

NEBRASKA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

NEHA Newsletter

Summer 2006

President's Message

- George Hanssen

Another hot summer is becoming history. Although there has not been a lot of membership activity since spring, when the Food Safety Task Force meeting and the Foodborne Illness Investigation Courses were held, your Board has been active. President Elect Doug Clark and Treasurer Jere Ferrazzo attended the NEHA Conference in June; Mark Kenne has been working on a NEHA website; Terry Philippi has been working on our Annual Conference coming up in October; Tim Miller has been working on criteria for Environmental Health Specialist and Administrator of the Year Awards for your organization; and the by-laws were reviewed and updates were suggested. All of these projects received assistance from the entire board. And of course, while all of this was happening, I was free to ride the scooter to Wyoming and Montana. Information on all of these activities – except the scooter trip – will be found in this newsletter. Please read and offer feedback to the presenters of the article.

Speaking of the Annual Fall Conference, mark your calendars for Wednesday, October 25, 2006 to attend the conference which will be held again at Mahoney Park. The preliminary agenda looks good with some new topics and updates on others to be presented. Proposed by-law changes will be voted upon and of course, the annual election of officers. By the way, if you have suggestions for topics/speakers, give Terry a call. We're always looking for topics of interest to the members.

Speaking of elections, we need nominees for next year. This is an opportunity for persons that have not been active in NEHA to step up to the plate and become involved. We need nominees for a Board Member, a two-year term; Secretary, a two-year

(continued page 2)

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars!

2006 Annual NEHA Educational Conference

Mahoney State Park (\$3.00 park entry fee)
Top floor – Main Lodge

Wednesday October 25, 2006

8:00 am – 4:30 pm (lunch and break refreshments will be provided)

*4:30 pm – Social Hour “to be announced”

Program chair, Terry Philippi, is busy putting together a dynamite group of speakers for this popular event.

The ever exciting “auction” will most likely be held again.

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President's Message (cont.)

term; Vice President, a one-year term; and President-Elect, a one-year term followed by the presidency. Let one of the Board members know you are interested in any of these positions. Incoming President Doug Clark is a great leader and mentor to new or not so new members of NEHA.

Since this is the last newsletter for 2006, this is the last Presidents' Message I'll be doing. It's been a great year. Several of the items on my 'List to be Accomplished' have been dealt with and several training opportunities have been provided. Thanks to the board members for their hard work and assistance and thanks to the members for their continued NEHA support and input.

Residential Swimming Pools: What Is The Outbreak Potential?

- Ryan King

Swimming is a popular way to get relief during the dog days of summer. Pools, waterparks and wading pools are often filled with people of all ages looking for a break from the heat. Besides the benefits, pools can also play a role in the transmission of recreational water illness. Environmental health professionals know that improperly maintained swimming facilities can increase the transmission of eye, ear, respiratory tract and skin infections along with a host of other illnesses. The profession has developed and enforced regulations related to recreational water facilities to ensure swimmers have a fun and safe experience.

Over the past few years there has been a noticeable increase in the number of backyard swimming pools. The majority of these pools are the blue inflatable-rim, soft-sided type which have become quite affordable. Unlike hard plastic wading pools, these pools hold enough water that people do not empty them throughout the summer. They vary from 2 to 4 ft in depth and range from 6 to 18 ft in diameter. These pools contain a simple filtration system where water is pulled through a single hose into the filter and is directed back into the pool. A disinfectant such as chlorine can be placed in the filter or directly in the pool water. Generally the chlorine is in the form of a solid stick or powder. (continued page 3)



Example #1 Residential Swimming Pool

NHSS Home Water Treatment Study

- Terry Philippi

The Nebraska Health and Human Services System, Environmental Health Services, is seeking owners of private water wells to participate in a project that will help to determine how well household water treatment devices remove contaminants.

Households that use water treatment devices and who do not use bottled water for drinking will be considered for the study. These devices may include reverse osmosis, distillation, and ion-exchange units. Water softeners alone are not considered a part of the study.

The study will attempt to determine how such treatment units are selected by consumers, how they are being maintained, how they are functioning, and what type of contaminants are being removed from private water well supplies.

A total of 100 households across the state will be selected for sampling this summer and fall. There is no cost for the testing and each participant will receive their water test results. Testing for contaminants will include bacteriological purity, nitrates, heavy metals, and pesticides.

Participants should contact the Environmental Health Services office at (402) 471-2541 if interested. The study will include an interview process where a questionnaire is filled out with household members which includes the reasons why they chose a particular household water treatment unit, the specific contaminants they are trying to remove, any maintenance agreements in place, etc.

At least 25 percent of the state's population is served by private water wells.

Residential Swimming Pools (cont.)

The increase in the number of these pools has sparked some questions. Although they are unregulated, are homeowners properly maintaining these pools? Could these pools become a source of an outbreak? Should professionals investigating illnesses keep these pools in mind? In July of 2005, Environmental Health Specialists from the Central District Health Department were sent out to residential areas to obtain permission from pool owners to test chlorine levels. Twenty pools were tested and the results were somewhat surprising and interesting.

80% of the pools did not contain enough chlorine to meet what is considered a minimum amount according to the standards set in the Nebraska Public Swimming Pool Regulations. A free chlorine level between 2 and 10 ppm is desirable. **60%** of the pools did not contain any chlorine which equates to over ½ the pools acting as community “bath tubs”. The average (mean) level of chlorine was < 1ppm while the most common (mode) level detected was 0. The highest chlorine level tested from any of the pools was 5ppm. Many residential pool owners felt they were maintaining their water properly while others did not see a need to do so.

What do the results tell us as Environmental Health professionals?

- The water quality in residential pools may not be safe to inhibit the growth of harmful organisms.
- These pools should be considered when investigating illnesses related to water exposure.
- More education should be directed towards residential pool owners related to water quality and the importance of disinfection.
- This also serves as a reminder of the importance environmental health professionals play in the public health system. “On the ground” or “in the field” observations and experience play a critical role in the health of a community.



Example #2 Residential Swimming Pool

In the field of environmental health many opportunities arise where we can make a difference. Small, seemingly insignificant pools as such become much more when you look at the outbreak potential due to the water quality concerns and current popularity in our communities.

Environmental Health
webpage of the day:

[http://www.colescohealth.org
/env/kids/index.html](http://www.colescohealth.org/env/kids/index.html)

NEHA Awards Criteria

- Timothy A. Miller

NEHA has established criteria for the **Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award** and **Administrator of the Year Award**. These are annual awards, but do not have to be presented each year.

Nominations must be submitted by September 15th using the nomination sheet and supporting materials. The current NEHA board will decide the winners by using a point system listed on the nomination form. Nomination forms can be found in this newsletter or can be requested from any board member. The forms will soon be available on the website at www.nebraskaneha.org

2006 Annual Educational Conference Report

- Doug Clark

The conference was held this year in San Antonio, at the Hyatt Regency on the riverwalk. Most of the educational sessions and meetings were held in the host hotel, with some being held in the conference center across the street and the Wyndom Hotel a few blocks away. The attendance for the conference was on par with other years, pre-conference registrations at about 970, and final numbers around 1200. The heat and humidity were worse than what we have been experiencing here over the past few weeks if you can believe that. Air quality is a major problem in the area also, each day on the news there was a health advisory issued. The Nebraska representatives included Jere Ferrazzo and myself from the Douglas County Health Department and Marcy Bauer from Public Health Solutions in Crete.

During the conference, our regional vice president, Bette Packer, organized a Region 4 meeting in which representatives from our region discussed the next regional conference, which will be held September 25-27, 2007 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. A planning committee has been organized and will be developing the program. At this time it is envisioned that there will be four tracks, consisting of food, general environmental health, emergency preparedness, and dairy. The hotel rates and registration fees will be minimal in keeping with the trend of past conferences.

During the Council of Delegates meeting, a number of national issues were discussed, among the most important being the issue of workforce development. It has been estimated that 46% of the current environmental health workforce will be retiring within the next five years, and it is essential that qualified employees are available to fill these vacancies. To this end, a "National Environmental Health Association Workforce Development Initiative" has been organized. The mission of this initiative was to develop an effective and efficient student recruitment tool for the environmental health profession. I have more information on the details of the product if anyone is interested. It will also be available on the NEHA website.

Another major issue which was discussed at the council meeting was H.R. 4167-"The National Uniformity for Foods Act of 2005". NEHA strongly objects to this proposed legislation, as it would destroy the ability of state and local food protection programs to identify and resolve situations involving adulterated food products. Past President Ron Grimes wrote a letter to Senator Richard Burr, on behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of NEHA, voicing the objections and concerns of our profession. The membership of NEHA was encouraged to write their own letters to their national senators, and sample letters were provided.

Educational sessions that I attended included programs on lessons learned and shared in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, meth lab decontamination, methods for stretching the budget, the environmental health response to pandemic influenza, recommendations for air monitoring during lead investigations, and workforce development. A DVD was provided to conference attendees that contains copies of the slide presentations. If anyone would like further information on the program, please contact me.

Your Support is Appreciated

Submit articles, announcements, or anything else that should appear in this newsletter and/or website to:

Mark Kenne, REHS
LLCHD
3140 N Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

(402) 441-8090 voice
(402) 441-3890 fax
mkenne@lincoln.ne.gov

You can also pass the information along to any board member. Thanks!

Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award Nomination Form

Purpose:

The Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award shall be awarded to an individual who has, during the year prior to selection, made a major impact on the field of environmental health by the development of special programs, educational activities, involvement in the legislative process, or any special achievement which enhances the delivery of environmental health services. This award is given only when deemed appropriate, not necessarily annually.

Eligibility:

Any person in the field of environmental health who currently holds a RS/REHS, and a member in good standing with NEHA.

Nomination Procedure:

1. Nominations for this award shall come from the NEHA members in good standing. Nomination packages must be submitted to the NEHA Board, postmarked no later than September 15th.

2. General Information

Nominee _____

Address _____

Employer _____ Title _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Date _____

Nominated By _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

3. Please attach all possible documentation to demonstrate the accomplishments of the nominee which have enhanced the field of environmental health during the past year.

Importance of project/special achievement (5 points)

Duration of impact of project (5 Points)

Scope of impact (5 points)

Accompanying documentation (5 points)

NEHA member last five years (5 points)

A Minimum of 18 points must be obtained to be eligible for this award.

Environmental Health Administrator of the Year Award Nomination Form

Purpose:

Administrator of the Year shall be awarded to an individual who thru leadership and guidance promotes environmental health throughout their agency and also outside their agency. This administrator shall have provided educational opportunities to staff and public, while also promoting Nebraska EHA, National EHA and supporting such causes. This award is given only when deemed appropriate, and not necessarily annually.

Eligibility:

Any administrator in the field of environmental health who currently holds a RS/REHS, and a member in good standing with NEHA.

Nomination Procedure:

1. Nominations for this award shall come from the NEHA members in good standing. Nomination packages must be submitted to the NEHA Board, postmarked no later than September 15th.

2. General Information

Nominee _____

Address _____

Employer _____ Title _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Date _____

Nominated By _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

3. Please attach all possible documentation to demonstrate the accomplishments of the nominee which have enhanced the field of environmental health, and agency during the past year.

- Importance of project/special achievement (5 points)
- Duration of impact of project (5 Points)
- Support of NEHA, educational opportunities for staff (5 points)
- Accompanying documentation (copies of news articles, letters of support, etc.) (5 points)
- Nebraska and National EHA member last five years (5 points)

A Minimum of 18 points must be obtained to be eligible for this award.

Corrections Please:

The NEHA Emails list is below, please verify your address, and send me any corrections needed. Also, *if you are not listed* send me an email so I can add your address. Send to: jferrazz@co.douglas.ne.us. Thanks! Jere

mail: dclark@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: dborer@agr.ne.gov
mail: justin.pfeifer@tworiverspublichealth.com	mail: denisnb@agr.ne.gov
mail: kreeves@ecdhd.com	mail: lizdev59@msn.com
mail: kking@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: jferrazz@co.douglas.ne.us
mail: kleinenk@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: shhealth@alltel.net
mail: nnphd@huntel.net	mail: tbaker@co.douglas.ne.us
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mail: marcy@phsneb.org	mail: cherek@co.douglas.ne.us
mail: mreiter@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: dlkahler@141.com
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mail: Mkenne@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: dblank@agr.ne.gov
mail: givethanks@stanton.net	mail: ejschu@phsneb.org
mail: mmbever@alltel.net	mail: gjohnson@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: mike.gould@hhss.ne.gov	mail: ghanssen@agr.ne.gov
mail: myra@swehealthdept.com	mail: grey.borden@hhss.ne.gov
mail: nclark@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: hheafer@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: pfriender@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: hleduc@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: pdrotzma@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: hhuynh@co.douglas.ne.us
mail: prooney@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: jack.daniel@hhss.ne.gov
mail: rsteinkr@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: jdavenpo@co.douglas.ne.us
mail: reriksen@ci.lincoln.ne.us	mail: jsonofjen@yahoo.com
mail: rhadan@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: tracy.donner@hhss.ne.gov
mail: rking@cdhd.ne.gov	mail: Jeffradl@msn.com
mail: SHolmes@lincoln.ne.gov	mail: jsteventon@sarpy.com
mail: smonaco@co.douglas.ne.us	mail: jweverka@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: stephen.schliffe@hhss.ne.gov	mail: JChess@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: sue.medinger@hhss.ne.gov	mail: jestrada@co.douglas.ne.us
mail: marysue.semerena@hhss.ne.gov	mail: jjensen@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: terriwyz@cox.net	mail: JDaniel@lincoln.ne.gov
mail: terry.philippi@hhss.ne.gov	mail: tjensen@agr.ne.gov
mail: kelliwtimm@aol.com	mail: ttieso@agr.ne.gov
mail: jeff.kuhr@threeriverspublichealth.org	mail: annette.bredthauer@hhss.ne.gov

Public Health tidbits

The University of Nebraska Medical Center is currently heavily recruiting students for its Master of Public Health degree: “The Master of Public Health (MPH) program is a collaboration between the Omaha and Medical Center campuses of the University of Nebraska. It is anticipated that the Lincoln and Kearney campuses may become increasingly involved as the program expands”.

It is also planned that classes may be taken online and by video conferencing for out state students, and scheduling is very flexible for the currently employed.

Full details can be viewed at <http://www.unmc.edu/mph/>

NEHA By-Law Changes Proposed

- NEHA Board

The following by-law changes will be voted up by the general membership at the annual conference in October. For the most part, the changes clarify with no substantive changes to the meaning of the by-laws. Changes are underlined.

If you want to review the current by-laws, contact one of the board members.

Article IV Membership, Part B

Section 2 Special meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called by the president or by the board of directors. Special meetings of the members may also be called by the president on the request of not less than 1/20 of all Association members on record ~~the Association records~~ who are entitled to cast votes at said meeting.

Section 3. Place of meetings. The board of directors may designate any place, either within or without the state of Nebraska, as the place of meeting for any annual meeting or for any special meeting called by the board of directors.

Article VI

Section 2. Number, tenure, qualifications. The board of directors shall consist of the president, president elect, vice president, secretary, treasurer, two board members, and the past president after they have been duly elected from among the members. The directors shall be elected by a majority of votes cast by the members in good standing at the annual meeting. Each director shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the members and until his/her successor has been elected and qualified except as specified in Article VII, Section 1.

Article VIII

Section 5. The treasurer shall have charge of all funds of the Association and shall deposit same in the bank at the direction of the board of directors. He/she shall report the financial condition of the Association of the board of directors whenever requested to do so. ~~All disbursement shall be made by check of the Association signed by two board members as authorized.~~ The treasurer shall chair the Membership Committee.

This suggested change reflects what is currently being done and has been done for several years.

Officers:

President: George Hanssen, 471-2536
Nebr. Dept. of Agriculture

Vice President: Tim Miller, 326-0186
Nebr. Dept. of Agriculture

Treasurer: Jere Ferrazzo, 444-7488
Douglas County Health Dept., Omaha

Secretary: Ryan King, 308-385-5175,
Central Dist. Health, Grand Island

Past-President: Liz Devney, 444-7480
Douglas County Health Dept., Omaha

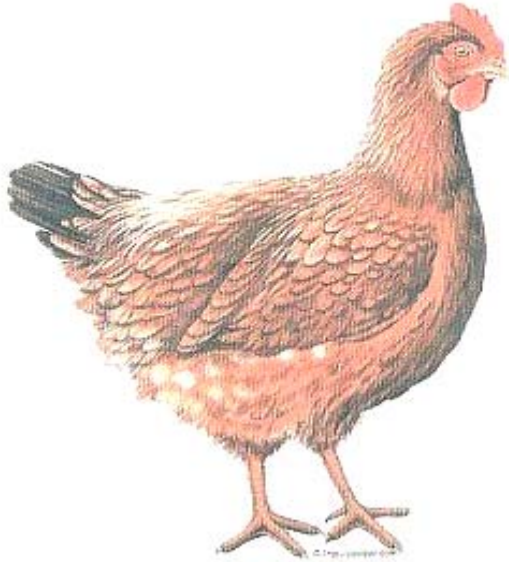
Board Member: Terry Philippi, 471-0514
Health and Human Services System

Board Member: Mark Kenne, 441-8090
Lincoln-Lancaster Co. Health Dept.

Fiscal Report

Current checking balance is \$4144.23
Current roster has 106 paid members

Jere Ferrazzo - 08/07/06



Return to Cyberspace

- Mark Kenne

The Nebraska Environmental Health Association is about to return to the internet after a long hiatus. Although it is still under construction, the site can be found at www.nebraskaneha.org. Please wear your hard hat if you go inside.

The new web site is hosted on Yahoo! Small Business, and will be considerably easier to maintain than the previous attempt. Yahoo!'s free "SiteBuilder" software is being utilized to construct the site. Soon, all NEHA board members will be able to log in and make simple changes using the software's graphical user interface.

If your interested in working on this project, or if you've got items to contribute or suggestions for things to add, send me an email at mkenne@lincoln.ne.gov. We want this website to be a shining reflection of this association and the excellent work done by its members.

Have you ever asked "Why did the chicken cross the road?"

Well, according to:

Darwin: It was the logical next step after coming down from the trees.

Ralph Waldo Emerson: It didn't cross the road; it transcended it.

Pyrrho the Skeptic: What road? Was there a chicken?

The Sphinx: You tell me.

Mark Twain: The news of its crossing has been greatly exaggerated.

Howard Cosell: It may very well have been one of the most astonishing events to grace the annals of history. An historic, unprecedented avian biped with the temerity to attempt such a Herculean achievement formerly relegated to homo sapien pedestrians is truly a remarkable occurrence.

Dr. Seuss: Did the chicken cross the road?
Did he cross it with a toad? Yes!
The chicken crossed the road!
But why it crossed, I've not been told!

Captain James T. Kirk: To boldly go where no chicken has gone before.

Grandpa: In my day, we didn't ask why the chicken crossed the road. Someone told us that the chicken crossed the road, and that was good enough for us. And that chicken would have had to walk barefoot five miles in the snow just to get to that road too! They just don't make them like that anymore!

Colonel Sanders: What? I missed one?

Bill Gates: I have just released the new Chicken Office 2006, which will not only cross roads, but will lay eggs, file your important documents, and balance your checkbook.

J FERRAZZO
NEHA TREASURER
1819 FARNAM ST RM 400
OMAHA NE 68183

TO:

