

Dedicated to the promotion of high standards in environmental health for the general welfare of the public



NEHA News

Fall 2014

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NEHA Membership

It's time to renew your NEHA Membership! NEHA membership is free with attendance to the Fall Educational Conference, but if you were unable to attend don't forget to renew. The renewal fee \$10 payable to NEHA. Send checks to: Nate Hartman, Treasurer-NEHA, 3140 N. Street, Lincoln, NE 68510. If you have any questions, please call a member of the board. NEHA currently has 78 members.

The 2014-2015 Board

We have a great board this year! Serving on the NEHA Board we have:

President	Allen Brown, DCHD
Vice-President	Ericka Sanders, NDA
Secretary	Lilian Turcios, LLCHD
Treasurer	Nate Hartman, LLCHD
Member at Large	Larry W. Figgs, DCHD
Member at Large	Mandy Kearney, DHHS
Past-President	Kathy King, LLCHD
President-Elect	Sarah Pistillo, DHHS

Please thank them for serving!

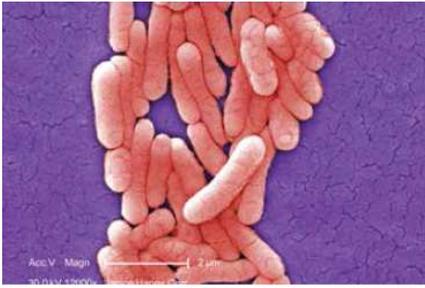
Retirements



Stan Jensen with DHHS, Grand Island office has retired after almost 43 years. Stan was one of the first sanitarians hired by DHHS. He helped develop many of the public health programs now in place and was one of the original well and septic inspectors in the State. His involvement with the Nebraska Mosquito and Vector Control association helped with the beginning implementation and design of vector control programs for many communities. His extensive knowledge, expertise, and devotion to public health in Nebraska will be greatly missed by his colleagues and the people he served. Enjoy retirement Stan!!

Job Openings

Environmental Health Scientist III in Grand Island, Perform field activities and actively participate in the development and day-to-day implementation of the Departments environmental health programs. Work related environmental health programs include, but are not limited to, swimming pools, recreational camps, private water and sewage systems, mobile home parks, child care facilities, etc. Conduct compliance inspections, educate the regulated community on environmental health principles, assist Nebraska communities in dealing with environmental health issues and make environmental health presentations as appropriate. This position is actively involved in the decision to issue or deny facility licenses, writes annual program specific progress/ issue reports, prepares and updates program specific public educational documents and coordinates the operations of environmental health programs with the operations of other agencies and with other interest groups. Occasional overnight travel. **This job opening ends Monday, November 10, 2014.**



FDA food safety challenge to spur new technologies for fighting foodborne illness

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is conducting a competition to develop breakthrough ideas on how to find disease-causing organisms in food – especially Salmonella in fresh produce.

The 2014 FDA Food Safety Challenge

was developed under the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, which grants all federal agencies broad authority to conduct prize competitions to spur innovation, solve tough problems, and advance their core missions. This challenge offers a total prize pool of \$500,000. Concepts must be able to detect Salmonella in minimally processed fresh produce, but the ability to identify other microbial pathogens and in other foods is encouraged.

The competition launched September 23 and submissions must be in by Nov. 9, 2014. A

panel of food safety and pathogen detection experts from the FDA, the CDC, and the USDA will judge the submissions, determine finalists, and select a winner or winners.

Salmonella is the leading cause of deaths and of hospitalizations related to foodborne illness, estimated to cause 380 deaths and 19,000 hospitalizations in the United States each year.

For a complete list of challenge rules and to submit a concept, visit

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

“Pioneering spirit should continue, not to conquer the planet or space ... but rather to improve the quality of life.” — Bertrand Piccard

New Tool Designed by the Partnership for Food Protection (PFP)

PFP created a worksheet designed to help state and local programs gain a more detailed understanding of their program’s business processes related to inspections, identify improvements, and serve as a mechanism to form requirements for IT system improvements or new developments. The worksheet walks regulatory program managers through nine core areas of their inspection program: inventory and licensing, assignments and scheduling, field work and inspections, recording of findings, issuance, review and approval, compliance and enforcement, record creation and retention, and data management. To view the tool go to:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForFederalStateandLocalOfficials/FoodSafetySystem/PartnershipforFoodProtectionPFP/UCM406326.pdf>

40th Anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the SDWA. The occasion is a great time to examine the Act and how it has impacted public health. Under the Act there have been 19 National Primary Drinking Water Regulations passed that address 91 difference contaminants. When the Act passed in 1975 it only regulated 22 contaminants. Water quality is extremely important to public health and these regulations have had monumental difference with regard to the quality of life of individuals in the US for the last 40 years.

Water Well and On-site Wastewater Treatment Educational Videos for Homeowners

The Northern Plains and Mountains Water Program and Montana State University Extension Water Quality created a number of videos to educate private well and septic owners about how their water systems function and should be maintained. Video topics include: Protecting the Wellhead, Septic System Function and Maintenance, Water System Considerations for Buying or Building a New Home, Sampling for Well Water Quality, Interpreting Water Quality Results, Chlorinating a Well and Water System, and Water Treatment Basics.

The video on chlorinating a well is very informative and could be of great value to homeowners that need to chlorinate and have never completed the process before.

The videos can be found at:

http://waterquality.montana.edu/docs/WELL_EDUCATED/Well_and_Septic_DVD/Educational_Videos2.shtml

Air pollution in smokers' homes can reach outdoor levels in worst cities

Living with a smoker can be like breathing the air in the world's most polluted cities, according to a new study from Scotland.

"The message is pretty simple really - smoking in your home leads to really poor air quality and results in concentrations of fine particles, that you can't see, that would cause real concern to us if they were found outside," said lead author Sean Semple, of the Scottish Center for Indoor Air at the University of Aberdeen.

Tiny particles 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller, known as PM2.5, can penetrate deep into the lungs and even enter the blood. They've been linked to heart disease, strokes and cancer.

"Making your home smoke-free is key to reducing your exposure to PM2.5; for non-smokers who live with a smoker the impact of implementing smoke-free house rules would reduce their daily intake of PM2.5 by 70 percent or more," Semple told Reuters Health in an email.

Such tiny particles typically result from combustion. Outdoors, the primary sources are vehicle exhaust, power plants and wildfires. Indoors, wood-burning or coal-burning stoves, gas cooking and heating fires and tobacco smoke are the most common sources of PM2.5 in the air.

For outdoor air, the World Health Organization says the safe exposure limit for PM2.5 particles is an average of 25 micrograms, or 25 millionths of a gram, per cubic meter of air over a 24-hour period, or average annual levels of 10 micrograms per cubic meter.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets the 24-hour limit at an average of 12 micrograms.

Semple and his colleagues wanted to bring together two scientific communities: those involved in tobacco control work and those interested in outdoor air pollution and health. "We think there is a lot that each can learn from the other," he said.

Many studies have examined outdoor air pollution or indoor air quality in workplaces. But home is where most people spend the majority of their time, particularly small children and homebound elderly people, the researchers write. By comparing indoor air pollution in the homes of smokers and non-smokers, then comparing that to the most polluted cities, they hoped to illustrate the perils of indoor tobacco smoke over a lifetime.

The study team looked at data from four separate studies that measured PM2.5 levels in 93 Scottish homes where people smoked and 17 homes that were smoke free.

On average, PM2.5 levels in smokers' homes were around 31 micrograms per cubic meter – 10 times greater than the average of 3 micrograms in non-smoking homes.

There was a wide range of smoke concentrations in the smokers' homes, however, and in one quarter of them, the 24-hour averages were 111 micrograms.

Semple pointed out, "A considerable proportion of smokers' homes had air pollution levels that were the same or higher than the annual average PM2.5 concentration measured in Beijing," a heavily polluted city.

The study team estimates that over a lifetime, a non-smoker living with a smoker will inhale about 6 grams more particulate matter than a non-smoker living in a smoke-free home.

Semple said that isn't much, but this amount is likely to "have a substantial effect on the risk of developing diseases of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems."

Semple said smokers often express the view that outdoor traffic pollution is a bigger problem than second-hand smoke pollution in the home.

"What this work shows is that, for most people living outside of major heavily polluted mega-cities like Beijing or Delhi, outdoor air pollution is much, much lower than what is measured inside homes where someone smokes," he said.

"We have a lot of data and it's an established fact how bad secondhand smoke is," said Lucy Popova, from the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California, San Francisco. "There's no safe level of exposure to it."

"Smoke-free rules help not only by reducing the particulate matters for non-smokers but it actually helps smokers to quit too," said Popova, who was not involved in the Scottish study. "Research shows when you have smoke-free rules in your home, that motivates smokers to make more cessation attempts and decrease the number of cigarettes that they smoke."

Taken from: <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2014/11/03/air-pollution-in-smokers-homes-can-reach-outdoor-levels-in-worst-cities/>

Environmental Public Health Online Course Topics

1. General Environmental Health
2. Statutes and Regulations
3. Food Protection
4. Potable Water
5. Wastewater
6. Solid and Hazardous Waste
7. Hazardous Materials
8. Zoonoses, Vectors, Pests, and Weeds
9. Radiation Protection
10. Occupational Safety and Health
11. Air Quality and Environmental Noise
12. Housing Sanitation and Safety
13. Institutions and Licensed Establishments
14. Swimming Pools and Recreational Facilities
15. Disaster Sanitation

Getting Last Minute Credit Hours before REHS Renewals

REHS license renewals are due December 31 this year. If you haven't earned 24 hours of continuing education credits in the last two years, it's not too late. Many of you are aware and have taken advantage of the many free credit hours which can be earned from the National EHA online. If you have exhausted this resource and still need hours or want to try something new, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the Jefferson County (Alabama) Department of Health, NEHA and the CDC have developed a comprehensive online package of courses for environmental public health practitioners. The program provides 45 hours of instruction through 15 courses that mirror the chapters of the NEHA Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian Study Guide. The courses are designed for new EPH workers who wish to learn more about the spectrum of environmental health practices. Experienced EPH workers can also use the program to refresh their knowledge. The course subjects are listed above and all are free. Registration for the courses are required. If you are interested in earning some additional CEUs you can register on their website at:

<http://lms.southcentralpartnership.org/scp/local/certificateprogram/view.php?id=14>