

Fall 2009

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NEBRASKA
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

So much to do, so little time. This seemed to be the theme throughout the year. As NEHA President, my personal theme was to move the Association forward by pushing the limits of the norm and challenging the board to explore new areas. That is exactly what was done. I would like to thank the Board for the great work they accomplished, not only accepting new challenges but tackling them head on. We worked on solidifying processes within the organization as well as looking at the Association's role from different perspectives.

This good work has not gone unnoticed. I am happy to report the Association's membership is at an all time high. This is an encouraging sign for the future of the Association and shows support for the important work Environmental Health professionals do in Nebraska.

Speaking of important work, our annual conference is quickly approaching. This is the event you do not want to miss. You can find out more about the conference in this newsletter. We have a great lineup of speakers including leaders from two national organizations. This is just an example of the good work your board has done.

As I hand off my current role on the NEHA Board I want to leave you with this thought. Now is the time we need to move our Association forward. Now is the time we need to make our community impact and now is the time we need to ensure environmental health in Nebraska is invaluable to everyone. The opportunities are there every day...we just need to take them and run.

Thank you for your support over the year. Enjoy the newsletter.

Ryan King, REHS/RS, MA

NEHA President

rking@cdhd.ne.gov



A Presidential Presence!

NEHA and NACCHO at Mohoney State Park

This year's NEHA Annual Education Conference promises to be a special one. We are pleased to announce two special guests to our speaker lineup. The President of the [National Environmental Health Association \(NEHA\)](#) and the President of the [National Association of County/City Health Officials \(NACCHO\)](#) have agreed to be part of our conference!

Bruce Dart, one of our own, is the current President of [NACCHO](#). This is a leading public health organization representing local health departments across the nation. Bruce will be followed by Welford Roberts, the current President of [NEHA](#) coming in from Virginia.

What a great opportunity for Nebraska. This is a chance to hear about environmental health from a national perspective. [NEHA](#) and [NACCHO](#) at the same place....this is the conference you do not want to miss!

The rest of the day's agenda is filled with exciting topics such as.....

Sustainability

Bed Bugs

Motivation

Overseas mosquito control

Water contaminants

When and where?

NEHA Annual Education Conference

Eugene T. Mohoney State Park

October 28, 2009

The registration form will be out soon so be watching for it.





Bovine Tuberculosis Discovered in Two Cattle in Bassett, Nebraska

In June, the first two cases of bovine tuberculosis in 17 years were found in a cattle herd located in the Bassett, Nebraska area. This discovery jeopardized the TB Free Status that Nebraska has enjoyed for numerous years.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and the USDA immediately began quarantining animals that may have had contact with the infected animals. This would include animals with fence-line contact and animals sold from the herd where the cases were discovered. Trace-backs and trace-forwards were begun.

Testing of the quarantined herds was begun. Approximately 15,000 animals were to be tested. Three testing teams were developed. Each team consisted of 7-8 members consisting of veterinarians, field inspectors, and locally hired ranch workers. In addition to the testing teams, two Cleaning and Disinfecting Teams were established. All equipment taken to the testing site had to be cleaned and disinfected before it could be taken to another person's property.

The testing consisted of injecting the animal with a reactant and returning two days later to 'read' the injection site for evidence of a reaction. If there was a reaction, the animal was bled. The blood sample was sent to a laboratory in Texas or Iowa for confirmatory testing.

As of the first of August, approximately 9,000 head have been tested with no positive animals.

From August through the end of testing, scheduled to be complete by November 1, one team will be used. The initial rush during the early months was to get those animals scheduled for sale tested so they could be sent to auction.

A Governors' Emergency Declaration was made in June. This allowed funds to pay for the equipment and overtime necessary for this project. The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) set up a command post in Bassett. The post was manned by NEMA and NDA personnel. The command post at Bassett was stood down in late July and moved to the NDA offices.



Command Post in Bassett

BOVINE TB - COUNTIES AFFECTED

AS OF JULY 15 2009



Nebraska is fortunate that no additional cases found. If additional cases would have been found, Nebraska would lose its TB Free status. Producers would then be required to test every animal they wanted to sell or transport out of state. This would have been a costly blow to Nebraska's cattle industry and Nebraska's budget.

Article submitted by George Hanssen, NDA



A Primer on Emerging Contaminants

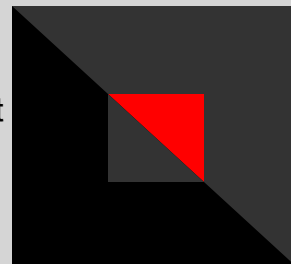
Article 1 and 2

Alan S. Kolok, Ph.D.
Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
University of Nebraska, Omaha

Article 1

We have all seen the headlines: pharmaceutical compounds found in drinking water, reproductive abnormalities in male fish downstream from wastewater treatment plants, agricultural pesticides feminizing male frogs, the list goes on and on. Fortunately, most of the headlines in the newspaper relate to distant parts of the country far removed from Nebraska. However, the headlines also leave us uneasy; are these issues relative to Nebraska, might these contaminants influence human health, and if so, what, if anything should be done about it? In the next few upcoming issues of the Water Current, we will take a closer look at the issue of 'emerging contaminants' particularly focusing on recent findings from the scientific literature, and on topics that are directly germane to Nebraska.

The term "emerging contaminant" is a confusing one in that the compounds are not necessarily emerging onto the contaminant radar screen. Nevertheless, while the name may very well be a poor choice, it has become part of the modern lexicon (in fact it even appears in the Water Current's list of Nebraska's Top-10 Water Challenges!) and we appear to be stuck with it for some time. The USGS¹ defines emerging contaminants as chemical and/or microbial constituents that have not historically been considered to be contaminants. The USGS goes on to further suggest that sources for these contaminants can be municipal, agricultural, and industrial, and that these compounds may require shifts in our traditional thinking of thinking about contaminants. How emerging contaminants are forcing paradigm shifts in toxicology warrants closer attention.



In toxicology, it is axiomatic that 'dose makes the poison'. In fact the root of this expression can be traced all way back to Paracelsus (1493-1541) who is often credited as being the father of Toxicology. Indeed, most of us have a relationship with doses of toxic compounds that parallels the 1970's Supreme Court Justice Stewart's feelings on obscenity, we may not be able to quantify what it is, but we would certainly know it when we saw it! Our inherent understanding of what is, and is not toxic, in the case emerging contaminants, can be incredibly misleading. Some emerging contaminants are toxic at levels so low, that their continued biological effect appears to stretch the imagination. It has been reported that concentrations of emerging contaminants are biologically active at concentrations in the part per billion (ppb) range. To put this into perspective, consider that one ppb is equivalent to a teaspoon of liquid poured into an Olympic-size swimming pool. How can such low concentrations of a compound result in adverse biological effects?

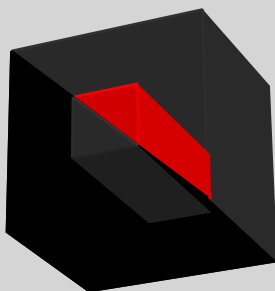


It is important to recognize that some emerging contaminants either mimic, or are, biological signaling molecules. Signaling molecules, such as hormones, travel in the blood and cause activation of cellular processes, and they do their jobs at remarkably low concentrations. In fact, the naturally-occurring estrogen, 17β -estradiol, which is responsible for sexual development in females (women and fish alike) is doing so at levels that average about 100 ppb. Clearly, signaling molecules manifest dramatic effects at astonishingly low concentrations! If a male, be it a human or a fish, is exposed for prolonged periods to exogenous estrogen (or compounds that mimic estrogen) it is not all surprising that feminization (or demasculinization) may be the outcome.

A further complication associated with emerging contaminants is that there may be no 'no effect' dose. Again, taking our cue from classic toxicology, if dose does indeed make the poison, then there ought to be a dose below which no adverse effects occur. Once again, this need not be true when dealing with biological signaling molecules (or molecules that mimic them). The reason is obvious, if signaling molecules already exist within the bloodstream, then any exogenous addition to that baseline concentration of these molecules can very well have an effect on the signal that these molecules are sending.

So where does this leave us? Some emerging contaminants are (or can mimic) our very own biological signaling molecules. Furthermore, these molecules (often termed endocrine disrupting compounds) can manifest their effects at astonishingly low concentrations. While not all emerging contaminants are endocrine disruptors, the low dose paradigm may apply to many other biologically active compounds, including exogenous pharmaceuticals. In the next column, we will take a closer look at pharmaceutical compounds, what they are, where they are coming from, and why they are a growing concern.

Article by: Alan S. Kolok, Ph.D.
Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
University of Nebraska, Omaha





A Primer on Emerging Contaminants

Article 2

Alan S. Kolok, Ph.D.

Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
University of Nebraska, Omaha

With regard to human health, we live in a truly remarkable time. Many infectious diseases have been to a large degree controlled. Witness the fact that during the Civil War over 70 fatalities occurred per 1,000 troops due to infectious disease. Approximately 80 years later during World War II, the fatality rate due to infectious disease had been reduced to less than 1 per 1,000. Partial credit for this profound increase in survivorship was due to the widespread introduction and use of antibiotics and other pharmaceutical compounds.

While human pharmaceuticals have played an important role in the development of modern society, it is important to understand what these compounds are. Simply stated, a pharmaceutical compound is a drug. Drugs are substances that, when taken into a living organism, may modify one or more of its functions. Modern pharmaceuticals include: antibiotics, analgesics (i.e., pain relievers), antidepressants, beta-blockers (used as cardio-protectants), as well as hormones and hormone mimics. But why are these human pharmaceuticals of importance to water quality?

Part of the answer to the above question is simply one of scale. Since the end of World War II, the production and administration of the pharmaceutical compounds has risen dramatically. During 2003 more than 3 billion prescriptions were dispensed in the United States with more than 45% of all residents being prescribed at least one pharmaceutical compound per month. Consumption numbers are probably most impressive for aspirin, an over-the-counter pharmaceutical that has an annual US consumption rate that exceeds 10,000 tons. The number of different pharmaceutical compounds prescribed in the United States is also quite large, and more than 90 different compounds are consumed at rates greater than 10 tons per year.

A second important factor relating pharmaceuticals to local water quality is one of abundance. Given the large amount of pharmaceuticals being produced, it is inevitable that some of them will never be consumed. Many pharmaceutical compounds have a relatively short shelf life, that time period between prescription and expiration date, and once the expiration date has passed, the consumer is left with the problem of appropriate disposal. Historically, the preferred method of dealing with old pharmaceutical compounds was to flush them down the drain. Flushing unused pharmaceuticals, however is an ineffective means of neutralizing them, and their presence in a household's wastewater is likely to translate into their presence in local natural waterways.



Interestingly, the pharmaceutical community in Nebraska appears to understand the importance of keeping unused pharmaceuticals out of the wastewater stream. For example, when six pharmacists in Omaha were recently posed the question, “What is the appropriate method for disposal of unused and expired pharmaceuticals?”, all of them advised crushing and mixing with solid wastes (coffee grounds, kitty litter) as opposed to flushing. The general public, however, may not be as knowledgeable about appropriate disposal methods for pharmaceuticals. When a class of 16 undergraduate students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha was posed the same question as the pharmacists, 50% responded that flushing the compounds was the most appropriate method of disposal. Clearly, an educational campaign focused toward the general public might dramatically reduce, if not eliminate this route of entry of pharmaceuticals into local waterways.

Flushing pharmaceuticals down the drain is not the only way that they can enter the environment, as ingested pharmaceuticals can also ultimately find their way into local waterways. Unlike food molecules, such as sugars or fats, which can be broken down and used as cellular building blocks or energy sources, the digestive fate of many pharmaceutical compounds is quite different. These compounds will either pass through the body unaltered or be metabolized (chemically altered) in the kidney or liver before excretion. Importantly, as these compounds journey through your body, they may retain a portion, if not all, of their cellular function. Thus, for many pharmaceutical compounds, the compound that you ingest will ultimately be found in the liquid waste stream in a form that retains at least a portion of its biological potency.

And find them we do. A nationwide reconnaissance of the occurrence of pharmaceutical compounds in the waterways of the US found that 80% of the 139 streams that were sampled contained detectable levels of these compounds. Fortunately, the concentrations found were generally low and rarely exceeded drinking-water guidelines. Nevertheless, pharmaceutical compounds and their metabolites are found in many waterways throughout the United States, including waters that are used as drinking water supplies.

But really is this a problem? If pharmaceuticals are found in the water in concentrations below drinking water guidelines, how can that be important? The devil lies in the details. Pharmaceuticals are biologically active compounds, with many of them being direct cell signals. As was discussed in my last quarter’s article (Water Current Summer 2008) biologically active compounds can manifest effects at astonishingly low concentrations. Furthermore, these compounds do not exist in the environment in isolation, but rather occur in mixtures. One compound within the mixture can magnify or offset the effect of another, and given the fact that scores of these compounds can occur in the water simultaneously, evaluating the relative risk of such mixtures on fish, wildlife and drinking water is a daunting task indeed.

The issue of pharmaceutical compounds in natural waters is a good-news, bad-news proposition. The bad news is that the compounds are broadly distributed in waterways throughout the United States, and that they may be having unforeseen effects on fish, wildlife and drinking water. The good news is that there is something that we can all do about it. The appropriate disposal of unused or expired prescriptions will directly reduce the load of pharmaceutical compounds in our water, and will enhance the quality of water within our state.





COOL /SFMNP Surveys Begin

Sanitarians with the NDA Foods Division are conducting two surveys this year funded by the USDA.

COOL (Country of Origin Labeling) surveys began in late June. Two sanitarians attended COOL training in Texas and then in turn, trained two additional sanitarians that attended similar training last year. A contract with USDA requires NDA to make 38 on-site inspections of retail grocery stores to determine compliance with the labeling requirements.

As of August 1, eighteen surveys had been completed. Of those, sixteen were in violation of COOL. Violations noted most often included no country of origin shown, no method of harvest for fish, and incorrect abbreviations used. USDA will send warning letters to the stores in noncompliance.

Another survey being conducted for USDA is the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) investigations. The USDA provides coupons for senior citizens to purchase fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. This not only provides nutritious foods for the buyer but helps the local economy.

There are certain restrictions when using the coupons. They can't be used for processed foods, fruits and vegetables purchased by the vendor, or non-food items, for instance. Coupons cannot be accepted by a vendor that did not register or attend training on the program.

Sanitarians conduct both overt and covert inspections. During the covert inspections, sanitarians attempt to use the coupons to purchase ineligible foods/items. Very few violations of the requirements are found.

Article submitted by George Hanssen, NDA

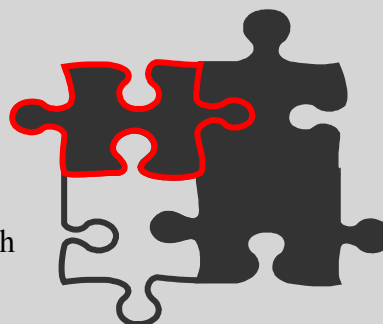


Public Health Association of Nebraska's (PHAN) Strategic Planning

In February, 2009 the Public Health Association of Nebraska met in Lincoln for strategic planning. Out of this session, three goals were identified to strengthen the Association over the next two years.

Those include:

1. Engagement in strategic partnerships
2. Investigate responsive internal structure
3. Identify, promote and advocate for evidence-based Public Health policy



As a result of our planning work groups have been meeting and planning how to best meet these goals. One of the organizations we have identified as playing a very important role in all facets of Public Health in Nebraska is **NEHA**.

Ryan King is a board member of both PHAN and NEHA and has been able to explain ways our organizations cooperate as well as where the two organizations differ.

Since February, we have been able to develop relationships with **NEHA**, the Minority Health Association, the Nebraska Medical Association and the School of Public Health. These relationships and the strengthen Public Health across Nebraska.

Our goal is not to engulf these organizations, but rather to promote better health for the public throughout Nebraska by finding shared issues and conveying how communications can be beneficial to both parties involved.

As a director of a small local health department, it is important that we develop relationships with persons of expertise in areas of public health that we currently don't have the capacity to employ. I truly appreciate being able to contact persons in your organization (NEHA) to literally bail me out when I have an environmental health issue.

As President of PHAN, I look forward to forming an alliance with NEHA, and would like to invite all **NEHA** members to expect the support of PHAN members across the state.

Kay Oestmann
President, Public Health Association of Nebraska



ENABLING ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE

Health service professionals devote their lives to helping people and often have difficulty accepting it when they need help themselves. Health service professionals are more susceptible to alcohol and drug addiction than the general population. Many perceive medication as the only appropriate care for their ills, including emotional or physical pain. Some have easy access to a supply of prescription medications. Also, some have extensive knowledge of drugs and feel they can prevent addiction because they can control their use of the drug.

Alcohol and drug abuse has been and continues to be an important factor to consider in the practice problems of health service professionals. Professionals who abuse typically have problems with attendance, personal appearance, relationships at work, practice competency and even safety issues. The substance abuser does not check their substance abuse problems at the door and others are adversely impacted. This has a negative impact on their confidence in their colleague and it can be destructive to the morale of the work group.

The best way for those dealing with a colleague with a substance abuse problem is to not ignore it or cover up the conduct or problems that result from the abuse or addiction. Ignoring or covering up for an abuser is called enabling. Examples of enabling in the workplace would be repeatedly offering to take on more than one's fair share of the work because a colleague is "going through a rough time," feeling sympathy, instead of empathy, for the colleague and frequently covering up for them, or rationalizing that it is not that big of a deal when a colleague regularly comes in late and has hangovers or smells like alcohol. Patterns of enabling by one or more co-workers generally indicates a pattern of alcohol or drug abuse by a colleague.

Many health service professionals do not receive the appropriate intervention and treatment they need due to lack of their colleagues encouragement to seek assistance on their confrontation of them when the problems are obvious. Some common warning signs that alcohol and drug abuse may be present in your workplace:

Unsatisfactory work/chart performance	Disorganized schedule
Unreasonable behavior	Unexplained absences
Frequent absences or illness	Excessive ordering of drug supply
Decreased workload	Inaccessibility to patients and staff
Defensive if questioned/confronted	Alcohol on breath
Discrepancies in treatment orders, progress notes, medication records	Frequent incorrect medication/narcotic count

Enabling the substance abuser is easy. Confronting them is hard because there are usually difficult issues to be faced. However, there is a greater good that will be achieved when the abuser overcomes their alcohol or drug abuse – for themselves, their families, those they serve and their colleagues.

If you have further questions about the Nebraska Licensee Assistance Program, or feel that you may benefit from assistance from the NE LAP, please contact the NE LAP Coordinator, Judi Leibrock or NE LAP Counselor Tricia Veech, at (800) 851-2336 or (402) 354-8055.



Who could possibly be against Sustainability?

by W. Cecil Steward

President and CEO of the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities
(Omaha and Lincoln offices)

On May 20, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Commission unanimously approved the following statement, to be added to the Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan:

“The Comprehensive Plan has long recognized the importance of building sustainable communities – communities that conserve and efficiently utilize our economic, social, and environmental resources so that the welfare of future generations is not sacrificed. This concept has grown in importance with increased understanding of the limits to energy supplies and community resources, the likelihood that energy costs will continue to increase in the future, and the climatic impacts of energy consumption. In a new century where these factors are likely to affect economic survival, we need to think about building communities that are resilient and adaptable to change. We should encourage economics that are sustainable, an attractive quality of life, and a healthy environment so that long-term benefits are derived for our community. Sustainability, as a part of the Community Vision, now requires added attention.

The community should be engaged in discussing how to more effectively approach this goal. Specific topics for discussion could include:

- Creating stronger incentives to encourage more projects and neighborhoods that incorporate best practices for mixing uses and reducing vehicle trips.
- Building a stronger relationship between city and rural communities and more security of our food supplies by encouraging more “local food.”
- Encouraging reduced energy consumption in new building construction and in retrofitting existing buildings.
- Encouraging more re-use, recycling, and conservation of natural resources, such as water, and other natural and man-made materials.
- Attracting new and expanding industries that serve the emerging market for more sustainable products and services.”

If approved by the City Council and the Lancaster County Board, this statement of principle will appear in the Community Vision section of the revised Comp Plan, along with other existing statements on quality of life, economic, and environmental visions.

Why does a statement on sustainability matter?

- The universal definition of “sustainable” community action is: “Quality development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Resources are becoming more scarce and expensive. Our descendants and the future Lincoln residents will be the benefactors of our conservation.
- The Comprehensive Plan is a public policy document, arranged and approved by the public to guide the future development of the city. The Comp Plan is (in Lincoln) a living, dynamic, and evolving document that guides the future qualities desired by Lincoln citizens. It offers predictability and enabling conditions for developers, citizens and entrepreneurs, while protecting property values, land uses, and resources for the public health, safety and welfare.





- The sustainability statement codifies the essential built-environment traditions that have distinguished Lincoln through years of civic leadership for the development and maintenance of quality-of-life places, facilities, institutions, businesses and events.

- Planning for sustainable development in a five-domain context (environment, socio-cultural, technologies, economics, and public policies) results in greater public participation, more balance among the conditions of the five domains, less ambiguity and unintended negative consequences, and more often than not greater financial returns to the community and business stakeholders.

- Good planning, design, and public administration with sustainability objectives will lead to a *creative city*. A city that is economically prosperous and stable; a city that retains and attracts its diverse socio-cultural youth; a city that respects and celebrates its historic heritage and the arts; a city that is safe, healthy and supportive of democratic freedoms; and a city that attracts growth and innovation in business and new enterprises and new residents.

A creative city will be made up of many distinct characteristics within the five domains of sustainability.

Within the *environmental domain*, it will be essential to insure that the habitat has adequate and clean air, water and sanitation, and that there is an abundance of environmentally protected, accessible green spaces and recreational areas, as well as goods and services that are free of pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Within the *socio-cultural domain*, an atmosphere should exist of respect for cultural and ethnic diversity, safe and affordable housing, health care and exceptional educational programs and facilities to accommodate life-long creative endeavors.

Within the *technologies domain*, essential factors are applications of appropriate and affordable technologies: carbon-free and efficient energy systems, convenient and community-wide transit systems, functioning and sustainable buildings and infrastructures, and ubiquitous communications systems.

Within the *economics domain*, a dynamic atmosphere of locally owned enterprises with both local and export market goals will support a balanced and definitive connection to all of the other domains.

And finally, in the *public policy domain*, the rules and regulations for developing, operating and sustaining a creative city must be designed and administered to support the balance and coordinated effectiveness of all five of the domains.

Our civic leaders in city and county government need your support and your voice in upcoming public forums to adopt Lincoln's sustainability vision. Lincoln is well on its way to becoming a truly great creative city.

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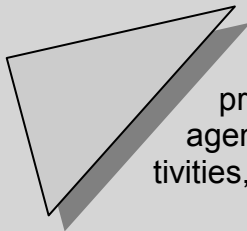
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CIFOR Guidelines for Foodborne Disease Outbreak Response

The Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) released its *Guidelines for Foodborne Disease Outbreak Response*. The guidelines in this document are targeted to local, state and federal agencies and provide model practices used in foodborne disease outbreaks, including planning, detection, investigation, control and prevention. Local and state agencies vary in their approach to, experience with, and capacity to respond to foodborne disease outbreaks. The guidelines are intended to give all agencies a common foundation from which to work and to provide examples of the key activities that should occur during the response to outbreaks of foodborne disease. The guidelines were developed by a broad range of contributors from local, state and federal agencies with expertise in epidemiology, environmental health, laboratory science and communications. The document has gone through a public review and comment process.



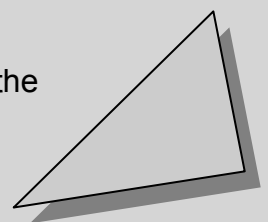
“It is our hope that this document will be useful to investigators at all levels in improving outbreak investigations and serve as a platform for developing local and agency-specific policies and additional tools to support these critical public health activities,” said Dr. Tim Jones, Tennessee State Epidemiologist and Co-Chair of CIFOR.

The *Guidelines* document is not intended to replace current procedure manuals for responding to outbreaks. Instead, it is designed to be used as a reference document for comparison with existing procedures; to fill in gaps and update site-specific procedures; to provide models for new procedures where they do not exist; and to provide training to program staff. The document is available in electronic and hard-copy formats for state and local health departments. CIFOR is pleased to include a foreword by Dr. Michael Osterholm of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy and Michael Taylor, senior advisor to the FDA Commissioner, two well-respected food safety experts.

CIFOR is a multidisciplinary partnership organized to increase collaboration among food safety officials at all levels of government and in all areas of the country with the ultimate goal of reducing the burden of foodborne illness in the United States. CIFOR is composed of seven professional associations and three federal agencies. CIFOR is co-chaired by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). Other member organizations include the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

For more information contact Lauren Rosenberg at (770) 458-3811 or to access the *Guidelines* please visit www.cifor.us.

Submitted by Scott Holmes
Lincoln-Lancaster Co. Health Department





NEHA Awards

Recognize your coworker or fellow colleague who has went above and beyond the call of



As the ambient temperature has fallen, it reminds us of the annual NEHA fall educational conference and meeting. A few new changes to the awards program have been made in light of comments by fellow members and to increase the admiration of the awards. A certificate of appreciation has been added to the award category in light of a

need to identify members whom are retiring or otherwise leaving the Environmental Health field. The Environmental Health Professional of the Year award selection process has been enhanced to increase the tribute of the award. Please submit all applications for awards and certificates to the NEHA board of directors post-marked by September 30, 2009.



Article by:
Jeremy Eschliman, REHS
Vice-President

FINANCIAL REPORT (2009)

Nebraska Environmental Health Association
Jere Ferrazzo, Treasurer

Current checking balance (08/20/09)	\$2659.68
Expenses paid to date	\$1402.07
Receipts to date	\$140.00
Paid active members	108 (a new high!)



NEHA (National) Update

EH graduates

The National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) released this year's study of the colleges and universities offering accredited environmental health programs. The Executive Director Yalonda Sindé reported that in the 2008 academic year overall undergraduate enrollment in environmental health is up about 9%, from 1,252 students to 1,381. In the 31 accredited schools there are 270 graduate students enrolled.

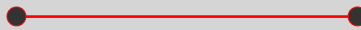
This past year there were 327 undergraduate students plus 59 graduates students who graduated. Job placement was split evenly between the public and private sectors, with graduates going to work for private companies such as Budweiser, Schwan's Food Service, and Newport News Shipping.

To see the entire report, go to <http://www.ehacoffice.org/> and click on the box 2008-2009 Annual Update for Programs.



Position Papers

A NEHA committee is currently working on position papers for third party auditors and for outlining what food safety should look like on the state and local level. Look for these on the web site in early November.



Region 4 Conference

By the time some of you read this, the conference will have ended. A year of work went into making this conference possible, with two people in particular who coordinated, requested, and encouraged the other committee members to follow-up and follow-through. Many appreciative thanks go to Kathy Lienenkugel from Iowa and James Mack from Wisconsin for their tireless efforts in making this event outstanding.

Bette Packer NEHA Region 4 VP

bettepacker@comcast.net





Upcoming Events

Long range planning: Annual Nebraska Food Safety Task Force Conference has been scheduled for March 2, 2010 at the Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City, Nebraska. The planning committee is currently soliciting topics for this conference. Registration for this one day conference is tentatively set at \$35.00.

This years' Task Force Conference will be held in conjunction with the Annual Mid-Continental Association of Food & Drug Officials (MCA) Conference. MCA consists of state and local regulatory officials and industry representatives from a seven-state region – Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska. This conference comes to Nebraska once every seven years. This is a great opportunity to network with colleagues from other states.

As with the Task Force Conference, the MCA Planning Group is seeking topics of interest to present at the Conference.

For more information on the MCA Conference, please visit the MCA website at www.mcafdo.org or contact George Hanssen, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, 402-471-2536 or at george.hanssen@nebraska.gov

EHTER

Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response

Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER)—Introductory Level course (CDP 014-06).

<https://cdp.dhs.gov/resident/ehter.html>

Course Description

The EHTER – Introductory Level course is a 24-hour course that provides an overview of environmental health topics, issues, and challenges faced during emergency response. The purpose of the course is to increase the level of emergency preparedness of environmental health practitioners and other emergency response personnel by providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to address the environmental health impacts of emergencies and disasters. Included in the course are 9 modules that address key areas of environmental health: disaster management; responder safety; potable water; wastewater management and disposal; food safety; vector control and pest management, solid waste and hazardous materials; shelters; and building assessment. Course instruction is provided through a combination of lectures, interactive group activities/exercises, and demonstration components.

See the above link for course dates.