



**Town of Lexington**  
**Land Use, Health and Development Department**  
Office of Public Health  
1625 Massachusetts Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02420  
(781)-698-4533  
Fax (781)-861-2780

Gerard F. Cody, R.E.H.S./R.S.  
Health Director x 84503

Kathy P. Fox, R.E.H.S./R.S., C.H.O., CP-FS  
Environmental Health Agent x 84507

David Neylon, B, S.N., R.N.  
Public Health Nurse x 84509

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Sharon Mackenzie, R.N., CCM  
Burt M. Perlmutter, M.D.  
David S. Geller, M.D.  
John J. Flynn, J.D.

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**To:** David Fields, Planner, Planning Office | Land Use, Health and Development

**From:** Gerard F. Cody, R.E.H.S./R.S.

**Re:** Comments on 1106 Massachusetts Avenue

The Office of Public Health received a *preliminary Subdivision Plan for "1106 Massachusetts Avenue."* You asked for comments from the Office of Public Health about this project. New Construction can sometimes create unintentional nuisance conditions by creating harborage conditions for both mosquitoes, rodents and other pests. The Office of Public Health would like to share with the developer some "best practices" to help avoid mosquito and pest harborage nuisance conditions during new construction and to help avoid them in the future once the project is completed.

**Mosquito Population Reduction through storm water runoff design**

During periods of several rain events and the when the ground water is high within a 10 day period, mosquito populations will increase. Below, you will find some general best practices to help reduce the mosquito population at this location:

- Ensure that stormwater structures such as dry wells, rain gardens and detention basins are designed to infiltrate water within 48 hours of a rain event to help reduce mosquito populations. Dry wells and detention ponds should be located, if possible, at elevations that are more than 2 feet above the seasonal ground water mark.
- Any outflow pipes/ drainage ditches that take water from dry wells, detention basins and catchbasins should be directed to upland areas, if possible, and if not into existing waterways. They should not be directed into a wetland because the inflow of water could cause increased water levels that is sufficient to allow immature mosquitoes in their larval and pupal stages to complete their development.
- Designing detention basins that are sloped and have low flow channels that are designed to prevent water from stagnating is beneficial. The low flow channels need to be maintained periodically to eliminate sand and sediment from obstructing the channels.
- As previously mentioned infiltrating stormwater is preferred to directing runoff into wetlands. If developers could install catchbasins with porous bottoms or even porous

pavement in some locations, those designs would be beneficial from a mosquito control perspective.

### **Rodent Population Reduction**

New Construction, demolition or renovation projects, can displace rodents from their natural habitat. Rodents may seek shelter or harborage in storm drains on residential and commercial properties. The Lexington Office of Public Health would like to provide you with the following information to help ensure that rodents do not take shelter permanently in this area or cause a nuisance condition for the general public.

- Maintain or Rodent Proof the outside structure
- Seal cracks and openings in building foundations, openings for pipes, electric wires, drain spouts, and vents. Do not leave holes any larger than 1/4 inch unsealed.
- If gnawing is suspected to be a problem plug holes and gaps with sheet metal, coarse steel wool or wire screening.
- Most rodents are excellent climbers so do not focus just on the ground level, check the roof as well. Make sure internal screens on roof and in attic air vents are in good repair.
- Keep side doors and garage doors tightly closed.
- Make sure that all windows that can be opened have screens that are in good condition.
- Cover crawl space with a tight fitting cover.
- Cover chimneys with a spark arrester.
- Make sure all exterior doors are tight fitting and weatherproofed at the bottom.
- Remember that pet doors in the house or garage also provide an easy entrance for rodents.
- Sanitation is a very important part of rodent control. Without proper sanitation other steps to eliminate and prevent rodents will not work.
- Keep the areas around your work zone “clutter free” to reduce hiding spaces for rodents.
- Store rubbish and garbage properly in air tight cans with tight fitting lids. All rubbish and garbage should be in cans, do not have bagged or loose rubbish and garbage on the ground.
- Article XI Dumpsters states in part that *“It shall be the responsibility of the property owner or agent being serviced to maintain the dumpster free of odors, scattered debris, overflow and all other nuisances. It shall also be the responsibility of the property owner or agent being serviced to maintain the dumpster area free from any condition that may be considered an attraction for rodents or other pests”*.

cc: Board of Health