


MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council
FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager 
DATE: January 21, 2022
SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

The following information includes follow up from general items that were discussed at previous Council meetings as well as updates of a general nature from the departments. The items are organized by department and are intended to provide information on activities currently being undertaken by the Town's departments and those matters that are upcoming. Not all departments will be represented in each Report.

Land Use

- As a reminder, the Lower Connecticut River Council of Government (RiverCOG) will hold a kickoff workshop meeting on February 10 at 7:00pm to begin work on the East Hampton Housing Plan. Those interested in attending the kickoff meeting may [register via the Zoom platform](#) at the link in the attached flyer. The East Hampton Housing Plan not only serves as the Town's Plan as required by Statute, but also is a chapter of the Regional Housing Plan being developed by the RiverCOG. A presentation and workshop on the Regional Plan will be held on Monday, January 24 at 7:00pm and those interested in attending that meeting may register through the RiverCOG website (www.rivercog.org/rhp) or [via the Zoom platform](#).

Library

- Library staff have begun planning several programs that make use of the recent grant intended to "spread kindness." The first of the events will take place during April and will include an art exchange drop box, a "kindness kit" for local residents containing supplies to help them bring goodwill to the community, a silent auction featuring the work of local artists with the funds benefitting local animal rescues, and a local history exchange with other libraries across the country and globally. As a reminder, the Library, along with other area libraries, received another donation from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and the Peach Pit Foundation, in the amount of \$2,500.
- The Library will celebrate Take Your Child to the Library Day on Saturday, February 5 with in-house activities, including a drop in craft, an obstacle course, and a face painter, who will be doing designs on foreheads, hands, and arms.
- Olivia Mendlinger has started with the Library as its newest Public Service Associate. She is currently a library science student at Simmons University in Massachusetts, and we are excited to welcome her to the team.

Parks and Recreation

- The Air Line Trail Sub Committee released and made available a new pocket-sized brochure for users of the Trail. These brochures were developed in partnership with the CT DEEP and Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development as part of a program to provide users of the Air Line Trail information about the communities through which the Trail passes. The brochures may be found in East Hampton at the following Trail heads and downtown businesses: Cranberry Bog, Depot Hill, Main Street Commuter Lot, Library, Parks and Recreation office, Air Line Cycles and Willow. An image of the brochure is included in this Report.
- Department staff has been responding to reports of a "Fish Kill" on Lake Pocotopaug and has communicated with CT DEEP regarding the matter. DEEP inland fishery division visited the locations of concern and provided information the Town. As the attached information, which is being distributed to many lake-area residents, indicates, the fish deaths are likely the result of an algae that can irritate the gills of the White Perch, which is the species being impacted. At this point, DEEP is not planning further investigation. An article was also printed in the today's Rivereast on the matter.

Police

- Officer Brandy Lenois has finished her Field Training and is now working on her own. As the Council may recall, Officer Lenois came to East Hampton as a fully certified Police Officer and EMT at the end of November and her Field Training was focused on learning East Hampton and the Department's local policies.
- Officer Vincent Garofalo started the Connecticut Police Academy on January 21 and he is expected to graduate sometime in August. With Officer Garofalo's hiring, the Department is again fully staffed at seventeen police officers. In the last few years, there has been significant turn-over in the department, primarily due to retirements, and this is one of a handful of times since 2018 that the department has been fully staffed even though some Officers were in training. That notwithstanding, one of our Officers has been called up by the Air Force Reserves and will be serving that duty until at least July.

Public Works

- Over the past week, the Public Works Department has spent the majority of its resources responding to winter weather. Over the holiday weekend crews were dispatched on Sunday and Monday to address slick road conditions as well as planned responses on Thursday morning for the storm and Friday morning to address overnight freeze. In all cases, crews also address sidewalks for which the Town bears responsibility. In between storms, crews have spent the majority of time washing and maintaining vehicles and stockpiling deicing materials. When other time is available, staff has been able to conduct some roadside wood debris collection operations from the Town's tree removal program.

Senior Center

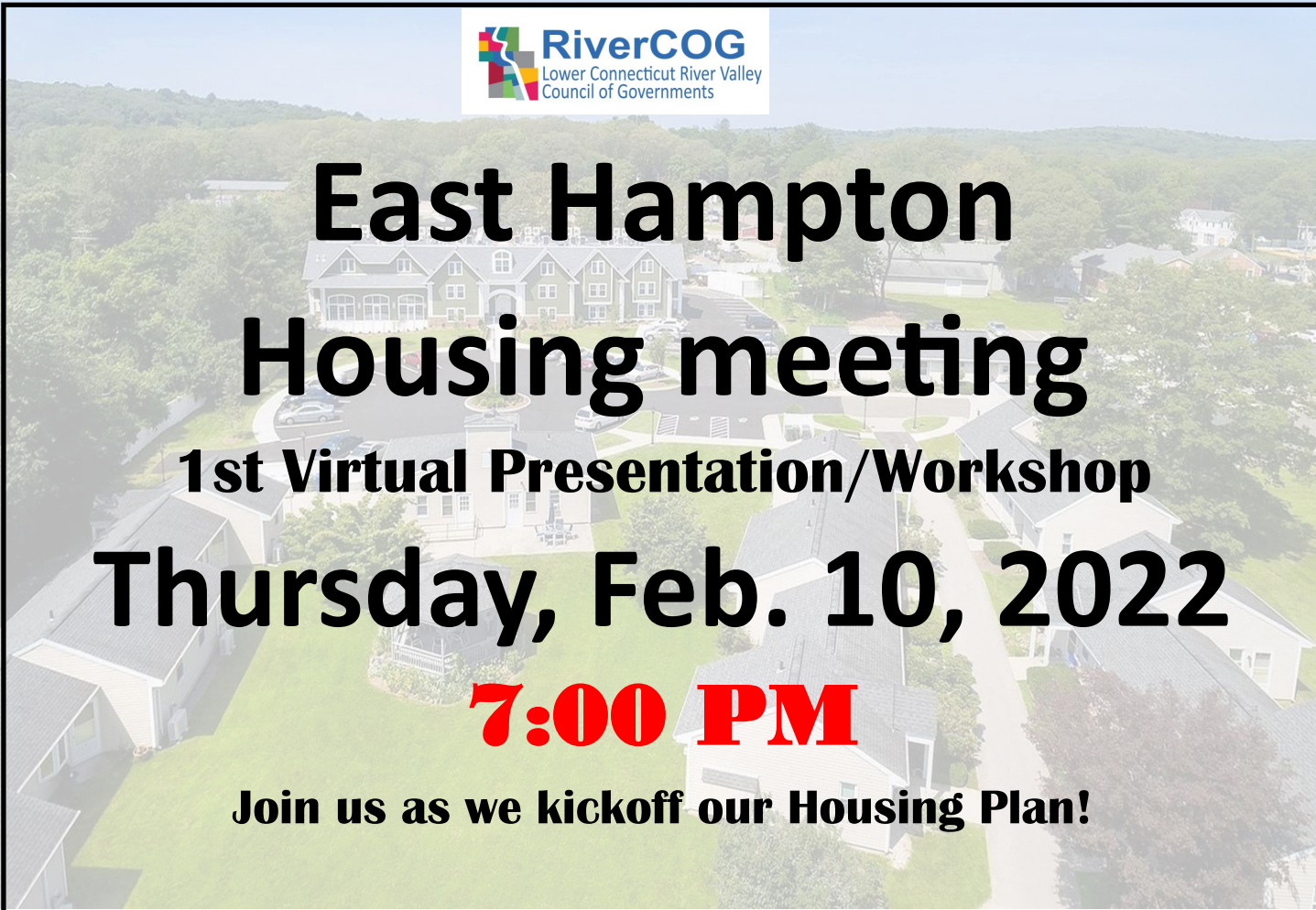
- The increase of positivity rate of the COVID-19 virus impacted the number of people visiting the Senior Center and attending programs. The Senior Center continues to offer programs and people are simply choosing to stay home and not put themselves at unnecessary risk. To the extent possible, programming will be offered via Zoom or other online platforms.
- AARP tax assistance is resuming service in East Hampton. People will have a brief interview with a Tax Preparer and then the tax preparer will contact the individual once the return is complete for a follow up meeting. AARP was able to secure an East Hampton resident as a volunteer, which allows the service to continue in our community.
- Future program plans include a fun "Grab, Click and Go" event for Valentine's Day, a cooking demonstration in March, a continued Family History seminar, Mother's Day floral arranging, and outdoor programming for the spring. The High School business class and art department are also creating Valentine bookmarks for Senior Center visitors, which will be distributed as part of the "Grab, Click, Go" event and at other Center activities.
- Center staff is collaborating with the Library for special Valentines from the children's program and also offering Book Bundles at the Senior Center. The Book Bundles program is an outreach program for older adults who may not be comfortable coming to the Library but will come to the Senior Center to get a small group of books on a common theme for at-home reading.

Town Manager/Other

- The Town's COVID rate leveled out and dropped in the recent figures. The Town remains in the "Red Alert" level under the State's framework along with all of the State except one town. In the recent reporting, the Town saw an average of about 17 new cases each day or 131 cases per 100,000 population. The Town has been at this level for the last two weeks with a slight decline in the second week. The weekly report from Chatham Health District is attached to this Report. All who are eligible are being encouraged to receive the COVID vaccine, which is available through Chatham Health District and other locations. About 71% of the Town's residents are fully vaccinated.

DC

cc: Management Staff



East Hampton Housing meeting

1st Virtual Presentation/Workshop
Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022
7:00 PM

Join us as we kickoff our Housing Plan!

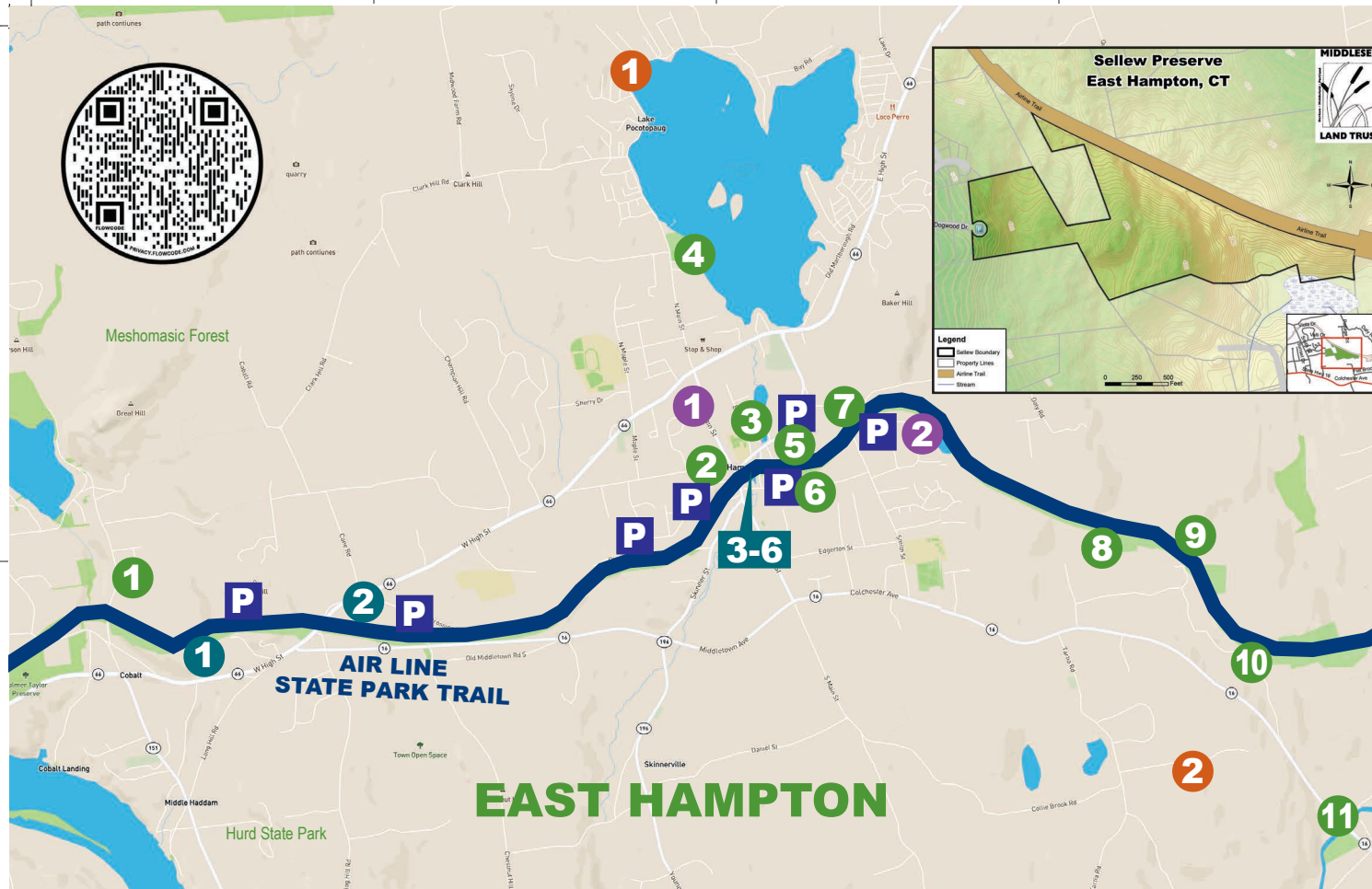
Register in advance

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApd-qgqzsqEtfPzDW1AfOjfZF2J6z9PZYX>



After registering, you will receive a confirmation email and meeting link.

VISIT WWW.RIVERCOG.ORG/RHP TO LEARN MORE



- Historic/Highlights**
- Cobalt Station Sign
 - Joseph N. Goff House Museum
 - Chatham Historical Society
 - Sears Park, Lake Pocotopaug
 - Bishop's Cut
 - Bevin Brothers Bell Factory
 - Cranberry Bog
 - Sellow Preserve
 - Rapallo Viaduct
 - Lyman Viaduct
 - Comstock Bridge
- Bike Shop/Repair**
- Air Line Cycles
 - Repair Station
- Camping**
- Nelson's Family Campgrounds
 - Markham Meadows
- Food/Snacks**
- Pizzeria DaVinci
 - The Tavern on 66
 - PO's Rice and Spice
 - ECO Coffee
 - Main Street Pizza
 - Gulf Gasoline Station
- Parking**
- Depot Hill
 - Aldens Crossing
 - Forest Street
 - Town Hall Road
 - Main Street
 - Watrous Street
 - Smith Street

AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL EAST HAMPTON

East Hampton is located 22 miles south of the state capital of Hartford and is equidistant from Boston and New York City. Our town is known for its rich history, environmental assets, and small town charm. We strive to preserve our rural-suburban character, our farmlands, watershed land, and historic structures by taking a long-term view. Enriching quality of life, respecting town heritage, and building community are among our highest priorities.

Pocotopaug, at 512 acres. State parks and forests surround us on our northern, southern and western borders, along with the famous Comstock Covered Bridge across the Salmon River.

In East Hampton you will find a community that supports a rural/suburban lifestyle that is family oriented. It is supported by a quality school system, two public libraries, two history museums, local parks with recreational programming, and two campgrounds, Nelson's Family Campground and Markham Meadows.

We are home to one of Connecticut's largest inland water bodies, Lake

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
1767
Connecticut

HIGHLIGHTS IN EAST HAMPTON, CT

The Joseph N. Goff House Museum and Cultural Center
2 Barton Hill Rd.
This historically preserved building contains artifacts and memorabilia of Connecticut's 84th Governor and East Hampton native, William A. O'Neill. The Cultural Center sponsors musical and enrichment programs, a proud testament to our community's cultural, civic, and architectural heritage.



The Chatham Historical Museum and School House
6 Bevin Blvd.
chathamhistoricalct.org
A private, nonprofit, organization open to the public the first Sunday of each month from 2-4pm. The museum is loaded with displays of historic artifacts, photographs, bells, toys, costumes, tools and items of interest.



Belltown Village Center
Historic Main Street is lined with eclectic boutiques offering clothing, local handicrafts, jewelry, flowers, art, antiques, furniture and even window blinds. You will also find eateries, a coffee house, artisan bakery, liquor store, barber shop, hair salons, and Public Library.



AirLine Cycles
66 Main St., (860) 365-5496
Visit our family friendly, local bike shop in the Belltown Village Center for new or used bicycles, tune-ups and repairs.

Bicycle Repair & Tool Stand
Located on the trail (about 1/2 mile on the right after Cranberry Bog toward Colchester). Spearheaded by Eagle Scout Cody Voelker, installed in 2021.

Lake Pocotopaug Sears Park, 68 North Main St.
Nestled on the westerly shore of Lake Pocotopaug is our beautiful Sears Park. Featuring a public beach, playscape, pavilion, picnic shelter, gazebo, boat launch, tennis and basketball courts open to East Hampton residents. Please use extreme caution while cycling on the busy roads from the Air Line trail to Sears Park.

Rapallo Viaduct



AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL EAST HAMPTON



Comstock Covered Bridge
East Hampton
The Bridge spans the Salmon River in southeastern East Hampton and is named after the town's first postmaster, Franklin G. Comstock. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as one of only three remaining historical covered bridges in the state. It serves as a well-preserved example of a Howe truss - a design patented in 1840 - and also provides the only remaining example in Connecticut of a wooden pony truss.



TRAIL TIPS

- Horses and riders have right of way.
- Bring water and a cell phone.
- Let someone know where you're going and when you might return.
- Clean up after your pets.
- Carry out what you carry in.
- If you see something, say something.

For additional copies of this map, please email jhall@easthamptonct.gov



PARKING

Many parking areas serve the Air Line State Park Trail. Some primary locations are:

THOMPSON

- Large parking lot at 121 Riverside Dr, (Rt 12, Mechanicsville)
- Pull off for a few cars at Air Line trail crossing, 388 Sand Dam Rd
- 5 car parking lot, located at 662 East Thompson Rd, near the junction of New Rd

PUTNAM

- 18 Kennedy Dr, across from Canal
- 80 Kennedy Dr, directly across from the South entrance of Simonzi Park
- 98 Kennedy Dr
- 165 Kenedy Dr (DMV lot)

POMFRET

- 18 car paved parking lot at Pomfret Station, 13 Railroad Ave (off of Rt 169)
- Parking adjacent to trail, in Town owned paved parking lot, west side of Pomfret Town Hall
- Parking available in rear of Town owned paved parking lot at Pomfret Community Center, 207 Mashamoquet Rd (Rt. 44)

HAMPTON

- Potter Rd 0.6 mile north of its intersection with Rt 6 in Goodwin State Forest

WINDHAM

- Intersection of Beaver Hill Rd and Windham Rd (Rt 203) in North Windham, at the CT Eastern Railroad Museum and in downtown Willimantic.

COLUMBIA

- Rt 87, Cook Hill Rd and Village Hill Rd

EAST HAMPTON

- Depot Hill, Cobalt; Aldens Crossing (at Rt 16); Forest St (Between Hayes Rd and Childs Rd); Town Hall Rd (Off Main St.); Main Street; Watrous Street; Smith Street (at Cranberry Bog)

PORTLAND

- Parking at 82 Middle Haddam Rd

RAILS TO TRAIL AIR LINE TRAIL A CONNECTICUT STATE PARK

Legend:
— Air Line State Park Trail
★ Trail Entry/Parking
— Colchester Spur
— Hop River State Park Trail

AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL HISTORY

In the 1960s, over fifty miles of the rail bed from East Hampton to the Massachusetts border were acquired by the Connecticut State Park System to construct a recreational linear park.

This trail has a colorful past. The "Air Line" was envisioned as a direct line between New York City and Boston. It opened in 1873 and 25 miles shorter, it offered fierce competition to the shoreline rail service from New York to Boston. The mesmerizing, white-painted express train, known as the Ghost Train, made the run between Boston and New York in six hours, a record time for 1884.

The construction of the new rail line contained ambitious feats of engineering, blasting through granite hills, navigating deep valleys and rivers along the route. The Air Line Railroad's "Ghost Train" began in 1891 and was designed to attract wealthy travelers. Luxurious Pullman cars were painted white with gold trim, and the staff of the train wore formal white uniforms.



The catastrophic Great East Thompson Train Wreck on December 4, 1891 clouded the introduction of this fast new rail service. It was one of the greatest train wrecks in American history, and the only train accident to involve four trains. Still, over the next four years, successful businessmen and prominent citizens, including President Benjamin Harrison, rode the increasingly well-known Ghost Train. As it sped across eastern Connecticut, its luminescent cars were easily recognized, especially at twilight.

In the 20th century, technology increased, railroad engines became faster, rail cars became longer, everything became heavier and after World War II, access to automobiles and interstate highways reduced the profitability of rail travel. The quaintness of the Air Line's winding grades as well as the weight restrictions of the spindly trestle bridges began to show its limitations. During its construction, the Air Line Railroad was expensive and controversial, but its operational costs would lead to its ultimate demise and abandonment. Passenger service on the Air Line ceased by 1937, and the track was completely abandoned by 1965.

Today, visitors enjoy scenic panoramas, village life, wildlife, hiking trails, and the tranquility of the rural landscape. The United States Department of the Interior recognized the southern section of the Air Line State Park Trail as a national recreation trail in 2002.

For more maps in this series, email outreach@ctcrd.org or visit ctcrd.org.

Connecticut
CTvisit.com/MysticCountry

RC&D



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Town of East Hampton Conservation, Lake Commission

January 19, 2022,

In response to multiple recent reports of dead White Perch observed at Lake Pocotopaug the following information has been provided by:

Joe Cassone Fishery Biologist - Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program, DEEP Fisheries Division and

Hillary Kenyon Limnologist, Soil Scientist, & Certified Lake Manager at Northeast Aquatic Research.

While it can be concerning to see dead fish along a lake shore, winter fish mortality is not uncommon in North East Lakes. To date, the reports and photos received have indicated that all of the dead fish are White Perch. The fact that multiple species of fish are not observed in the mortality is indicative that the conditions resulting in mortality are specific to White Perch. In addition, based on information observed to date, this event would best be described as a minor fish kill of a single species.

At Lake Pocotopaug, White Perch have for several years been regularly observed crowding into the Lake's tributaries such as Christopher Brook during the winter months. This behavior suggests that the fish are seeking to avoid conditions in the Lake. This behavior may potentially be a result of Haptophyte algae that release substances that can irritate the gills of these fish. This algae had been identified in Lake Pocotopaug several years ago (Libby 2000) [Death of Fish in Lake Is Tied to Toxic Algae - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#) and may thus be a factor worth additional investigation. However, what specific conditions or chemical/biological factors the juvenile perch are seeking to escape is not known with certainty, as winter fish kills can be the result of multiple factors including thermal stress, starvation, predation, disease, or a combination of these factors (Hurst 2007). [Causes and consequences of winter mortality in fishes \(psu.edu\)](#).

While it can be troubling to see dead fish along the shoreline, the loss of some white perch may actually be beneficial to the Lake and the lake's fish community. The Town began annual introductions of Walleye fingerlings several years ago in an effort to reduce the White Perch population via predation. However, since the initial Walleye introductions began, it has been determined that manipulating the White Perch population via predation by Walleye may not be feasible. Regardless, the lake continues to support a very large and stunted (small and slow growing) population of White Perch, which exerts tremendous grazing pressure on the zooplankton community within the lake. As zooplankton graze on phytoplankton (algae), a reduced White Perch population (via winter kill or other factors), could benefit the zooplankton population and subsequently improve water quality through phytoplankton reductions.

The summary of this investigation concludes this event is not considered a Large Fish kill by DEEP standards and instead is consistent with prior year reports, therefore at this time the Town and DEEP have completed their investigation. We appreciate the feedback and hope residents will report suspicious activity such as this to the Town Hall in the future. Town residents and Municipal employees should continue to implement measures that reduce nutrient loading and promote a healthy watershed; these actions are likely to be the greatest long-term remedy for the algal and related fish mortality issues historically observed within Lake Pocotopaug.



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Inland Fisheries Division Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program

Winter Fish Kills Fact Sheet

WHAT IS A FISH KILL? An event where large numbers of fish die, indicating a problem in the body of water. Fish kills can be caused by a variety of factors including dissolved oxygen depletion, extreme water temperatures, fish diseases or introduction of pollutants. Most fish kills are natural events.



Example of Winter Kill in a Connecticut Pond

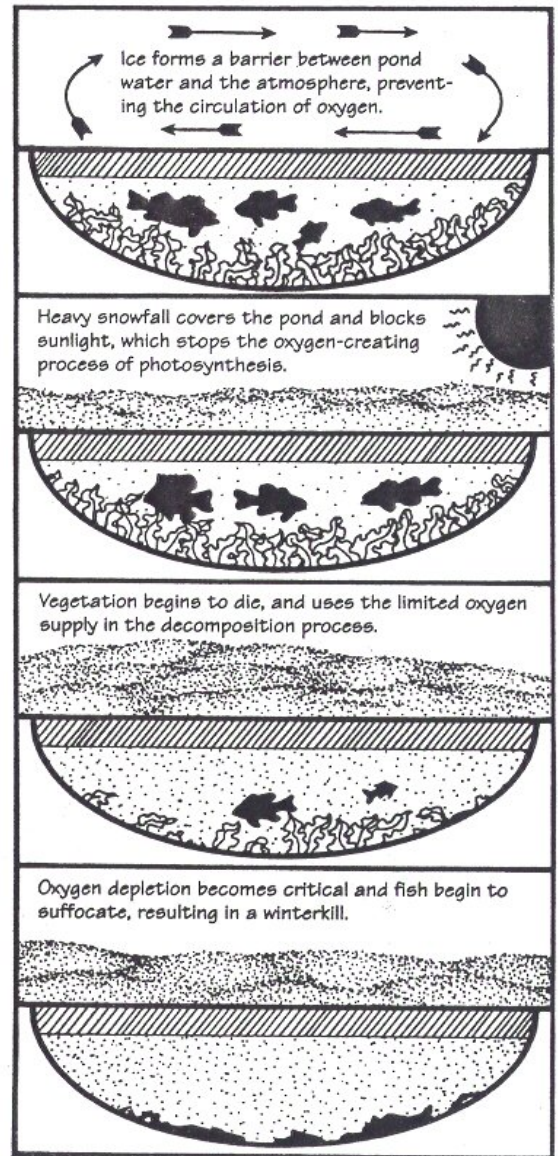
WINTER FISH KILLS: Are generally caused by a depletion of dissolved oxygen. Winter kills occur most frequently in very shallow, nutrient rich ponds that are subject to abundant growth of aquatic plants and algae. Conditions conducive to winterkill arise when heavy snow cover over ice inhibits sunlight penetration, thereby preventing aquatic plants and algae from producing oxygen via photosynthesis. This process is the sole means of oxygen creation under ice-covered ponds. Also, the greater the load of dead and decaying plants and other organic material, the more rapid the loss of oxygen and the more quickly fish can be stressed or killed by low dissolved oxygen levels (See Figure 1). Fish typically die during the winter and are only observed following ice-out.

HOW TO PREVENT: Generally, a thaw that occurs in or around February provides enough sunlight to recharge oxygen supply by means of photosynthesis and melt waters. However, for a harsh winter with a lot of snow and an extended period of ice cover, one of the best things to do is clear snow from several areas of the pond to allow sunlight to penetrate through the ice. Removal of at least 30% of the snow from the ponds surface usually provides adequate sunlight transmission. **Be sure the ice is safe before clearing any snow!**

WILL A FISH COMMUNITY RECOVER FROM A WINTER KILL? Winter kills that occur in larger lakes are rarely serious in the long run because lakes support thousands of fish per acre. Fortunately, usually enough fish survive, either in the lake or in connecting waters, to repopulate the lake. Fish kills can sometimes be beneficial for the fish community by reducing over-populated, slow growing fish species. More severe winterkills that result in the complete elimination of the pond's fish community are more likely to occur in very small, privately owned ponds. In this case, it may be necessary to restock your pond. Contact DEEP Inland Fisheries Division biologists for restocking recommendations. A list of private commercial fish hatcheries where you can purchase fish is listed at the DEEP website: www.ct.gov/deep. You can also consult the publication "Small Ponds in Connecticut: A Guide for Fish Management" that can be purchased at the DEEP Bookstore.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU OBSERVE A FISH KILL: Once dying fish are observed it is usually too late to stop a fish kill. Pond owners who may observe abnormally high fish mortalities after ice out in the spring should notify the DEEP Inland Fisheries Division at the numbers listed below. The public is also reminded that any fish kills that they observe in rivers, lakes, ponds and streams, at any time of the year, should be reported to the DEEP Inland Fisheries Division. Biologists will discuss the caller's observations and determine if a field investigation and involvement of other DEEP units is needed. While most fish kills are natural occurrences, some have been attributed to accidental or unauthorized human actions such as chemical releases, farm runoff and flow modifications or poorly designed or conducted management activities. Anyone reporting fish kills is asked to provide as much detail as possible concerning location, time and date, estimated size, numbers and types of fish involved, and other relevant site-specific information.

Figure 1. The Winter Kill Process



INLAND FISHERIES DIVISION

Hartford Office: **860-424-3474**

Eastern CT: **860-295-9523**

Western CT: **860-567-8998**

DEEP • Inland Fisheries Division • Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program

CHATHAM HEALTH DISTRICT COVID-19 STATUS REPORT

Updated 20Jan2022

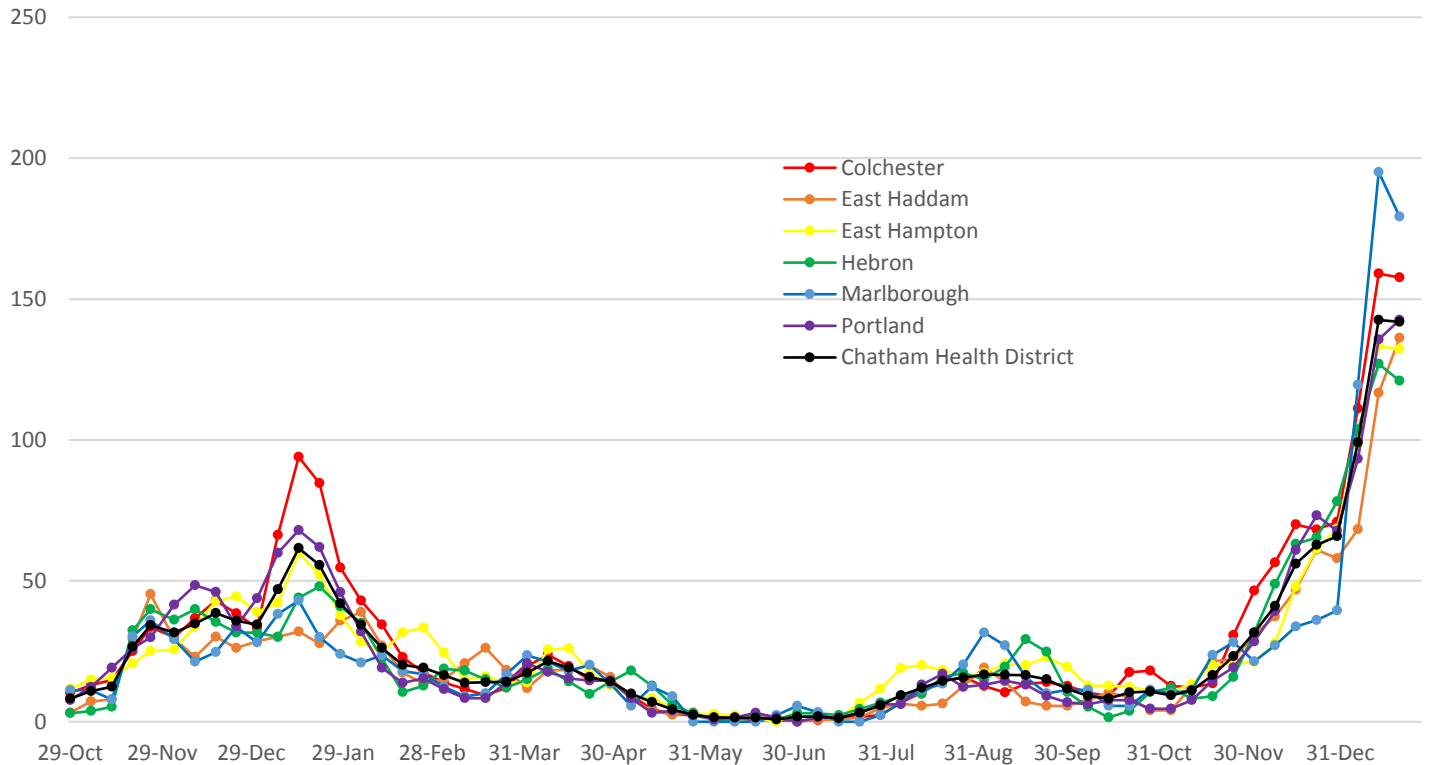
COVID-19 CASES (DPH reporting period: (1/2-1/15))

Dashboard

Town	Alert Status	Average Daily Case Rate #/100,000 population	Number of Cases	Change in Number of Cases
Colchester	Red	157.7	349	-3
East Haddam	Red	126.2	159	12
East Hampton	Red	132.3	237	-2
Hebron	Red	121.0	161	-8
Marlborough	Red	179.3	159	-14
Portland	Red	142.6	185	9
Chatham Health District	NA	141.9	1250	-6

Increased from previous week
 Decreased from previous week
 Unchanged from previous week

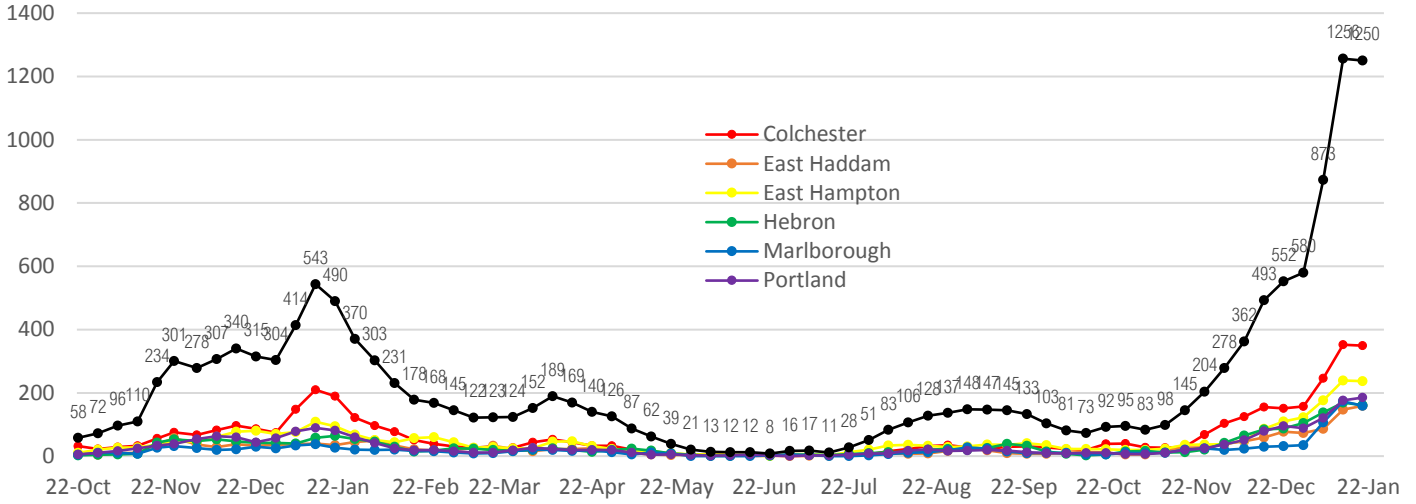
Average Daily Case Rate by Town (# of cases /100,000)



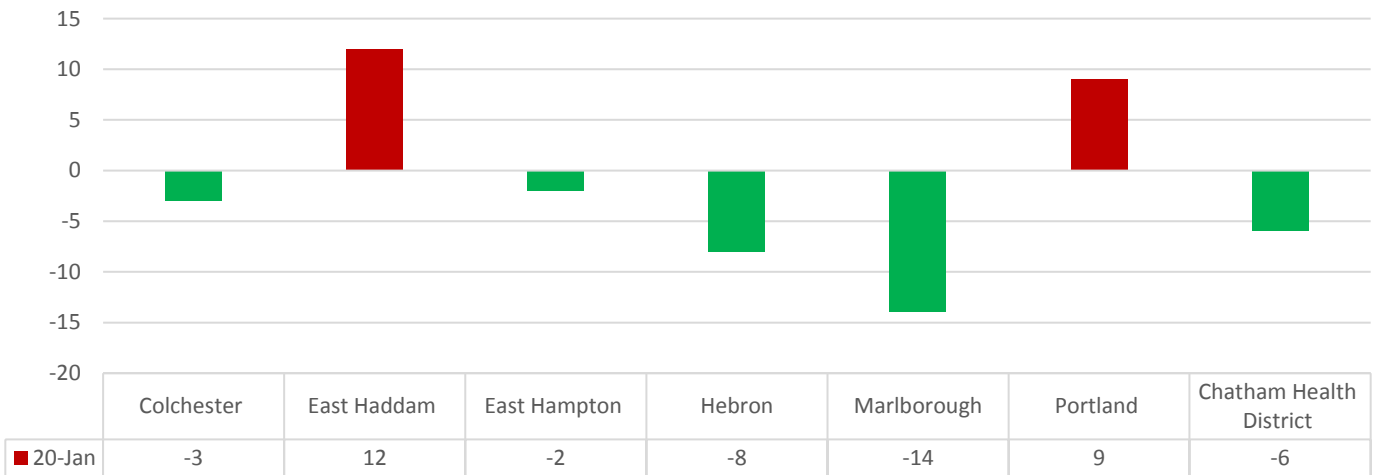
CHATHAM HEALTH DISTRICT COVID-19 STATUS REPORT

Updated 20Jan2022

Number of Cases Reported by Town



Change in Number of Cases Reported by Town



Source:

<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/COVID-19-DPH-Reports-Library/bqve-e8um>

CHATHAM HEALTH DISTRICT COVID-19 STATUS REPORT

Updated 20Jan2022

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Overall COVID-19 Vaccination Rates by Town

Vaccination Coverage as Reported by CT DPH on 19Jan2022

Town	% Total Population That Has Received First Dose	% Total Population This Is Fully Vaccinated
Colchester	80.15%	73.26%
East Haddam	75.53%	67.24%
East Hampton	77.54%	71.20%
Hebron	79.96%	72.90%
Marlborough	81.44%	74.06%
Portland	83.01%	76.39%
Chatham Health District	79.5%	72.5%
Connecticut	81.07%	70.86%

Sources:

<https://data.ct.gov/stories/s/CoVP-COVID-Vaccine-Distribution-Data/bhcd-4mnv/>

<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/COVID-19-Vaccinations-by-Town/x7by-h8k4>

Age-Specific Vaccination Rates by Town

Town	% Initiated Vaccination – 1/19/22					
	5 to 11	12 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65+
Colchester	38.74	64.58	79.72	82.99	84.56	100
East Haddam	26.55	57.43	89.58	73.82	74.65	100
East Hampton	40.09	80.36	82.47	75.76	78.50	100
Hebron	34.94	55.11	95.31	81.09	82.07	100
Marlborough	38.24	79.55	100	77.92	80.08	100
Portland	50.96	71.05	84.69	85.54	84.34	100

Town	% Fully Vaccinated – 1/19/22					
	5 to 11	12 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65+
Colchester	29.90	61.77	71.78	75.07	78.91	100
East Haddam	12.97	53.71	76.67	66.77	67.58	100
East Hampton	32.84	75.53	72.40	69.62	73.31	100
Hebron	26.32	51.58	83.35	74.49	76.90	100
Marlborough	28.48	74.30	94.67	71.31	74.77	100
Portland	42.76	67.69	74.11	79.01	77.92	100

Source: <https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/COVID-19-Vaccinations-by-Town-and-Age-Group/gngw-ukpw>