

## Nebraska Environmental Health Association Newsletter

### A Message From Your NEHA President

Greetings, NEHA membership, from your current president:

I hope everyone has enjoyed the first quarter of this year! I can't believe how quickly this year is passing by. In fact, the NEHA board has already held a number of meetings and we are organizing our annual conference. If you have any suggestions for presentations for our annual conference, contact a board member or email me at [sarah.pistillo@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.pistillo@nebraska.gov).

The NEHA national conference will be held in Washington, DC from July 9-11. I am planning on attending and look forward to reporting back what I've learned to our members.

There will also be a NEHA Region IV Conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin, from September 25-26. There are lots of opportunities for continuing education and networking this year.

I also wanted to convey that I am honored for the trust you have placed in me to represent our organization and I am extremely grateful to my fellow board members for helping me. I look forward to representing NEHA, and I hope everyone has a fantastic year!

Sarah

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#### 2012-2013 NEHA Board:

PRESIDENT	Sarah Pistillo
VICE PRESIDENT	Jenny Steventon
TREASURER	Nate Hartman
SECRETARY	George Hanssen
PRESIDENT-ELECT	Kathy King
PAST PRESIDENT	Scott Holmes
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Terry Philippi
MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Jeremy Collinson

# Member News

## 2012-2013 NEHA Memberships

The Nebraska Environmental Health Association currently has 92 members, which is a 33% increase over the 2011-2012 membership year. Benefits of membership include advanced notice of the Annual Education Conference, e-mail news updates, and a bi-annual newsletter.

If you have not already renewed your membership, applications can be found under “Membership” at [www.nebraskaneha.com](http://www.nebraskaneha.com). Any questions can be directed to Nate Hartman, NEHA Treasurer, at [nhartman@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:nhartman@lincoln.ne.gov). An annual membership is only \$10. If you attended the 2012 Annual Education Conference at Mahoney, your 2012-2013 NEHA membership dues were included as part of the conference fees.

## 2012 Annual Education Conference

The 2012 Annual Education Conference at Mahoney was one of the best attended conferences in recent years, with over 90 NEHA members in attendance. The conference hosted a variety of professional speakers, opportunities for networking, and many exciting donated raffle items.

The NEHA Board appreciates those members who took their time to complete the conference feedback survey. All surveys were reviewed and suggested changes will be incorporated into the 2013 Annual Education Conference as best they can.



## NEHA Image Updates

The NEHA Board has begun the process of updating our website. Our organization has evolved in the past decade, and our website should have the capability and design to reflect that. Sometime this summer our new website, which will remain [www.nebraskaneha.com](http://www.nebraskaneha.com), will be unveiled. Stay tuned!

To accompany our new website, the Board is considering an update to the NEHA logo as well. If you would like to voice your opinion on keeping our traditional logo or updating it, you may contact any of the Board members listed on the first page of this newsletter. If a logo change is warranted, look for it to be revealed on the updated website this summer.

# REHS/RS News

## Clarifications to Title 172 Chapter 168: Certification of a Registered Environmental Health Specialist

The NEHA Board wishes to remind all REHS/RS of two important sections in the “Statutes, Rules and Regulation relating to the Certification of a Registered Environmental Health Specialist”, Title 172 NAC 168, dated August 25, 2012:

168-005.01C Acceptable Programs/Activities outlines the continuing education requirements, limitations and the minimum documentation that licensees must submit to the Department during an audit. The minimum documentation is:

- ✔ Certificate of attendance; and
- ✔ Program outline and/or objectives

Certificates must in some way indicate the number of hours completed, topic(s) and/or have a program outline attached where the attendee can mark which sessions he/she attended. This information is necessary in order for Licensure Unit staff to calculate hours completed.

As you attend training and/or provide training, please spread the word about the importance of licensees obtaining and maintaining the minimum documentation for their continuing education.

168-005.01A Acceptable Continuing Education explains that the Board of Registered Environmental Health Specialists does not pre-approve continuing education programs in advance. The Board retains final authority for acceptance of any educational program/activity submitted by the certificate holder to meet the continuing competency requirements. License holders are asked to maintain their own continuing education records for programs and activities listed in 168-005.01B A.

For questions regarding Title 172 Chapter 168, contact the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Licensure Unit at (402) 471-2299.



# Environmental Health Laws

## Nebraska Environmental Health Laws

The NEHA Board has been tracking several pieces of legislation that could impact environmental health in Nebraska. We have submitted a letter of support for LB 13, which would require new housing to be built using radon resistant construction. Radon is a significant environmental health risk in Nebraska, contributing to the incidence of lung cancer. Radon resistant construction is proven to lower radon levels in homes, thereby reducing the risk of lung cancer in Nebraska. The Health and Human Services Committee approved LB 13 and it is on General File as of March 11.

The Board also submitted a letter in opposition to LB 637, a bill which would require NDEQ to conduct an economic analysis of all regulation changes. NEHA pointed out that the current review process via the Environmental Quality Council, has proven to be adequate. The Board also pointed out that only including economic considerations, and not the health and environmental benefits, is unacceptable and unethical. NEHA asked the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee to kill the bill. LB637 remains in committee as of March 11.

## Keystone XL Pipeline Project

In January of 2013, Nebraska Governor Dave Heinemann approved the route for the TransCanada Keystone XL Pipeline. The new route takes the pipeline through the High Plains Aquifer, including the Ogallala Group, but avoids many areas of fragile soil in Nebraska.

To learn more about the Keystone XL Pipeline project and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's evaluation of the project, visit the NDEQ website at <https://ecmp.nebraska.gov/deq-seis/>

### 2012 National Environmental Scorecard

Have you ever wondered how your Nebraska Senators and Representatives voted on key environmental issues? Since 1970, the National Environmental Scorecard has been providing objective information about the most important environmental legislation considered and the corresponding voting records of all members of Congress.

To see how your representatives voted in 2012, visit the National Environmental Scorecard website at <http://scorecard.lcv.org/?p=m&year=2012>



To search Nebraska bills and laws, visit <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/intro/php>

## 10 Essential Services of Environmental Health

The Ten Essential Services of Environmental Health provide a framework to assist environmental health agencies in assessing their strengths and weaknesses. However, studies indicate that few environmental health professionals are even aware of what the 10 essential services are. Are you?

1. Monitor environmental and health status to identify and solve community environmental public health problems
2. Diagnose and investigate environmental public health problems and health hazards in the community
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental public health issues
4. Mobilize community partnerships and actions to identify and solve environmental health problems
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community environmental public health efforts
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect environmental public health and ensure safety
7. Link people to needed environmental public health services and assure the provision of environmental public health services when otherwise unavailable
8. Assure a competent environmental public health workforce
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental public health services
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to environmental public health problems

## Earth Day

Earth Day is celebrated each year on April 22. Environmental Health professionals know a great deal about the earth and environmental issues. But how much do we know about Earth Day itself, the one day a year specifically designated to raise environmental awareness?

Senator Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day, said this of the first Earth Day in 1970: "The American people finally had a forum to express its concern about what was happening to the land, rivers, lakes, and air - and they did so with spectacular exuberance."

Earth Day is a special day meant to teach everyone about the things that need changing in our environment, and to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment. Twenty million Americans participated in the first Earth Day activities, and the momentum has only gone up from there.

One man's idea to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment has taught us that environmental responsibility is everyone's responsibility.

Besides working in an environmental health profession, how environmentally-conscious are we? To find out, take the Ecological Footprint Quiz at <http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator>



### **"Climate Change Science" to Enter American Science Classrooms**

The "Next Generation Science Standards" are new education recommendations that encourage teaching about man-made global warming in all science classes, starting in elementary school. One of the goals of the new standards is for students, by the eighth grade, to understand that human activities are a major factor in global warming.

The standards were developed by the National Research Council, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the nonprofit organization Achieve, and more than two dozen states.

Why are these new standards so important? The only federal science standards were published by the National Research Council in 1996. Many educators are not addressing the topic of man-made global warming because it is not in their curriculum. The omission of this topic in the classroom has led to a climate skepticism among youth that could have long-term impacts on our goals of reducing global warming.

# Conferences & Education

## 2013 Nebraska Swimming Pool Operators Clinic Schedule

Swimming pool operator courses are organized by DHHS and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. For more information, including registration and fees, visit <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Documents/2013%20Pool%20Clinic%20Schedule.pdf>

## NEHA Annual Education Conference

The 2013 Annual Education Conference will be in October again this year. Look for an agenda and registration instructions to be released this fall.

## 2013 NEHA Regional Conference

The National Environmental Health Association's Region 4 (Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) Conference will be held in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on September 25 and 26, 2013. The cost to Nebraska Environmental Health Association members is \$140, and \$160 for non-members.

Additional conference information, including registration instructions, will be e-mailed to NEHA members in the upcoming months.

### Pool Operator Clinics

April 3, 2013 (Wed) – Chadron  
 April 4, 2013 (Thurs) - North Platte  
 April 6, 2013 (Sat) – Lincoln  
 April 10, 2013 (Wed) – Kearney  
 April 11, 2013 (Thurs) - Papillion  
 April 15, 2013 (Mon) – Lincoln  
 April 23, 2013 (Tues) - Papillion  
 April 25, 2013 (Thurs) – Norfolk  
 April 25, 2013 (Thurs) – Lincoln  
 May 2, 2013 (Thurs) - Grand Island  
 May 2, 2013 (Thurs) – Lincoln  
 May 9, 2013 (Thurs) – Lincoln  
 May 14, 2013 (Tues) - Papillion  
 May 17, 2013 (Fri) – Lincoln  
 May 21, 2013 (Tues) – Lincoln  
 May 22, 2013 (Wed) – Scottsbluff  
 May 23, 2013 (Thurs) – McCook  
 May 31, 2013 (Fri) - Papillion  
 June 4, 2013 (Tues) – Lincoln  
 June 11, 2013 (Tues) - Papillion

## NEHA 77th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition



ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION  
 July 9-11, 2013 ♦ Washington, DC

The National Environmental Health Association is holding its 2013 Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition in the Washington, DC area, July 9-11, 2013. The NEHA 2013 AEC will offer expansive training and education that covers a wide genre of environmental health (EH) topics. Sessions at the NEHA AEC will cover over 15 different environmental health

topic areas including emerging EH issues, food safety and defense, environmental justice, healthy homes and communities, sustainability/climate change and general environmental health. NEHA 2013 AEC registration and information are available via [neha2013aec.org](http://neha2013aec.org)

# Opportunities

## **Environmental Health Supervisor**

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

[http://www.neha.org/pdf/job\\_center/EHSupJobDescription.pdf](http://www.neha.org/pdf/job_center/EHSupJobDescription.pdf)

## **Health Services Manager**

St. Louis, Missouri

<http://stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/personnel/city-jobs.cfm>

## **Environmental Health Sanitarian**

Kewanee, Illinois

<http://www.henrystarkhealth.com/>



## **DID YOU KNOW...**

...you can submit an environmental health article for the next edition of this newsletter? Tell everyone what is going on in your organization, department or program. Share a success story or let everyone know of your research findings.

## **HOW?**

Just submit your article to a NEHA Board member. Visit the NEHA website listed on the front of this newsletter for contact information.