

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE MERRIMACK VALLEY GAS EVENT



PRESENTERS



THOMAS CARBONE, Director of Public Health, ANDOVER

BRIAN LAGRASSE, Director of Public Health, NORTH ANDOVER

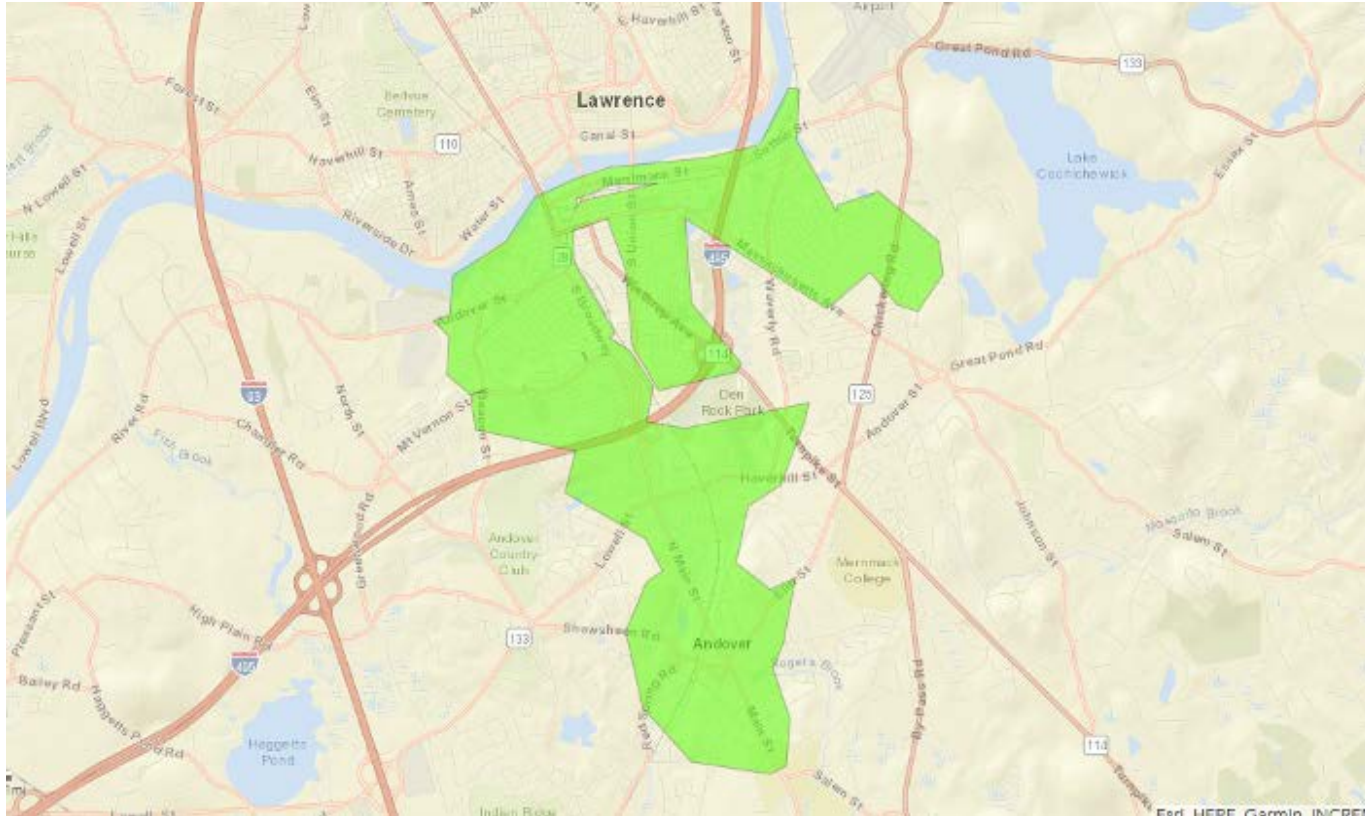
JOANNE BELANGER, RN, Deputy Director of Public Health, ANDOVER

FELIX GARCIA, Inspector, Inspectional Services Division, LAWRENCE

SEPTEMBER 13, 2018



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



SEPTEMBER 13, 2018



Over-pressurization of a gas line being repaired

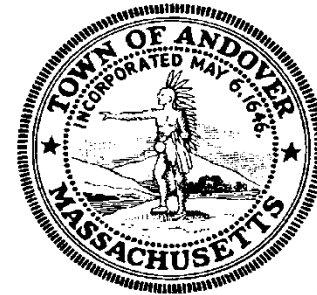
3 Communities:

- City of Lawrence
- Town of Andover
- Town of North Andover



Impacts:

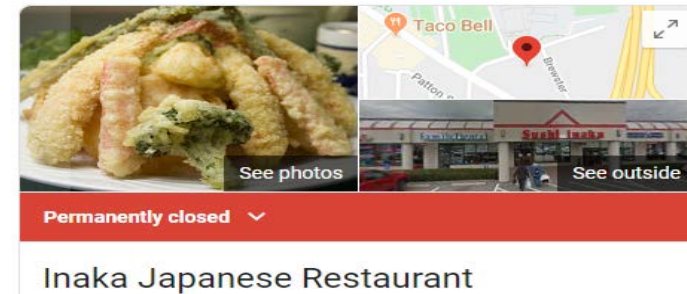
- Restaurants
- Housing
- Communication
- Sheltering and Volunteers



FOOD SERVICES IMPACTS



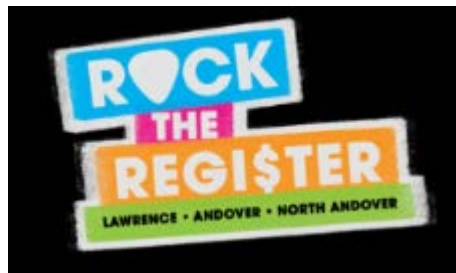
- Approx 700 Food Service Establishments in the three communities.
- Approx 250 Food Establishments were impacted by the event in the three communities.
- Lawrence response/Mutual Aid
- Remaining opened as retrofits occurred.
- Carleen's Diner did not reopen until February 2019.
- Delish Bakery a new business venture prior to gas disaster permanently closed after the gas disaster.
- Sushi Inaka never recovered and closed their doors.



FOOD SERVICES IMPACTS



- Over \$1 Million lost in food spoilage and damage to equipment.
- About \$19.5 Million has been paid to business customers.
- 70% of the 900 businesses affected are now operating as they did before the gas explosions as of July 19, 2019.
- Solutions: Newly-Launched campaign “Rock the Register” which aims to reinvigorate local businesses in the Merrimack Valley by utilizing special shopping promotions as a way to spread the message to shop locally.



FOOD SERVICE IMPACTS



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Business at Carleen's Diner has not recovered since the Merrimack Valley explosions. (WBZ-TV)



Elizabeth Bautista (right) and her business partner, Deya Garcia, shown in October in their closed shop Delish Bakery and Cafe in Lawrence. SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

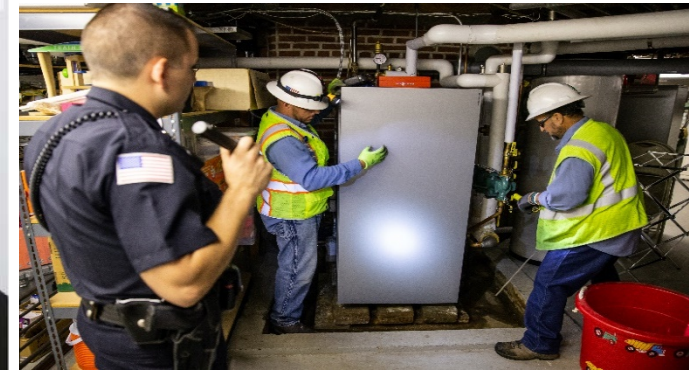
HOUSING IMPACTS



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



TIM JEAN/Staff photo Casey McGee places a trash barrel outside a trailer as workers get them ready for families on the South Common in Lawrence. The trailers are being prepared for residents who are still without gas heat as a result of the Merrimack Valley gas disaster.



HOUSING IMPACTS



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



North Andover Health Department
Community and Economic Development Division

GAS INFORMATION SHEET

- Affected Customer Helpline 1-866-388-3239
- Property Claims/Claims Center 1-800-590-5571
- Space Heater 1-855-218-8816

Other Resources

- Red Cross Shelter 1-800-564-1234
- Report a Gas Emergency (911) 1-800-552-8222
- N Andover Fire Department (911) 1-978-688-9590 business line
- N Andover Police Department (911) 1-978-683-3168 no emergency
- Gas Emergency (911) 1-800-525-8222

To Tenants without gas, heat, hot water and stove:

The Town has been advised that there are over 1,500 gas meters that have been affected by this outage, most of them residential locations. It is anticipated that the gas outage will likely last several weeks, and there are efforts to develop solutions to the heat, hot water, and cooking issues.

This link will take you to the Housing Code: <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/105-CMR-41000-minimum-standards-of-fitness-for-human-habitation-state-sanitary-code>

HOUSING IMPACTS



- Housing Court
- Attorney General's Office
- Temporary Housing
 - Hotels
 - Trailers
 - Apartments
 - Home (with space heater and hot plates)



Communications – Andover EOC



- Police
- Fire
- Health
- MRC
- DPW
- Facilities
- Schools
- Town Manager
- Trade Inspectors
- Community Services (Senior Center, Youth Center, Recreation)
- MEMA
- Columbia Gas
- State Police
- John Guilfoil - PR



Public Communications



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- Andover Staff
 - Police Social Media
 - Schools Communication Specialist
 - Town Manager's Office
 - John Guilfoil – JGPR
 - Health Division Social Media
- Platforms
 - Social Media – Facebook/Twitter
 - Real Time Monitoring & Response
 - Website
 - Initially, multiple daily updates
 - Daily updates with outline for next day activities
- Press coordinated through JGPR



**Town of Andover
GAS LEAK INFORMATION**

www.andoverma.gov

Communications – LTC/Hospitals



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

- Local Health conducted outreach to LTC
- Served as liaison for information
- Andover - 2 Nursing homes, 1 Memory Care, 1 Assisted Living – all shut their gas service off.
- Only Assisted Living Facility had long-term impact
- Hospital communications occurred through the HMCC



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Communications – Regional/MDPH

- Carbone/LaGrasse/Blanchette spoke & emailed regularly
- Tried to be consistent across communities for public/business info
- OPEM called evening of the event & regularly
- Challenge – Region 3 had no Fiscal Agent
 - HMCC staff not initially available
 - Decision was made to use HMCC for SitRep sharing & assistance request
 - HMCC requested SitRep each morning
- Specific MDPH Asks:
 - Food Safety Info in multiple languages
 - Legionnaires' Disease & stagnant water heaters
 - Temporary Housing / Trailer Concerns
 - Assistance for Housing Inspections
 - Behavioral Health Specialists
 - Lesson – Call program office directly for advice/public info. – Policy issues (state inspector dispatch) go through HMCC
- Mutual Aid
 - Lawrence used inspectional help
 - Neighboring Health Directors did internet research on Food Service recovery

SHELTERING & VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT



Shelters

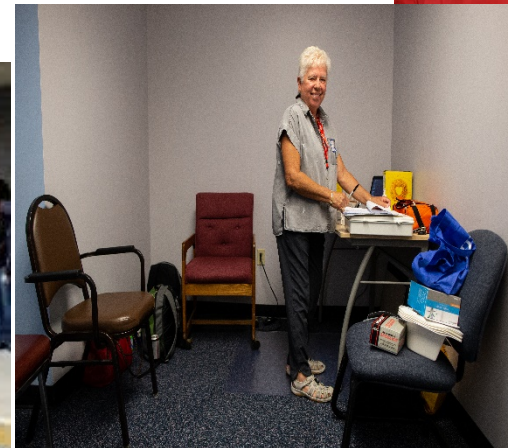
- Registration
- Medical screening, monitoring and triage
- Medical care of shelter residents, transition to hospital
- General care and Behavioral Health of shelter residents

Resource Recovery Centers

- Registration
- Calming frustrated residents

Claims Centers

- Behavioral Health
- Administrative support



SHELTERING & VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT



Shower Facility Staff

Food and other Donation Distribution



SHELTERING & VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT



Statistics

Shifts Covered Across 3 Communities:

49 at Emergency Shelters

46 at Resource Recovery Centers

14 for Behavioral Health – Numerous Sites

38 for Shower facilities

6 for Food distribution sites

Donation management

Over the deployment, **356** volunteers were
on standby



Questions???

THOMAS CARBONE, tcarbone@andoverma.gov

BRIAN LAGRASSE, blagrass@northandoverma.gov

JOANNE BELANGER, joanne.belanger@andoverma.us

FELIX GARCIA, fgarcia@cityoflawrence.com

