



WEHA Newsletter

1250 McDougall Dr., Lander, WY 82520

Issue II

August 2005

President's Message



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Looking back at the previous President's Message I wrote in February made me realize how much Wyoming's environment can change so quickly. At that time, the entire State was going through a drought. Now, only a portion of Wyoming is experiencing drought conditions. And other parts are experiencing flooding conditions! This affects how we carry out our environmental health duties. Of course, no one could ever predict the weather!

I would like to remind those of you that are not current on your WEHA dues, to please submit them to Bryan Grapes. Since the deadline has passed, the fee is \$15.00. Contact Bryan for more information.

Also, you will notice in the last newsletter that an application for award nomination was inserted. Please take time to nominate someone for either the Outstanding Environmental Health Professional, Arthur Williamson or Donkey Tail awards. This is your opportunity to recognize a deserving colleague. The award winners will be recognized at the Awards Banquet at the Annual Educational Conference (AEC) in Cody.

Speaking of the AEC, we are planning a terrific conference. We are bringing in some great plenary speakers that WEHA members will find fascinating. We're getting a well-rounded group of break-out session speakers for the environmental health track. We also have some fun activities in store for you to experience! Cody is a beautiful setting, so please make plans to stay long enough to take in some of these magnificent sites. Better yet --- bring the whole family and stay long enough to take a trip into Yellowstone National Park! I want you to think of your health and well-being and enjoy yourself while attending the conference. During the conference, WEHA will have their general membership meeting. We have some important things to discuss this year, so be sure to attend and share your thoughts with the group.

I hope everyone has an enjoyable summer. I know this is a very busy time of year for everyone, but hopefully you can get in some summer fun. Then after summer, I'll see you at the AEC in Cody!

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Origins at The Ivory Cellar

Kenneth Blehm, Colorado State University

Internships can be summarized using these words: value and cost. I have scores of letters from mentors telling me of a project - long anticipated and greatly needed but of lower priority - which was finally done by an intern. I have copies of surveys, reports, studies and inventories that would have gone wanting except for an intern. I have memories of virtually every graduate who has said to me "the internship was the best part of my whole program". Value to the sponsor and the student is never in doubt in a well-structured and executed experience.

Cost is a very real concern for sponsors and students. Environmental health students perform a professional-level internship – one where full time effort at a performance level equal to an entry-level employee is expected. Sponsors who use interns bear the cost of selection, orientation, training and direction of an intern. Students who receive up to 15 hours of academic credit must register for and pay tuition and partial fees for the internship; in addition to costs for transportation and living expenses for the internship. There is no question that there is significant cost (or investment) by both parties. This is most appropriate!! How much value did you attach to an experience where there was not a personal investment or cost involved to secure an outcome?? A significant cost makes both parties very keen to strike the best deal – one that benefits the agency with substantial, high-quality work and the student with high-quality experience.

The number of internships offered with no compensation has increased dramatically in relation to paid positions. I appreciate those agencies with dwindling budgets and increasing work expectations. I know even better that a stipend of only \$1200 over a 10-15 week period can allow a student to work and learn AS WELL as eat and pay rent. Only \$120 per week, a little over minimum wage, can allow you to get that vector survey done; complete the well water project; or develop those educational materials for pollution prevention. All of these tasks are necessary but below the capability of your core staff which must be reserved for those inevitable priorities and "brush fires". Remember the excitement of a first restaurant inspection, the first sampling and analysis of a small POTW outfall, the first time on top of the courthouse wrestling with the hi-vol? Interns do these tasks well; learn a bunch; and free your staff to higher priorities.

There is none more grateful than I (well maybe the student) for each quality internship with a caring mentor offered to a Colorado State student. I have a special request as this new year approaches that busy spring and summer season. Please invest in internships. Please invest the time and dollars so you may reap the benefit of quality work that can be done at a reasonable (if not dirt-cheap) rate by a motivated, capable and grateful student. Please help our profession develop those colleagues of which we are proud and with whom we gladly work. Please bestow on yourself the treasure of accomplishment when your protégé turns to you with that look of "YES!!! I DID IT!!!" gleaming from their eyes.

I shall look forward to your letter or comments and perhaps those intern opportunities yet to be developed. Please write me care of WEHA newsletter or email at ken.blehm@colostate.edu.

Announcements

Sara Budge from the Teton County Health Department has passed the rigorous CPO Inspector Certification and will now be teaching the CPO course in Teton county at least quarterly.
Congratulations Sara!

WEHA minutes now available at:
<http://www.wehaonline.net>

UPCOMING TRAINING:

CPO Courses:

Casper	WY	November 18 & 19	Pat Kirk	307-680-7946 (swim)
Cheyenne	WY	November 4 & 5	Pat Kirk	307-680-7946 (swim)
Jackson Hole	WY	October 14 & 15	Pat Kirk	307-680-7946 (swim)
Laramie	WY	December 5, 6 & 7	Fontaine C. Piper	660-665-6721

WEHA 2005 AEC:

September 27-29, 2005 ~ Buffalo Bill Village Resort ~ Cody, Wyoming

NEHA Epi-Ready Team Training Workshop:

September 19 - 20, 2005 ~ Estes Park Conference Center / Holiday Inn ~ Estes Park, Colorado

CEHA 2005 AEC:

September 21-23, 2005 ~ Estes Park Conference Center / Holiday Inn ~ Estes Park, Colorado

World Aquatic Conference:

September 19-21, 2005 ~ Pacific Palms Conference Resort ~ City of Industry, California



What Is WEHA?

By: Sherry Maston

Some of our new members may be asking themselves, “*What is WEHA?*” I hope this can be explained to clear up any of those questions. The Wyoming Environmental Health Association (WEHA) is made up of professionals responsible for protecting the health of the people and the environment in Wyoming. WEHA’s mission statement is: “*–devoted to preserving the environment, health and well-being of the people of Wyoming.*” Members regularly attend educational conferences to keep up with current science and information to maintain and improve Wyoming’s environmental public health. The association mirrors strong leadership and protects Wyoming’s environment, health and bio-security.

By being a member of WEHA, you are contributing to protecting Wyoming’s environment through your profession and annual dues. WEHA also provides you with the tools needed to maintain your professional credentials.

Sustaining membership is critical for the survival of our association. Sustaining members and sponsors may exhibit at our educational trainings/conferences, which is a great time for networking.

This year’s Annual Education Conference, sponsored by the Wyoming Environmental Health Association, the Wyoming Public Health Association, and the Wyoming Food Safety Coalition is scheduled for September 27-29, 2005 at the Holiday Inn in Cody, WY. This year’s theme is “*Partnering to Meet Wyoming’s Public Health Challenges*”.

Feel free to ask how you can get more involved in WEHA activities. As a result, you are creating a State of environment that everyone will benefit.



Sushi 101

By Jennifer Escobedo

Every day provides for something new and different in our profession. With all the variety and color and spice, I believe the world of food has never been more exciting. It is, however, bringing questions to light, new things that we as professionals are responsible for knowing. One of the food trends that has crossed the borders of our land-locked state in a big way are issues with sushi, sashimi and sushi rice.

We have always had the knowledge of what precautions should be taken with sashimi. We know what freezing temperatures kill parasites associated with the various types of raw fish and what fish are approved for consumption - provided that parasitic reduction has been performed. What we previously haven't had knowledge of is that many fish are delivered to restaurants fresh *without* parasitic destruction ever having been done.

In the food code, parasitic destruction is done strictly by controlling the temperature of the fish. The only fish that are exempt from the need to be frozen are tuna of the species *Thunnus alalunga*, *Thunnus albacares* (Yellowfin tuna), *Thunnus atlanticus*, *Thunnus maccoyii* (Bluefin tuna, Southern), *Thunnus obesus* (Bigeye tuna) or *Thunnus thynnus* (Bluefin tuna, Northern). These fish may be served or sold in a raw, raw-marinated, or partially cooked ready-to-eat form with freezing. (See Chapter 3, Section 34, Page 3-14 in the 2002 Wyoming Food Safety Rule for reference)

For all other types of sashimi (raw fish), parasitic destruction must be done at some point in the chain, if not by the distributor of the product, then by the establishment. Before service or sale in ready-to-eat form, raw, raw-marinated, partially cooked, or marinated-partially cooked fish other than molluscan shellfish shall be frozen throughout to a temperature of -4°F (-20°C) or below for one hundred sixty eight (168) hours (7 days) in a freezer; or -31°F (-35°C) or below for fifteen (15) hours in a blast freezer.

With the exception of one distribution company, Japan Food Company, no other companies that regularly deliver fish to Wyoming restaurants perform parasite destruction on their products prior to delivering them for consumption. Many times what is noted on the exterior of the packaging is that a HACCP plan was employed at the plant where the fish were processed. Having a HACCP plan does not mean that the required temperatures were achieved to complete parasite destruction. In fact, the product is often delivered fresh without having been frozen at any point. It is then up to the individuals responsible for inspecting the facilities to verify that the establishment has properly processed the fish by keeping it frozen long enough to destroy any parasites that may be associated with it. It is necessary that time and temperature logs be kept by the restaurant operators to monitor how many days the product, once it becomes frozen, has been at freezing temperatures. It must be at least the seven days at temperatures of -4°F (-20°C) and the establishment must have a monitoring and labeling system that makes it clear which fish are acceptable for serving on what days.

Another product that is common is the sushi rice that is often used as a basis for sushi and sashimi. According to Jeff Lineberry from the California Department of Health Services, this rice is made using domestic medium or short grain white rice, and once it is cooked and cooled it becomes sticky.

At this point, it becomes necessary to add vinegar, salt and sugar and blend it thoroughly. Mr. Lineberry states that this achieves the correct consistency, and if it is done properly each grain of

rice should have a coating of the vinegar solution, which makes it have a distinctive sheen and a protective coating of vinegar to inhibit growth of any pathogenic bacteria. Lineberry further states that sushi chefs do not want to refrigerate the mixture after this point because the rice dries out and clumps together and is then ruined from a culinary point-of-view. Also, he states that using this method should consistently put the pH of the rice well below 4.6, (usually in the ballpark of 4.3) and it also gives the rice an acceptable flavor and texture. He recommends using pH meter to determine the exact pH of the product. He concludes his thoughts by saying that the mixing of the rice when using pH as a control is the important part and must be done diligently to distribute the vinegar thoroughly in the product and that this process usually takes about 10 minutes. Furthermore, if it isn't mixed properly, clumps of rice may not be acidified completely and could allow bacteria to grow.

Using time as public health control is the other way to go. If this method is used, the temperature should be monitored once the product dips below 135°F and it should be thrown away after it remains in the temperature danger zone (41°F -135°F) for four hours. Of course logs should be kept so that all the times and temperatures can be verified. Something of interest is that in Japan, refrigeration of the sushi rice is a regular practice. It can only be done there because they use a special variety of rice to make sushi rice and it can tolerate being refrigerated. That specific type is not readily available in the United States, which is why it is necessary to acidify the rice mixture or time as a public health control.

Another interesting side note is that Tyler Bandemer with the City of Laramie was curious about the acidification process and what type of pH it would yield under normal restaurant conditions. One of his own establishments, which actively prepares the sushi rice, was gracious enough to allow him to take samples. He took samples of the rice and had them tested at the Wyoming State Agriculture Laboratory. At the time the rice was brought into the lab, the pH registered 3.9. After 1 week of being left out at room temperature, the pH was still at 3.9 and neither *Bacillus cereus* nor *Clostridium perfringens* were found.

DON'T FORGET!! SIGN UP NOW!
2005 WEHA/WFSC/WPHA
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE



September 27-29, 2005
Buffalo Bill Village Resort
Cody, Wyoming

For More Information Visit:
<http://outreach.uwyo.edu/conferences/publichealth>



Thanks To Our Committees!

By: Sherry Maston

I want to personally give a standing ovation to all of our WEHA committee members. They are the nuts and bolts of seeing our activities through a road of success. Here are those admirable members:

Education Committee: WEHA Board of Executive Directors:

Child Care – Jennifer Sewell-Escobedo (chair), Jerry Olson, Shawn Moore
Pools & Spas – Chelle Schwopw (chair), Neal Bloomenrader
Food Safety - Jon Cecil, Jennifer Sewell-Escobedo
Water & Waste Water – Roy Kroeger (chair), Doug Evans

Library Committee: Michael Oleson (chair), Roy Kroeger

Public Relations Committee: Dawn Helms (chair), Linda Stratton, Sue Mickelson, Kevin Krouch, Joe Martinez

Newsletter Committee: Jennifer Sewell-Escobedo (chair)

Awards Committee: Neal Bloomenrader (chair)

Legislative Committee: Dean Finkenbinder (chair), Joe Martinez

Archives & Scrapbook Committee: April Gindulis (chair)

WEHA By-Laws and Policy & Procedure Committee: Gary Hickman (chair), Joe Martinez


Membership Committee: Doug Evans (co-chair), Bryan Grapes (co-chair)

Nominations & Elections: Gary Hickman (chair)

2005 AEC Planning Committee:

Foods & On-site Cody Coordination – Chelle Schwopw (chair), Terrie Bruckner
Exhibitors / Silent Auction – Audrey Leaman (chair), Jennifer Sewell-Escobedo
Awards Banquet / Plenary Session – Kevin Krouch (chair)
Breakout Sessions – Ellen Southwell (chair), Doug Evans, Sherry Maston, Neal Bloomenrader

These members have been doing a tremendous amount of committee work to see our efforts succeed. When you see any of these guys, be sure to give them a pat on the back!



2005
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
WYOMING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Home Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Work Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Office _____ Fax _____

E-mail Address _____

Position/Title: _____

Agency: _____

Counties/Cities Assignment Area: _____

Position Duties/Specialty Areas: _____

Are you a: Registered _____ Licensed _____ or Certified _____ Professional?

Are you a member of: NEHA _____ IAFP _____ Member of WEHA since: _____

Annual Dues: \$100.00 Sustaining Membership
\$10.00 Before March 31, 2005 or any new members
\$15.00 April 1, 2005 or later.
\$ 5.00 Student Membership

Please return completed applications with dues to: Bryan Grapes, Treasurer
2526 E. B St.
Torrington, WY 82240

Please fill out forms completely.

THANKS to our Sustaining Members!!



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