

Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research
2014 Proposed Operating Budget

Mission

This department's mission is two-fold:

1. Performance of all major laboratory testing for Westchester County including:
 - a. Microbiological testing of clinical specimens for TB, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, Swine Flu, and new emerging diseases. Major client: Westchester County Dept. of Health.

Testing for biodefense – related incidents as a member of the nationwide CDC Laboratory Response Network. Clients: Emergency response and related agencies of the seven (7) counties in the lower Hudson Valley.
 - b. Environmental testing of air, water, food, soil, and waste to monitor the environment and control disease. Major clients: Westchester County Dept. of Health, Westchester County Dept. of Environmental Facilities, municipal water departments.
 - c. Forensic Science (“crime lab”) evidence collection and analyses including DNA, illicit drugs, trace evidence, and photography to aid in crime prevention, crime solving and prosecution of criminals. Major clients: 43 Town and Village Police Departments, Westchester District Attorney, New York State Police, and Federal CODIS (DNA Identification Program).
 - d. Toxicological analyses of body fluids and tissues for Medical Examiner and DWI/DFSA cases. Major clients: 43 Town and Village Police Departments, Westchester District Attorney, Westchester Department of Public Safety
2. Medical Examiner functions including investigation of all unexpected deaths occurring within Westchester County.

Accomplishments

During the past year this department achieved a number of accomplishments including the following:

- The Forensic Science Laboratory brought two new instruments on-line for DNA analysis. One doubles the labs capacity and the other allows for a more rapid generation of DNA profiles. The laboratory passed its annual accreditation surveillance inspection without any findings. The drug lab brought on-line a new Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer which will increase the lab's capacity to analyze drug cases including the new “bath salt” type drugs.
- The Toxicology laboratory has completed their inspection and retained their accreditation with ABFT (American Board of Forensic Toxicology). In accordance with the New York State guidelines, the calculated level of variation of alcohol result is now included in the DWI casework final report.
- The Environmental Laboratory instituted the rapid Microcystin test for the quick determination of algae toxins in recreational waters. A 24 hour Colilert test, down from 72 hours, for numeration of e. coli bacteria in drinking water was instituted. The Environmental lab is currently accredited by the NYS Department of Health (ELAP).
- The Microbiology Laboratory has successfully achieved its biannual accreditation by the Clinical Laboratory Evaluation Program of the NYS Department of Health and the County Laboratory Response Network Laboratory (Biodefense) by the Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program of the NYS Department of Health. The testing phase has been completed for the computer interface between the County Health Department and our lab information system and initiated roll-out of the direct test order entry at the DOH district offices.

Tax Levy

The 2014 Budget that is before the Board of Legislatures at this time, proposes a tax levy of \$9,612,633. There are no major expenditure or revenue changes.

Expenditures

Annual Regular (1010)

- This account increases \$266,414 due to funding for raises for Medical Examiner office MD's and loss of NYS grant funding, along with appropriate step increases for employees.

Materials & Supplies (3000's)

- This account decreases by \$30,164 due to the discontinuation of some tests that are no longer requested. Reduction in specimen requisition slips due to WCDOH computer interface.

Interdepartmental charges (5000's)

- These charges for county supplied support services show an overall decrease of \$117,109.

Revenue

Departmental Income (9067)

- Revenue is increased by \$48,000., as a result of fee increases in our 2014 fee schedule.

Lab State Aid (9708)

- State Aid has been decreased by \$100,000. , due to changes in the NYS Department of Health interpretation of eligible expenses.