

# WDG Board of Health

# Highlights

## Board of Health Members

Nancy Sullivan  
Chair  
City of Guelph

Allen Taylor  
Vice-Chair  
County of Dufferin

Dennis Lever  
Secretary– Treasurer  
Warden, County of Wellington  
Mayor, Township of Puslinch

Dr. Nicola Mercer  
Ex-Officio Member  
Medical Officer of Health & CEO,  
WDG Public Health

Margaret Abbink  
City of Guelph

William Baxter  
County of Wellington

Christine Billings  
Councillor, City of Guelph

George Bridge  
Warden, County of Wellington  
Mayor, Town of Minto

Cam Guthrie  
Mayor, City of Guelph

Guy Gardhouse  
Councillor, County of Dufferin  
Mayor, Township of East Garafraxa

June Hofland  
Councillor, City of Guelph

Ken McGhee  
Councillor, County of Dufferin  
Deputy Mayor, Town of Mono

Keith Perron  
City of Guelph

Chris White  
Councillor, County of Wellington  
Mayor, Township of Guelph-Eramosa

*Public Health is governed by a Board of Health consisting of provincially appointed local municipal councillors, mayors and community members and is mandated to support the well-being of individuals and communities.*

## Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO, shared:

**Well Water Safety:** To prevent or reduce the burden of waterborne illness related to drinking water, private well owners in Ontario are able to have the bacteriological quality of their water tested for free through Public Health. Public Health is analyzing the patterns of well water samples submitted for testing over a 10 year period from 2006-2015. Preliminary analysis has been conducted for 2011 to 2015 and 31,452 samples were included in the analysis. On average, 19% of samples showed evidence of bacterial contamination and 2.9% were positive for *E. coli*. Over the 5 year period, only 21% to 25% of wells tested in a given year met the recommended testing frequency (at least three times a year). Public Health will be using this evidence to motivate more consistent well water testing

**Rabies is coming soon:** Public Health is notifying the public that raccoon rabies has recently re-emerged after a 10 year absence in the animal population in Ontario. In fact, hundreds of raccoons and skunks have tested positive for the raccoon strain of rabies in the last 15 months. A public awareness campaign has been launched to warn people and tell them what to do if they suspect they or their pets have been exposed. Physicians and veterinarians are also receiving information.

**Ongoing School Suspensions:** Having suspended almost 2,000 students in both elementary and high schools, Public Health is running extra clinics to help students get back to school. Since suspensions began on March 22, Public Health has administered almost 4,400 vaccine shots to students needing to catch up.

**Mumps:** 4 lab-confirmed cases of mumps were linked to a keg party held in Guelph. Public Health reached out to college-aged residents to inform them that mumps was in our community, what they can do to protect themselves, what symptoms they need to look for and what to do if they do become ill.

**Measles:** Toronto Public Health has reported 4 lab-confirmed cases of measles and WDG Public Health is following a number of contacts linked to cases in our area. Public Health will monitor for signs that the disease is in our area.

**Opioids:** There have been four overdose-related deaths with Fentanyl being suspected. Public Health is working to identify better data sources to provide a better understanding of who is at risk. Local service providers are being engaged to ensure we have the best information possible so any community drug strategy is based on local population evidence.