



# 2024-2025

# Environmental Health Annual REPORT

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 [www.ccraven.org/EnvironmentalHealth](http://www.ccraven.org/EnvironmentalHealth)

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MISSION STATEMENT

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To safeguard life, promote human health, and protect the environment through the practice of modern environmental health science, the use of technology, rules, public education, and above all, dedication to the public trust.

The Craven County Health Department - Division of Environmental Health seeks to build upon the history of public health and to assist in maintaining a healthy environment in which it is pleasant to live and work. This Division strives to respond to the dynamics and growth of our county and the changing priorities of Public Health. This is accomplished through the development and implementation of programs designed to assist in the promotion of healthy living and the mitigation of adverse environmental factors.

The Division protects public health and safety through preventive measures designed to identify and control the spread of disease. This is accomplished primarily by the promotion of environmental health through education of the general public and through the enforcement of state and local public health regulations.



# MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

This section's goal is to ensure that citizen's requests, data and other information are distributed in a timely manner to the appropriate personnel or program. Researching and providing documents such as older septic permits upon request by citizens. Finances associated with Environmental Health's various programs.

This section is responsible for, but not limited to:

- Accounts receivable and accounts payable
- Purchasing
- Accounting support for the Animal Shelter and voucher program
- Receive samples for water analysis
- Process applications and permits for septic tanks, food, lodging and institutional plan reviews
- Generate reports
- Ensure documents are completed, processed and maintained
- Assist with various needs of staff and with special projects
- Log complaints or inquiries from citizens, and
- Various other requests for service



# FINANCE

Environmental Health Management Support receives funds from several sources.

Fees for Services:

- Permits & Approvals for Septic Tank Systems
- Private Drinking Water Well Permits
- Water Sample Analyses

- Plan Review for Food Service Establishments
- Temporary & Limited Food Establishment Permits
- Plan Review and Annual permits for Swimming Pools
- Annual Tattoo Artist Permits
- Manager Food Safety Training

**LOCAL TAX SUPPORT: \$1,254,364**  
**CRAVEN COUNTY SUPPORT IS PROVIDED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION, HOWEVER NOT AS REVENUE, AND IT'S HANDLED THROUGH THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM.**

**STATE AID TO COUNTY: \$48,834**

Annual permit fees collected by these State for FLI establishments are shared with the counties based on the percentage of required sanitation inspection completed. We received \$36,608.

A portion of the State Health Aid to County was allocated for Environmental Health in the amount of \$12,226.

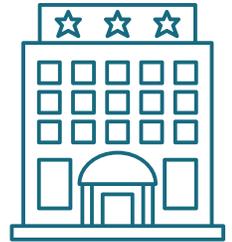
## **2024-2025 REVENUES FROM SERVICES: \$141,164.00**

- Onsite Application Fees \$93,278
- FLI: \$8,610
- Plan Review \$4,050
- TFE \$4,110
- ServSafe Courses \$450
- ENV Lab: \$49,276





# FOOD, LODGING AND INSTITUTIONS



This program's goal is to ensure excellent food safety and sanitation in regulated establishments.

The FLI program conducts unannounced inspections in a variety of facilities including:

- Restaurants
- Push Carts and Mobile Food Trucks
- School Cafeterias
- Nursing Homes
- Day Care Centers
- Hotels
- Bed & Breakfast Inns/Homes



All inspection reports for these facilities can be found on the Craven County website at: [www.cravencountync.gov](http://www.cravencountync.gov) or by typing "craven establishments" without the quotes in your internet search engine.

FLI staff work to ensure compliance with all sanitation laws through routine inspection, education, construction plan review and complaint investigations.

# 3 INSPECTION TYPES



## Sanitation

- 1-4 inspections per year based on risk hazard analysis of food preparation.
- Unannounced
- Grade card is posted. 90-100=A; 80-89.5=B; 70-79.5=C.

Establishments receiving a score below 70 will be closed.

- Majority conducted at food service establishments.

## Compliance

- Verify violations are corrected, generally within 10 days.
- Investigate complaints.
- Majority conducted at food service establishments

## Permit or Opening

- Permits - new establishments or new owners of existing establishments. Plan review is required.
- Opening - facilities permitted by other agencies and inspected by our FLI program.
- Majority conducted at food service establishments.

1196 Total Inspections conducted

1014 FLI Sanitation Inspections

6 FLI Re-Inspections

374 Complaints Investigated

124 New Permits issued



# ONSITE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM



The Onsite program is responsible for protecting the public's health by ensuring safe subsurface treatment and disposal of wastewater and the attainment of clean, potable water from private drinking water wells in our county.

There are significant portions of Craven County that are served by septic tank systems. This program is responsible for the permitting and inspecting of all onsite septic systems installed in the county. This includes new systems, repairs and flow increases for septic systems for residences, places of business and places of public assembly.

To determine the suitability of land parcels to accommodate new septic systems, detailed soil and site evaluations are performed by Onsite staff. Based on these evaluations, either a permit or a denial is issued.

## Documents Issued

- Improvement Permit (IP): The first permit issued for a parcel of land if it is determined usable for a subsurface septic system. It is needed prior to Planning Board approval of subdivisions or mobile home parks.
- Construction Authorization (CA): Required before any construction on a new or malfunctioning septic system or structure begins.
- Operation Permit (OP): Issued after the septic system has been properly installed and inspected. It is needed prior to release of final electrical power and occupancy of a structure.
- Approval: Issued when additional structures are added or replaced on parcels with existing septic tank systems Denial: Issued when the parcel cannot support a septic tank system for the type of structure applied for.



# ONSITE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM CONTINUED



## In the Fiscal Year 2024-25:

Total applications received: 641

Improvement Permits Issued: 191

Construction Authorizations Issued: 208

Operation Permits Issued: 173

Complaint Investigations: 49

Approvals for Existing Systems: 61

Request for Services: 679

Migrant Housing Inspections: 8

- Onsite staff review & inspect large and/or complicated septic tank systems (those with pumps, pre-treatment technology, electronic components, etc.) to ensure they are being properly maintained and operated. This is known as the System Review Program (SRP) within the Onsite program.
- Installation inspections are performed by EHS's during the construction of each system installed in the county to ensure compliance with state rules and regulations.
- Migrant Labor Camps are checked to ensure the septic systems and drinking water sources are usable for individuals utilizing the camps.
- A site visit and evaluation for an existing septic system approval is performed when any building addition, structure replacement, swimming pool, or detached structure is proposed.
- On-site staff evaluates failing septic systems and issues permits for repair.
- Field staff also investigates various complaints and respond to requests for services, such as, water sampling, consultation, permit queries, educational presentations, etc.



## DRINKING WATER WELL PROGRAM

The Onsite Water Protection Program is responsible for overseeing the permitting, construction, repair, sampling and abandonment of private drinking water wells (not irrigation wells) via our Private Drinking Water Well program. Sites are visited by EHS's to confirm the suitability of each proposed location for a well and to identify potential sources of contamination. Water sampling is performed to test for bacteriological, inorganic and nitrate/nitrite indicators of water contamination. Water samples from newly-installed wells are tested at the State Laboratory of Public Health in Raleigh, NC. Samples from existing wells may be tested at our Environmental Health Lab, depending on the parameters desired.





# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH LAB

The goal of the Environmental Health Laboratory is to protect the public from disease-causing organisms by providing bacteriological testing of public water systems, private wells, new construction plumbing, ground water supplies and recreational surface waters.

The Environmental Lab is certified by the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Laboratory Certification. Bacteria, viruses, parasites and other microorganisms are sometimes found in waters and can cause a variety of illnesses.

The environmental lab provides testing services to comply with regulatory programs and requirements such as:

- NC Public Water Supply
- NC Good Agricultural Practices
- Environmental Protection Agency
- US Veteran Affairs (VA Home Loans)
- City/County Building Inspections
- Federal governmental contracts

Bacteriological Testing includes;

- Total coliform and E. coli presence/absence
- E. Coli MPN/100 ml
- Enterococcus MPN/100ml
- Heterotrophic Plate Count MPN/ml



IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2024-25:  
 Public System Compliance Samples 1126  
 Total Coliform & E. Coli Drinking Water 1264  
 Heterotrophic Plate Count Samples 89  
 Well Water Analyses 9  
 New Potable Water Line Construction 49  
 Special Water Samples 80

# VECTOR SURVEILLANCE



The vector surveillance program consists of individuals in the department who collect and count mosquitoes June through October. Mosquito traps are set up around the county to collect specimens for identification by genus and species. We continue to collaborate with East Carolina University to identify and count mosquitos collected in Craven County. This information is uploaded to the NCDHHS mosquito surveillance database. This establishes baseline mosquito prevalence data for our area.

Our main objective is to ensure our department is prepared in case of a public health emergency.





# Environmental Health Highlights

Craven County partnered with Northeastern University in a NASA-funded private well water sampling campaign. The project provided free testing kits to 234 residents across 5 counties to establish a baseline for water quality, with plans to resample after a flood event. The goal is to better understand the impacts of flooding on private wells and enhance public outreach and education following disasters.

Our program highlighted the vital role of Environmental Health during a presentation to Leadership Craven, an affiliate group of the New Bern Chamber of Commerce, at Union Point Park. This group of emerging community leaders offers valuable perspectives on Craven County's future. Special thanks to Jacob Kendall and Sagar Patel for representing our department and sharing their expertise.

Environmental Health delivered a vendor presentation to a local home builder, focusing on the importance of subsurface wastewater systems. This collaborative effort aimed to help their team preserve system areas during construction, understand field operations and streamline the application process for new homes.

The Food, Lodging and Institution section of Environmental Health achieved 100% compliance with all food program requirements for the second year in a row. Over the course of the year, the team conducted 1,056 inspections and educational visits across 401 permitted food establishments. Sanda traveled to Western NC after Hurricane Florence to help with recovery efforts.

A major milestone was achieved; we secured \$63,500.00 for our Food program from the FDA-NEHA Retail Flexible Funding Model grant. The grant will be used to launch the Bear-Hands Conference & Expo, a first of its kind event in the State of North Carolina. The conference is designed to bring together food service employees, vendors and food safety professionals for an immersive experience. Planning is underway and incorporates Craven County, 11 other counties in eastern NC, State DHHS staff, and FDA staff support.

The program made significant progress in meeting FDA Program Standards. The team successfully met Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9, and actively worked toward full compliance with Standard 5. In addition, staffing milestones were met with the hiring and authorization of Jenna Hinton and Tyler Johnson.