



WEHA Newsletter

Issue III

April 2006

President's Message



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It is springtime in Wyoming with greenery showing across the plains and mountains. This is the time of year when we come out of our winter slump. The meadow larks are active; the days are brighter and longer. Along with spring comes outdoor activities' involving temporary food service. WEHA is sponsoring a 2-day "Temporary Food Service" course on May 10-11, 2006. The location for the class is at the Agricultural Resource and Learning Center in Casper, Wyoming. Please register by April 28, 2006 to attend this course. Participants will learn about proper design and location of food storage, preparation and serving operations and sanitary facilities through lectures and group exercises. This class will better prepare you for reviewing and inspecting temporary food establishments. The cost for the course is only \$10.00.

This year's annual educational conference will be held jointly with the Wyoming Food Safety Coalition in Saratoga, Wyoming. The Saratoga Inn is a quaint location that will be suitable for our conference. This year's conference will include seminars and field trips (tours) of environmental related industries. Mark your calendars for September 19-21, 2006 for attending the AEC. Planning stages are still underway; so please give your input to the co-chairs of the planning committee (Dawn Helms & Kevin Krouch).

This year is election year so think about the WEHA members you would like to vote into the executive board. The election will be held during our general membership meeting at the AEC in Saratoga. If anyone would like to run for a position, now is the time to start campaigning!

As for the 2007 AEC, we were trying to organize a NEHA Region 3 conference. However, this has not developed as we originally hoped. We were unable to get the other Region 3 States involved with this endeavor. Utah's Environmental Health Association was as excited about a regional conference as we were in Wyoming. The Region 3 conference was canceled since we could not get the needed participation from all the States. Start thinking now about what you might like to do in 2007 for a conference.

Last but certainly not least, I want to encourage you to welcome all of our new members. The State and local agencies have several new employees now working in the field of food and environmental health. This is such a noble field and I commend those choosing a career in environmental health. If you live near one of these new members, take time to get to know them and assist them with carrying out their duties. Sometimes we get so caught up in our work, we need to remember the importance of teamwork.

Have a great summer!

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Origins at the Ivory Cellar

Kenneth Blehm, Colorado State University
Education and Enforcement – Can one set up the other?

All of us in Environmental Health have learned something that was so striking that we change our thinking and manner of doing things afterward. Memorable experiences of mine involved cutting boards, raw poultry and logarithmic growth of bacteria, as well as the interesting microecology that can exist on the surface of unwashed fruit. I have treated cutting boards, meat thawing and fruit handling differently ever since as a result of what I learned in one of my first food safety classes.

After a learning experience, we (especially us teacher types) would like to think that all persons are capable and willing of immediate and permanent behavior changes. Obviously if this were true, we would have eliminated every greasy spoon and foodborne outbreak years ago, right??? I have come to the conclusion that without enforcement (the steel fist) inside the velvet glove of education, less than 20% of any regulated body of persons would be in compliance with any comprehensive environmental protection strategy. However, I also know that without genuine education and attitude change, less than 20% of any behavior change is going to be self-propagating and permanent.

The challenge then becomes how to do enforcement to facilitate temporary behavior change that opens our clients to education preparatory to permanent change. I propose that any enforcement program must be science based and consistent to achieve these long-term outcomes.

Consistent means that we must treat each client equitably and fairly. This means that conformance oversight, calibration training, or file review and peer observations are essential. We have to be able to justify that each of our actions are consistent, fair within the constraints of the presented situation, and reasonable. None of us, regardless of how much we dislike having “someone look over our shoulders” can assure these outcomes alone. Our internal values, our perceptions and our environments too easily influence us. Do yourself a favor if you are an enforcement official and formal review is not part of your regular activity: ask a colleague to review your files, your actions and observe you in the field. If clients perceive that you are arbitrary or capricious in the slightest, you have lost the credibility essential to trust (or respect) that must precede long-term behavior change.

Science-based means that ALL of our enforcement actions must be performance-based and rooted in documented outcomes. Case in point, minimum lot size requirements in particular Florida, Alabama and North Carolina counties, even though proposed as a water protection consideration for installation of ISDS systems, are really veiled techniques for zoning density utilizing PUBLIC HEALTH concerns as the unsupported rationale. Enforcement of construction requirements in restaurants before the advent of HAACP were trumpeted as necessary to prevent foodborne outbreaks – but were they really effective and provably so – in most cases?

It is a fact that the threat of enforcement is what “gets the attention” of many clients who do not have your background in Environmental Health – however it is education leading to behavior change that causes actual disease prevention or environmental protection. We cannot save the environment – EVERYONE exercising reasonable actions has to do this. Our credibility is damaged beyond repair when enforcement activity is arbitrary and not provably linked to a desired outcome. Take the opportunity to get actively involved in performance-based standard development and institute a documented review process (even if it is nothing more than you and one other professional colleague) to ensure that you, as the “enforcement heavy on the block”, are treating all clients with reasonable fairness and equity.

As always I welcome your comments and discussion. Please write me care of WEHA newsletter or email me at Ken.Blehm@Colostate.edu.

WEHA Announcements

Just a quick reminder for everyone:

We are in the planning stages for the upcoming AEC meeting in Saratoga, WY September 19th-21st
We will be having a Silent Auction again this year and are looking for fun, creative items for donation!

If you would like to donate something please

Contact:

Stephanie Malcolm

PO Box 290

Riverton, WY 82501

(307) 857-3049

Thank you in advance! I appreciate everyone's help on this project!



Membership renewal for WEHA was due on March 31, 2006. If you have not already renewed your membership please do so today!



NOTE

WEHA T-SHIRTS STILL AVAILABLE !!

(CONTACT JOE MARTINEZ IF INTERESTED)

WEHA minutes available at:

<http://www.wehaonline.net>

New Employees

Dru Haderlie – Consumer Health Specialist – Wyoming Department of Agriculture

My name is Dru Haderlie, I graduated from BYU-Idaho with a degree in Ag-education. I am married and have a 9 month old daughter. My wife and I enjoy ranching with my in-laws in Cokeville, Wy. My hobbies and interests are ranching, roping, ranch horse competitions, hunting, camping and spending time with my family.

Amie Merwin – Consumer Health Specialist – Wyoming Department of Agriculture

Amie is back in Wyoming and now working for the state. She most recently was a part time meat inspector for the State of Montana. Before that, as most of you know, she was employed at Cheyenne/Laramie County Health Department. She enjoys being back in the area and is looking forward to working for the Department of Agriculture. Welcome back Amie!!

Teresa O'Connell – Environmental Health Specialist – Cheyenne/Laramie County Health Department

I grew up in Lakewood Colorado. I Graduated from Metropolitan State College of Denver in 1994 with a Bachelors degree in Restaurant Management. In 1998 I graduated from the Bel-Rea Institute of Animal Technology with an Associates degree in Veterinary Technology and earned a Bachelors degree in Microbiology from Colorado State University in 2002. I worked for the USDA as a meat inspector in Greeley prior to moving to Cheyenne. I enjoy spending time with my dogs and going riding on my ATV with my boyfriend Tony.

Department of Agriculture has one vacancy for a Consumer Health Specialist in Worland





Get Informed!

The House of Representatives has passed the controversial "National Food Uniformity Labeling Act" (HR 4167) that would take away local government and state's power to require food safety food labels and will destroy the ability of state and local food protection programs to identify and resolve situations involving adulterated food products. It will also destroy our ability to tailor these programs to the particular needs and circumstances of the communities we serve.

As most of you know, NEHA has prepared a well written letter/position that President Grimes sent to several US Representatives. Now environmental health professionals must turn to educating our US Senators on our concerns with this proposed law. For more information on HR 4167 visit www.neha.org/position_papers/positionHR4167.htm or www.afdo.org/afdo/HR4167.cfm



UPCOMING TRAININGS:

Food Safety for Temporary Events

Casper, WY

May 10-11, 2006

34th Annual Rocky Mountain Food Safety Conference

The Arvada Center for the Performing Arts

Arvada, CO

May 23-24, 2006

NEHA's 70th Annual Education Conference and Exhibit

San Antonio, TX

June 25-28, 2006

IAFP Annual Education Conference

Calgary Alberta, Canada

August 13-16, 2006

USDA FSIS Food Safety Conference

Denver, CO

September 27-29, 2006

2006 WEHA AEC

Saratoga, WY

September 19-21, 2006

Upcoming CPO courses:

For information regarding location and dates of CPO courses in your area either go to www.wehaonline.net, click on Events and take the link to upcoming CPO courses or go directly to www.nspf.org/course.html.



Nomination Petition

We the undersigned WEHA active members in good standing hereby nominate _____,

for the position of WEHA _____.

Member: _____

Date: _____

Member: _____

Date: _____

I _____ hereby state my willingness to serve as _____ and if elected will resign any currently held office in WEHA.

All nominations must be completed and submitted to the chairman of the Nominations and Elections committee at least thirty days prior to the annual AEC meeting.

Return completed petitions to Gary Hickman, 100 Central Ave., Cheyenne, WY 82007



Wyoming Rabies Rule

Submitted by John Drinnon

The new State Veterinarian’s “Rabies Rule” has been signed into effect. In summary, these rules make little allowances for unvaccinated pets (principally dogs, cats, etc) that are involved with bite incidents. This may require little involvement from Consumer Health Services personnel, however, for local health departments these rules may fall onto your shoulders. The aim of these new rules, I believe, is to tighten rabies prevention statewide. Unlike Natrona, Laramie and perhaps Sweetwater Counties, many rural counties throughout the state do not necessarily have a comprehensive animal control program. As a result, the intent of these rules are to provide a blanket regulation statewide. Needless to say this will most likely open up new dialogue between law enforcement, animal control and public health (as well as discussions with local vets). In any event, we became aware of these rules after they were signed into being. These rules are well intended and are meant to support public health goals. How they are to be enforced will be an interesting proposition. For more information on the “Rabies Rule” – go to <http://wlsb.state.wy.us/> and click on the “Wyoming State Veterinarian Rabies Rules” link.



THANKS to our Sustaining Members!!

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Wyoming Environmental Health Association
100 Central Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82007

2006
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, 2006 or any new members
\$15.00 April 1, 2006 or later.
\$ 5.00 Student Membership

Please return completed applications with dues to: Joe Martinez, Treasurer
315 N 9th St
Thermopolis, WY 82443

Please fill out forms completely.