the judgment of the highway superintendent and is highly dependent on conditions. "Salt use is highly variable from year to year. Last year we used 2,800 tons."

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, Cheshire's water supplier, has taken action to reduce road salt at their facilities and wellfields. Regional Water Authority workers attended classes to better understand how salt impacts the environment, its effect on equipment and infrastructure, proper storage methods and proper application methods, said Steve Vitko, senior environmental analyst.

"We also learned how to correctly calibrate our equipment, which directly correlated to less volumes of road salt being applied," he said.

One goal is to eliminate road salt at wellfields, Vitko said.

"Our team is currently researching innovative ideas to eliminate salt use, while keeping our employees safe," he said. "Technologies include heated walkways, eliminating impervious surfaces to maintain better traction and ice melting solutions that do not contain chloride or negatively impact water quality."

William Henley, aquatic resource scientist with the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, said "salt is a very problematic contaminant which can impact wetlands, streams and freshwater ecosystems such as our reservoirs, and groundwater supplies."

Henley explained that chloride concentration, the other component of road salts, has been shown to decrease the biodiversity of aquatic plants and animals and can create unfavorable conditions for the growth of phytoplankton, namely cyanobacteria. A number of studies have highlighted acute toxicity of salt and chlorides to aquatic life, spanning from macroinvertebrates to fish species. These direct ecological impacts generally present themselves during first-flush runoff of salts into smaller streams and ponds.

Road salts have various other watershed-wide impacts as well, such as promoting the spread of invasive species. Road salts can also impact watershed soils, promoting the runoff of contaminants and decreasing soil water retention.

The Mill River Watershed Association, a community-based group focused on the long-term health of the watershed, also is paying attention to winter salt use.

"The overuse of salt does have a negative impact on the environment, especially in upper watershed areas with smaller streams and wetlands that don't allow for dilution," watershed association president Ron Walters stated. "MRWA stakeholders have been studying this problem for several years. We realize the need for salt use as a safety issue but also understand through education and awareness we can greatly reduce the negative environmental impact of salt use through proper application and alternative methods."

Crews Respond to Hazmat Incident After Oil Truck Rolls Over in Cheshire

NBC 30 - February 11, 2022

A truck carrying home heating oil rolled over on Route 42 in Cheshire Friday morning, spilling almost 2,000 gallons of oil, some of which ended up down a storm drain.

An oil truck rolled over in Cheshire Friday, closing Route 42 and creating an oil spill, according to Cheshire police.

Cheshire firefighters and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) responded to the scene for a hazardous materials incident.

About 2,000 gallons of home heating oil spilled from the truck, according to the DEEP. The oil traveled downhill along Route 42 and into a catch basin.

Clean-up remains ongoing and is expected to continue throughout the weekend.

Some of the oil made it into a storm drain and there are concerns because the spill took place in an area that is a public water supply watershed area. There are both public water supply service areas and private wells nearby, according to DEEP.

DEEP said there is no expected impact to public drinking water supplies, though the Regional Water Authority is monitoring the situation.

The Chesprocott Health District has contacted homeowners in the area who are served by private wells to assist them.

At this time, it does not appear that homeowners will be impacted by the spill.

Route 42, also known as Bethany Mountain Road, is closed from North Brooksvale Road to the Prospect town line, police said.

The driver was the only person in the truck and was taken to the hospital to be treated for non-life threatening injuries.

The cause of the crash is still under investigation. The road will remain closed during the investigation and cleanup.