
Events and Happenings in the Quabbin Health District Region:

Quabbin Health District Harm Reduction Program -- NO COST:

- Opioids and Opioid Overdose Response with Narcan Educational Program & FREE Narcan
- Syringe Exchange Program with Sharps Containers and Needles
- Hygiene Kits
- Non-judgmental, Confidential Resource Connection

SAVE THE DATES! Community Blood Drives!

February 24, 2025, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm at the Belchertown Town Hall, Belchertown, MA

February 26, 2025, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm at the Ware Senior Center, Ware, MA

**Fliers and More Information in February Newsletter!

The Ware Recovery Center of HOPE and Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance are hosting a Community Cold Weather Drive! Now accepting gently used or new sweaters, scarves, gloves, coats, etc. and new socks and beanies – *See the flyer at end of this newsletter for more information!*

FREE Pharmacy Technician Program!! You can become a Licensed Pharmacy Technician by successfully completing the program, located at the Education 2 Employment (E2E) Office on Main Street in Ware! Registration is required - *See the flyer at the end of this newsletter with instructions!*

Did you know?

Travers City, MI hosts an annual New Year's Eve celebration – but instead of a “ball drop” they drop a giant, glowing cherry followed by fireworks! It's called the CherryT Ball Drop!

January 2024



Happy New Year
2025

Quabbin Health District Public Health Nurse Newsletter

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*Serving the towns of
Belchertown, Pelham, and Ware*

126 Main Street Suite D, Ware,
MA 01082



Quabbin
Health District

NATIONAL
**BLOOD
DONOR**
MONTH



**January is National
Blood Donor Month!**

The first National Blood Donor Month, January 1970, was proclaimed on December 31, 1969, by President Richard Nixon, as requested by Senate Joint Resolution 154. This honors those who voluntarily donate blood and encourages new donors to donate!

Where Can I Donate?

American Red Cross: Visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org/> or download their Blood Donor App on the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store.

Baystate Health Locations: Visit <https://www.baystatehealth.org/about-us/volunteering-opportunities/donating-blood-at-baystate-health> for information and locations

Holyoke Medical Center: Visit <https://www.holyokehealth.com/services-specialities/laboratory-services/hmc-blood-bank/> for information and locations

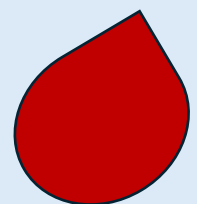
February 24, 2025, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm – Belchertown Town Hall, Belchertown – Community Blood Drive

February 26, 2025, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm – Ware Senior Center, Ware, MA – Community Blood Drive

*****Local Blood Drives Help Keep Blood in the Local Community*****

Did you know?

- ♥ Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood
- ♥ 1 in 7 hospitalized patients need blood
- ♥ 25% of the blood supply is used by patients battling cancer
- ♥ 1 donation can help 3 people!





Test Your Home. Protect Your Health.

JANUARY IS NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH

TAKE ACTION ON RADON

Radon is an invisible, radioactive gas that comes from the ground



Radon is in ALL buildings



The only way to know how much radon is in your home is to TEST



Radon is easy to TEST and easy to REDUCE



According to Mass.gov:

- 1 in 4 homes in Massachusetts has high radon levels (>4 pCi/L).
- Radon mitigation systems should be tested every 1-2 years to make sure they are still effective.
- Tests should be conducted between November 1 and March 31 - radon is higher during the winter.



Radon test kits

To screen your home for radon, you can:

- Buy a radon test kit from a home improvement store
- Hire a radon measurement specialist certified by either the [National Radon Safety Board](#) or the [American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists - National Radon Proficiency Program](#)
- If you are a homeowner or renter who would like to test your home for the first time, you can call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's **radon information line** at [\(800\) 723-6695](tel:8007236695) for a free radon test kit during the heating season (November through March).

QUABBIN HEALTH DISTRICT

HARM REDUCTION PROGRAM



Harm Reduction
Saves Lives

WE PROVIDE (AT NO COST)

- Syringe Exchange Services
- Naloxone Distribution
- Opioids & Overdose Response Training
- Community Resources Connection



Quabbin
Health District

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Public Health Nurse

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www.quabbinhealthdistrict.com

BLOOD IS AN ESSENTIAL MEDICINE

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HUMAN BLOOD



1 unit of blood can save up to **3** lives



Every **2** seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood

29,000

units of red blood cells are used each day in the U.S.



Fewer than **5%** of eligible donors give blood

BLOOD CONSISTS OF SEVERAL COMPONENTS

THOSE MOST NEEDED BY PATIENTS ARE:

WHOLE BLOOD

Whole blood contains red cells, white cells and platelets suspended in plasma.
Use: Major Trauma/Surgery (limited civilian use)

RED BLOOD CELLS

Red blood cells carry hemoglobin and are essential for oxygen exchange in the lungs.

Use: Anemia, Surgical Blood Loss, Chemotherapy

PLATELETS

Platelets are small cell fragments whose main function is to interact with clotting proteins to stop or prevent bleeding.

Use: Thrombocytopenia, Coagential and Acquired Platelet Disorders

PLASMA

Plasma is a fluid composed of ~92% water and 8% proteins, mineral salts, sugars, fats, hormones and vitamins.

Use: Liver Disease, Coagulopathy, Abnormal Coagulation Tests, Coagulation Factor Deficiency

WHO NEEDS BLOOD?

1 IN 7 HOSPITAL PATIENTS NEED BLOOD FOR MANY REASONS, INCLUDING:

- Trauma
- Postpartum Hemorrhage
- Cancer
- Sickle Cell Disease
- Hemophilia
- Kidney Disease
- Liver Disease
- Preterm Infants
- Transplants
- Critical Care
- Burns



HOW MUCH DOES IT TAKE?

AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT VICTIM MAY NEED UP TO

50 RED BLOOD CELL UNITS

A CANCER PATIENT UNDERGOING CHEMOTHERAPY MAY NEED UP TO

8 PLATELET UNITS / WEEK

AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENT MAY NEED UP TO

25 PLASMA UNITS

30 PLATELET UNITS

40 RED BLOOD CELL UNITS

aa BB Accredited

Is Your Facility Accredited by **BB**?

AABB-accredited facilities adhere to the highest standards of donor and patient care and safety.

Community

Cold Weather Drive

Donations will benefit local individuals
and families facing hardships

Happening
now through
Spring!



ACCEPTING NEW & GENTLY-USED:

Gloves • Mittens • Scarfs • Sweaters
Blankets • Base-Layers • Jackets • Coats

AND NEW:

Beanies • Socks

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS & TIMES:

MON
Ware Town Hall
126 Main St.
8am-4pm

TUES
Ware Town Hall
126 Main St.
8am-4pm

WED
Recovery on Main
78 Main St.
1-3pm

THURS
Ware's Public
Library
37 Main St.
10am-7pm

FRI
Recovery Center
of HOPE
52 Main St.
2-4pm

Free Pharmacy Technician Program

Become a licensed Pharmacy Technician by successfully completing our Pharmacy Technician program offered at E2E (Education to Employment)*.

**a collaboration between HCC and Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation*

Program Requirements

1. CURRENTLY RECEIVE SNAP OR TAFDC BENEFITS
2. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA/ GED COMPLETION
3. CLEAN BACKGROUND CHECK (CORI/SORI)
4. COVID-19 VACCINATION
5. PASSING SCORE ON MATH ASSESSMENTS
6. PASSIONATE TO WORK AS A PHARMACY TECHNICIAN

Program Details

- Jump Start at Holyoke Community College is offering a 13 week Pharmacy Technician program starting in mid-December 2024.
- This program will be offered in-person at E2E in Ware, Massachusetts.
- Program Length: 13 weeks
- Schedule: Monday through Friday in-person at Ware, 9AM-2PM
- Free books and materials provided
- Employment search provided
- Interested? Please complete inquiry form, link [here](#) or scan QR code and complete the inquiry form.



Contact Information

- Scan QR code & complete Google inquiry form
- Complete Google form link [here](#)
- Email: jumpstart@hcc.edu





HEALTHY QUABOAG & THE TOWN OF WARE

QUABOAG VALLEY

Food Policy Council

VISION

"THE QUABOAG VALLEY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL WILL MAKE NUTRITIOUS LOCAL FOOD EASILY ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS"

MISSION

THE QUABOAG VALLEY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL MISSION IS TO CONNECT LOCAL RESOURCES, PROVIDE EDUCATION SURROUNDING NUTRITIOUS FOOD, PROMOTE AND ADVOCATE FOR LOCAL FOOD AVAILABILITY, INCREASE COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS, AND IMPROVE THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM FOR ALL"

Serving the towns of: Barre, Belchertown,
Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick,
Holland, Ludlow,
Monson, North Brookfield, New Braintree, Palmer,
Spencer, Wales, Ware, Warren, West Brookfield &
Wilbraham

Anyone is welcome to join the Council! You don't have to have prior experience or knowledge of the local food system and food policy to be involved.

For more information, email Sawyer, at sblake@townofware.com

Testing Your Home for Radon

What is radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas that comes naturally from soil and rocks. You can't see, taste, or smell radon. Radon can build up inside your house and cause lung cancer if you breathe it in over many years. Any home can have a radon problem, no matter the foundation type. **Testing your home is the only way to know if radon is a problem.** Everyone should test their home for radon.



Radon test kits

How do I test for radon?

To screen your home for radon, you can:

- Buy a radon test kit from a home improvement store
- Hire a radon measurement specialist certified by either the [National Radon Safety Board](#) or the [American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists - National Radon Proficiency Program](#), or
- Call the Massachusetts Radon Hotline at (800) 723-6695 for a free test kit.

See the other side of this fact sheet for tips on how to test your home.

What do my test results mean?

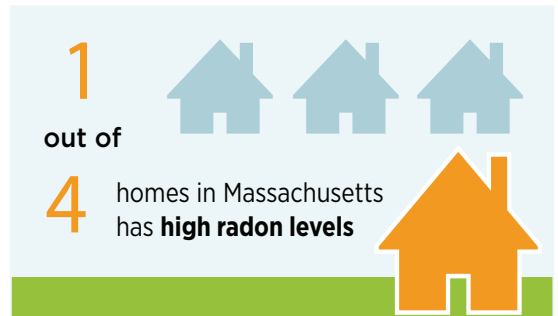
Radon in the air is measured in “picocuries per liter of air” or pCi/L. The level of radon in outdoor air is about 0.4 pCi/L. No home will have 0 pCi/L.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the “action level” for radon at 4 pCi/L. You should fix (“mitigate”) your home if radon is above the action level. No level of radon is risk-free, so the EPA recommends you consider action if your home’s radon level is between 2 and 4 pCi/L.

What if I have a radon mitigation system?

If you have a mitigation system, be sure to test your system every year or two to make sure the system is operating properly. A system that is incorrectly designed or installed can make the problem worse.

Contact the Massachusetts Radon Hotline at (800) 723-6695 if you have questions about radon and testing. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has also developed a fact sheet for “Fixing Radon in your Home” as well as a general fact sheet for homes and one for health care providers. These are available at www.mass.gov/radon.



DO's and DON'Ts of TESTING YOUR HOME FOR RADON

Follow these tips to make sure your radon test is accurate.

Things to DO before a test:

- ✓ Read all instructions that come with your test kit.
- ✓ Test between November 1 and March 31. Radon levels are typically higher in the winter. Re-test your home if your first test was in summer.
- ✓ If you are doing a short-term test lasting 2 or 3 days, close your windows and outside doors for at least 12 hours before beginning the test. Keep outside doors closed as much as possible during the test.

Things to DO during a test:

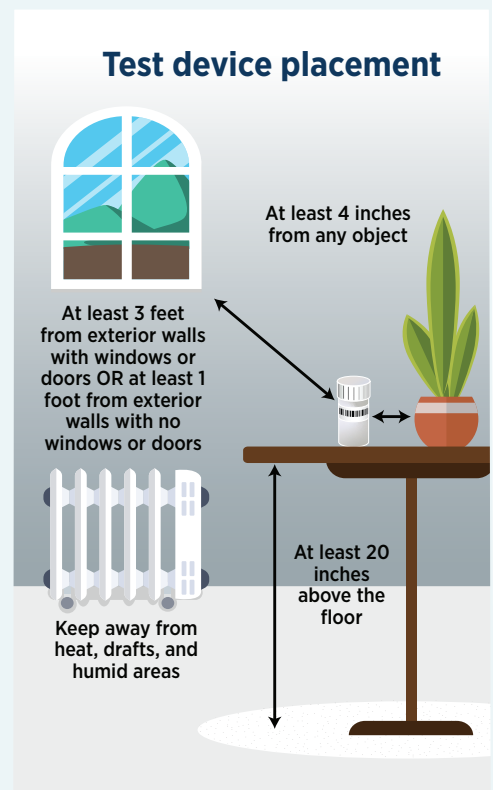
- ✓ Operate heating and air conditioning system fans that re-circulate air during the test.
- ✓ Place the test kit in the lowest level of the home where people spend time (such as a living room, playroom, den, or bedroom).
- ✓ Place the test kit in a location where it won't be disturbed:
 - On a flat surface (such as a table) *and* at least 20 inches above the floor
 - 1 foot away from an exterior wall, and 3 feet away from any exterior wall with openings (such as doors or windows)
 - 4 inches away from any other object
 - Away from any drafts, heat, or humidity (such as a washer or dryer)
 - Leave the kit in place for as long as the package says

During a test, DON'T:

- Don't operate whole-house fans that bring in air from the outside.
- Don't operate fireplaces.
- Don't place the test kit in your kitchen, laundry room, bathroom, or closet.
- Don't test during storms, high wind (greater than 30 miles per hour) conditions, or unseasonably warm weather.

Things to DO after a test:

- ✓ Write down the test kit ID number for future reference.
- ✓ Reseal the package. Fill in forms that come with the test and send it promptly to the lab specified on the package. You should receive your test results within a few weeks.



Carbon Monoxide *Safety*

Hundreds of people die accidentally each year from CO poisoning caused by malfunctioning or improperly used fuel-burning appliances (EPA data). According to the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, CO is the number one cause of poisoning deaths in the U.S.

Carbon monoxide gas is produced whenever any fuel, such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood or charcoal is burned.

Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning

CO enters the lungs and blood where it competes with oxygen normally carried by red blood cells. CO attaches to the cells 200 times easier than oxygen. Without oxygen, cells begin to die.

Exposure to carbon monoxide can produce flu-like symptoms such as:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Fainting

At higher levels, CO exposure can cause:

- Unconsciousness
- Death

What to Do If You Suspect CO Exposure

- Get out of the house or car and get fresh air.
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's house.
- If you have symptoms, seek medical help immediately.

Carbon Monoxide is:

- *Poisonous*
- *Odorless*
- *Colorless*
- *Tasteless*

Protect Your Family

- Install carbon monoxide alarms on every level of your home, except unfinished basements or attics.
- Since 2006, state law has required carbon monoxide alarms in most homes.
- Locate CO alarms near bedrooms so family members will awaken at night.
- Alarms should be kept away from open windows or doors, excessively hot, cold or damp areas and "dead-air spaces" such as corners of rooms and peaks of ceilings.
- Do not place a CO alarm in a garage, furnace room, near the stove or fireplace.
- Change the batteries according to directions.
- Change the back-up batteries after a prolonged power outage.
- Know the difference between the alarm signal and the low battery alert.

(over) →



FireFactors

Office of the State Fire Marshal • www.mass.gov/dfs • (978) 567-3300

What Kind of CO Alarms to Purchase

- Make sure that any alarm you purchase is approved and certified by a nationally recognized testing agency, such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- Several types of alarms are allowed in Massachusetts:
 - Battery powered with battery monitoring (a low battery signal);
 - Plug-in (AC powered) units with battery backup;
 - Hard-wired with battery backup (usually involves hiring an electrician);
 - Combination smoke detectors and CO alarms that have a signal as well as a voice alert;
 - Low-voltage with secondary power
- Follow installation instructions carefully.

Appliances and CO Safety

If appliances that burn fuel are properly maintained and used, the amount of CO produced is usually not hazardous. Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions that come with fuel-burning devices.

However, **if appliances are not working properly or are used incorrectly, dangerous levels of CO can result.**

- Have a qualified service technician inspect your appliances yearly, before the heating season.
- Check vent pipes, flues and chimneys for leaks or blockages.
- Un-vented kerosene heaters are illegal in MA.
- Never use a charcoal grill indoors!
- Do not use a gas oven to heat your home.
- Don't leave a vehicle running inside a garage, even if the door is open. Fumes will build up quickly inside the home.
- Snow can block car tailpipes outdoors.
- Never use gasoline-powered engines (generators, chain saws, blowers, weed trimmers, mowers or snow blowers) indoors or near doors or windows.

Replace Aging CO Alarms

- Replace aging CO alarms every 5 -7 years according to directions.
- Newer model CO alarms have a 10-year sealed lithium battery that does not need changing. At 10 years, the entire device is replaced.

Sources of CO:

- *Furnaces and water heaters*
- *Chimneys and woodstoves*
- *Gas and oil fueled space heaters*
- *Blocked furnace and dryer vents*
- *Car tailpipes blocked by snow*
- *Generators*
- *Running vehicles*
- *Barbeque grills and camping stoves*
- *Gas ovens used for heat*
- *Gas tools such as snow removal and yard equipment*