

“Health in your Hands”

With Great Numbers of Salons Comes Great Responsibility

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Darien is a very popular destination for salons and other spa services to locate and open for business. With a population of 21,190, our town supports 28 salons that offer cosmetology services, while a nearby municipality has 16 salons catering to a population of 51,384 people. This comparison becomes even more fascinating when you take into account that more than half of our residents are under the age of 18 or over 65 years of age - a population that may be less likely to be receiving services as frequently or as extensively as the middle age bracket.

In 2001, the State passed legislation directing local health departments to inspect personal service salons, but no statewide guidelines or regulations were provided leaving local health departments to develop their own procedures and policies for protecting public health. While hairdressers and massage therapists need State licenses to practice, no such requirement exists for manicurists and pedicurists. To provide needed protection for the public, the Darien Health Department has developed local regulations and a permit program that our local salons must follow. Health Department staff conduct regular inspections at least twice a year and a *“Certificate of Inspection”* is issued to each establishment at the conclusion of each inspection indicating that the facility has been inspected and meets standards of safety. Patrons should look for this certificate when entering the facility.

The guidelines developed by the Health Department are vital to protecting our citizen’s health. As the number of salons and complexity of services increase, so do the associated health risks. In an effort to sponsor community awareness of proper sanitation practices, health concerns, and to provide some guidance in how to become vigilant as a consumer, the Darien Health Department has launched the “Health in your Hands” public awareness campaign. Resources, such as an informational pamphlet, weekly Tweets, and access to the results of salon inspections online are available to the public.

Follow us on Twitter www.twitter.com/darienhealth and use the hashtags #HealthyNails and #EmpoweredConsumer to keep up with the campaign.

Note: The “Health in Your Hands” nail salon safety awareness campaign is a project largely conceived by Catherine Gorey who is a High School Senior serving as an intern to the Darien Health Department until she graduates in June, 2017.