

TO: Local Health Officers

FROM: James A. Brownlee, M.P.H.
Director , Consumer and Environmental Health Services

DATE: June 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Youth Camps – 2008 Inspection Activities

The Summer Youth Camp season is rapidly approaching and we are again requesting that Local Health Departments conduct a pre-operational inspection of each camp within your respective jurisdiction as required by N.J.A.C. 8:52-1 et seq., "Public Health Practice Standards of Performance of Local Boards of Health in NJ."

It is anticipated that over 800 youth camps, accommodating over 600,000 campers, will be licensed to operate this summer. Consumer and Environmental Health Services plans to inspect camps with a poor inspectional history and determined to be of high priority. We will also focus on all initial (new) camps, and plan to conduct audit investigations of camps that have not been visited for at least five years.

Your cooperation is requested to inspect the recreational bathing places at all youth camps. Subchapter 9 "Waterfront Safety", in the Youth Camp Safety Standards should be specifically addressed during these inspections, with particular attention given to waterfront staffing requirements which are more stringent than those applicable to general-use public facilities. In addition, remember that your department should also be inspecting the food service operations at each camp to determine compliance with Chapter 24 of the State Sanitary Code.

For several years now, the Department has received numerous complaints from many of you regarding the lateness youth camp pre-operational assignment lists sent out each year. Unfortunately, because of the way the existing rule is written, many renewal applications sent to this office are not received until the first week of June, or later. As a result, the Department has not been able to send out a list of assignments until mid-June. As promised, the rule revisions will address this issue. Starting in the 2009 season, all renewal youth camp applications must be received by May 1. This will allow us to get assignments out to your offices before the end of May.

In addition, in an effort by the Department to assist the local Health Authorities in their pre-operational inspection workload, we have taken measures to accomplish this. Two seasons ago, we initiated a Pilot program for Single Sport Youth Camps (SSYC). All SSYCs will have one permanent youth camp ID number per owner. As a result, the Department has taken on the responsibility for pre-operational inspections for SSYCs.

A recent initiative taken by the Department was to come into a working agreement with the **American Camp Association, New Jersey Section (ACA-NJ)**. This agreement will be written into

the new rule accepting the ACA accreditation in lieu of routine pre-operational and operational inspections in the state. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the rule will not be in effect this season. But, as per an agreement with the ACA-NJ, we will be accepting the ACA accreditation this season.

Therefore, in effect this season (2008), all local Health Departments **will not** be responsible for doing routine pre-operational and operational inspections of any SSYC or ACA-accredited youth camps. Please understand that, although the Department is accepting the ACA accreditation, it does not prohibit your office from doing the pre-operational inspections; it only alleviates your responsibility from doing them as per the, "Public Health Practice Standards of Performance of Local Boards of Health in NJ."

I appreciate and thank you for your cooperation. The chart, "Inspection of Youth Camps ..." attached, has been developed to summarize the division of labor between this Department and your agency. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Mr. Muetter at (609) 588-3124.

Attachments

**New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
Consumer and Environmental Health Services
Public Health, Sanitation and Safety Program**

Guidance Document

**INSPECTION OF YOUTH CAMPS -
RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE 2008 SEASON**

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE AGENCY</u>
Youth Camp Safety Standards Pre-Operational Inspection	Local Health Department
Single Sport Youth Camps (SSYC)* and their Pre-Operational Inspection	NJDHSS/EEOH/CEHS
Youth Camp Safety Standards Operational Inspection and Audit Investigation	NJDHSS/EEOH/CEHS
Chapter 24 (Retail Food) Operational Inspection	Local Health Department
Chapter IX (Rec. Bathing) Operational Inspection	Local Health Department
Complaints, Water Quality, Outbreaks, etc.	NJDHSS/Local Health Dept.
Serious Injuries, Deaths, Child Abuse Investigations	NJDHSS
ACA-accredited Youth Camps	American Camp Association

* A **Single Sport Youth Camp** (SSYC) is a camp in which all campers (boys, girls, or coed) will be attending to specifically practice, play and learn to understand the rules of the individual sport that this individual camp is teaching (e.g., soccer, baseball, football, cheerleading, hockey, basketball, etc.) All Single-Sport Youth Camps shall have as their primary activity only those sports activities that are not considered "High Risk." If a SSYC offers a free swim as a secondary activity, the SSYC shall follow all of the requirements of SUBCHAPTER 9, WATERFRONT SAFETY, of the New Jersey Youth Camp Safety Standards, <http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/phss/edmat.htm>.