

The County of Dukes County Newsletter



Latest News from:

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Dukes County Boards of Health

Dukes County Emergency Management

Dukes County Health Care Access Program

hca@dukescounty.org

508-696-0020

COMING
SOON!

Adult Dental Cleanings at NO COST TO YOU

For Island residents, 18 years or older, who do not have access to dental care. By appointment only.

February 16 – 27, 2026



2/16 The Anchors/Edgartown COA
10 Daggett Street, Edgartown

2/17, 2/18, 2/19; 2/23, 2/24 & 2/26
The First Baptist Church Parish Hall
66 Williams Street, Vineyard Haven

2/25 Island Elderly Housing* (*call 508-693-7009)

2/20 & 2/27 Up Island Council on Aging (Howes House)
1042 State Road, West Tisbury

To register text or email Polished Dental:
(508) 394-0068/PolishedVHCA@gmail.com

☆ *Sponsored by Dukes County Health Care Access/Vineyard Smiles
and supported by the Martha's Vineyard Community Foundation and
the Island Boards of Health ☆*

[Dukes County Public Benefits Access](http://publicbenefits@dukescounty.org)
publicbenefits@dukescounty.org
508-696-3844

**Fuel Assistance/ Utility Assistance
Social Security Disability, Social Security Insurance
Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children(EAEDC)
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)
Unemployment Insurance**

***Dukes County Veterans Services*
VSO@dukescounty.org
*508-693-6887***

Martha's Vineyard Center for Living



Memory & Caregiver Support Services

No diagnosis needed.

- **Respite Innovations**
Engaging home visits & caregiver respite
- **Supportive Day Program**
A daily activity and social program
- **Support Groups**
Dementia Caregiver Support & Early Memory Loss Group
- **Guidance**
Information, education, & support referrals

No one has to do it alone!



Free Info Session

Wed, Feb. 11th, 3:30-4:30pm
at MV Center for Living

Support our neighbors by learning the 5 key messages of dementia, how it affects people, & how we can make a difference in the lives of people living with the disease, & their caregivers.

All are welcome to this one hour training.

Please RSVP to Mary Holmes:
maryh@mvcenter4living.org

CALL for VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer opportunities for all interests, but especially to help at the front desk.

10am-1pm, lunch included.

Great opportunity for young adults seeking administrative experience.

Contact Katie Vieira:
katiev@mvcenter4living.org

508-939-9440 | mvcenter4living.org
29 Breakdown Ln, Vineyard Haven, MA

Healthy Aging MV

Registry of Deeds

Consumer Notification Service

The Dukes County Registry of Deeds offers a **no-cost Consumer Notification Service (CNS)** that sends you an email whenever a new document is recorded that matches the monitoring criteria you've chosen. The alert includes information such as the document type, document number, book and page reference, along with a link to masslandrecords.com.

CNS is simply a convenient way for property owners to stay aware of activity relating to their property records. Enrollment is free, easy, and allows you to register up to three properties at <https://cns.masslandrecords.com>. If you need assistance signing up or managing your account, the Registry staff is happy to help.

Emergency Management

Warming Locations

Our libraries are a warm place to escape the cold outside or get out of a cold house for a few hours with Wi-fi and options to charge phones or laptops.

[Click here for library hours.](#)

Winter safety recourses

WINTER SAFETY INFORMATION INFORMAÇÕES DE SEGURANÇA NO INVERNO

PROTECT YOUR HOME & YOUR LIFE / PROTEJA SUA CASA E SUA VIDA

Keeping exterior vents, gas meters, and AC condensers clear of snow is crucial for safety and system performance.

Blocked, snow-covered vents can force dangerous carbon monoxide (CO) back into the home — a potentially fatal health hazard.

Additionally, buried equipment can cause furnaces to shut down due to restricted airflow, leading to frozen pipes and costly repairs.



Manter as saídas de ventilação externas, os medidores de gás e os condensadores de ar condicionado livres de neve ou qualquer outro obstáculo é crucial para a segurança e o bom funcionamento dos sistemas.

Saídas de ventilação bloqueadas ou cobertas de neve podem forçar o monóxido de carbono (CO) a voltar para dentro da casa, representando um perigo potencialmente fatal para a saúde.

Além disso, equipamentos soterrados pela neve podem causar o desligamento dos aquecedores devido à restrição do fluxo de ar, resultando no congelamento dos canos e em reparos caros.



SAFETY REMINDERS / DICAS DE SEGURANÇA

- ◆ Keep vents and exhaust pipes clear at all times / Mantenha os exaustores de ventilação e os tubos de escape sempre desobstruídos.
- ◆ Remove snow from gas meters and outdoor units / Remova a neve dos medidores de gás e das unidades externas.
- ◆ Check after every snowfall / Verifique após cada nevasca.
- ◆ Install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors / Instale e faça a manutenção de detectores de monóxido de carbono.

Protect your family, neighbors, and property this winter.

Clear snow. Save lives. Prevent damage.

Proteja sua família, seus vizinhos e sua propriedade neste inverno.

neste inverno. Remova a neve. Salve vidas.

Previna danos.

Homelessness Prevention

Winter Shelter

New Location: 111 New York Ave. in Oak Bluffs

Open November 1, 2025 - April 18, 2026 at 8 AM

Overnight with Dinner and Breakfast

6PM - 8AM

****Guests arrive between 6 PM - 7 PM - NO ADMITTANCE AFTER 7PM****

For more information call: 508-560-3678

Abrigo Noturno

Aberto de 1º de novembro de 2025 a 18 de abril de 2026 às 8h

Pernoite com jantar e café da manhã

Todas as noites, das 18h às 8h

Entrada entre 18h e 19h

Não é permitido entrar depois das 19h

Ubicación para el invierno de 2025-2026 por determinar

Para mais informações ligue para: 508-560-3678

MV Substance Use Disorder Coalition

Boards of Health

Free Flu Vaccine

at Health Imperatives

517 State Road

Vineyard Haven

Thursday February 5th

11am – 1pm

3pm – 5pm

Ages 6 months and above

To schedule an appointment:

508-693-1208

Vacina Gratuita contra Gripe

Localização: Health Imperatives

517 State Road

Vineyard Haven
Quinta-feira, 5 de fevereiro
11h – 13h
15h – 17h
Idade: a partir dos 6 meses
Para agendar uma consulta:

508-693-1208

Board of Health Public Health Nursing Announcement

As of January 1, 2026, all-island Boards of Health have contracted with Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) of Cape Cod, a Member of Cape Cod Healthcare, for Public Health Nursing services. This includes Aquinnah, Chilmark, Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, and West Tisbury.

Public Health Nursing programs generally include but are not limited to Immunization Clinics, Wellness Clinics, Wellness Education Presentations, Health Fairs, Communicable Disease Investigations, and Workshops and Exercise Programs.

Community referrals can be made for the following:

- Home visits to provide rehabilitative assessment or rehabilitative teaching for the purpose of improving the environment to make independent function possible; to provide Social Work counseling to individuals with identified needs;
- Health promotion/wellness visits for health and wellness teaching in relation to both physical and mental health;
- Maternal and Child Health Services for newborns and mothers on referral with follow-up home visits according to adjudged need; office visits for the purpose of childhood immunization; and social work assessment visits to families with identified needs.

To make a referral for Public Health Nursing services:

From a Hospital, Inpatient Setting, or Provider Office

Submit the referral to VNA Public Health using your standard VNA referral process.

*Please note clearly that this referral is for Public Health.

From a Non-Medical Entity (for example- COA)

The referral form.

Email: ckram@capecodhealth.org

Fax: 508-693-2173

In an effort to address the increasing issue of tick-borne illnesses on Martha's Vineyard, the Dukes County Commissioners, along with all island Boards of Health, are supporting two legislation that would increase access to hunting:

To Expand Crossbow hunting - Senate Bill S595 -

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/S595>

To Reduce Setbacks - Senate Bill S498 -

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/SD65>

This overpopulation of deer contributes to our tick issues, and reducing the herd would reduce the prevalence of ticks on MV. Please join us in advocating for these changes in hunting regulations. Public hearings have been scheduled, and feedback can be submitted here: [Hunting laws public feedback | Mass.gov](#)



Dear MassWildlife,

We, the Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative (IIPHEC), are issuing this letter of support to update current legislation involving use of crossbows and setback limits.

Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket are facing a public health crisis involving the infestation of ticks and tick-borne diseases or allergies. Island residents and visitors continue to suffer an overwhelming burden of tick-borne disease, consistently showing up as the darkest color on incidence maps for Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Tularemia. This has created a tipping point on the islands. Residents no longer enjoy outdoor activities, seasonal homeowners are leaving, and tourists are choosing safer destinations. The impact is now being felt not only in the health of island residents but also in the local economy.

Scientific evidence shows that a majority of deer tick and lone star tick adults rely on white-tailed deer as reproductive hosts. Reducing deer densities to an estimated 8–10 deer per square mile is widely considered a critical threshold for lowering tick abundance and, consequently, human exposure to tick-borne diseases.

We support authorizing all licensed hunters to use crossbows during regulated hunting seasons and reducing hunting setbacks to 250 feet from dwellings. Together, these changes would strengthen wildlife management by expanding lawful hunting opportunities and increasing access to huntable land. Crossbows are efficient, accurate, and pose minimal safety risks which can improve harvest success and broaden hunter participation, especially among younger and older hunters. Additionally, reducing setbacks increases available hunting acreage, particularly in suburban and exurban areas, helping to make effective deer management more achievable.

In conclusion, we believe that updating these statutes will increase opportunities to manage an overabundant deer herd and provide further opportunities for community members to engage in hunting activities. Ultimately, providing greater access for people to utilize a sustainable natural resource and the ability to manage a key ecological host in the tick-borne disease cycle.

Sincerely,
The Inter-Island Public Health Excellence Collaborative

Drew Belsky, Health Agent, Tisbury
Inter-Island Public Health Excellence
Collaborative Chair

 (Feb 3, 2026, 12:52:24 EST)

03/02/2026

Alexa Arieta, Health Agent, Oak Bluffs
Inter-Island Public Health Excellence
Collaborative Vice Chair


(Feb 3, 2026, 1:04:11 EST)

03/02/2026