



# Oregon Environmental Health Association

*Furthering the Education of the Environmental Health Professional*

Newsletter

Summer 2012

## President's Message: "What is OEHA?"

According to our constitution<sup>1</sup>, OEHA exists to fulfill several purposes. Our first purposeful directive is "To maintain and improve the standards of performance in environmental health by fostering and encouraging research, education, and the dissemination of information."

OEHA members participate in several ongoing State-level advisory committees and strive to ensure that high standards are applied to issues involving environmental health determinations.

Our next constitutional directive is "To publish, or cause to be published, scientific or other useful information relating to environmental health."

### **OEHA 2011-13 Board**

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Ian Stromquist

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NW Regional Director

Jeremy Long

Mid-Willamette Regional Director

Bill Emminger

SW Regional Director

*vacant*

Eastern Regional Director

John Mason

Secretary

Tabitha Howell

Admittedly, OEHA has not sponsored any published works in recent memory. However, for those members wishing for support in publishing their work, we are ready to help you.

Another directive is "To promote the highest degree of skill, efficiency and professional competence among Environmental Health Specialists and all other members practicing disciplines in environmental health through a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience."

OEHA hosts an annual education conference to foster professional networking, camaraderie and to fulfill our educational goals. This year, the conference is scheduled for October 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the OSU Campus in Corvallis, OR.

To ensure equitable access to our profession, we are directed "To foster cooperation and understanding among environmental health professionals, and to work with other like-minded organizations consistent with the advancement, cause, image and the professional development of the environmental health profession in Oregon."

OEHA members advise members of the Oregon Health Licensing Agency's, Environmental Health Registration Board. We also promote our profession by requesting the Oregon Governor's office to declare an 'Environmental Health Specialist Day' every 4<sup>th</sup> Monday in April. As well, once or twice a year I write an editorial for our local newspaper and appear on our local radio station to discuss the environmental health profession.

Lastly, our final directive frames our limitations; it says that we are "To engage in any other lawful activities appropriate to a professional organization; provided, however, that the Association shall not function as a collective bargaining agent for the purposes of fixing the compensation or conditions of employment for any of its members; nor shall it endorse the products or services of any manufacturer or other

*commercial organizations; nor shall it sanction such endorsement by or in the name of the Association by any of its members."*

Essentially, OEHA is not a union of employees; rather we are an association of professionals aimed at improving environmental public health for all people both living in, and visiting Oregon. However, we have not limited ourselves to Oregon alone; OEHA members have been active in fundraising money for 'Public

<sup>1</sup> The OEHA constitution and By-Laws may be found online at: <http://www.oregoneha.org>

Health International<sup>2</sup>; an organization that staffs and conducts environmental projects in areas desperately needing help all around the world. OEHA also raises money to fund scholarships that we award to individuals pursuing non-paid internships in the profession. As well, we award science fair prizes at the 'Intel Northwest Science Expo'<sup>3</sup>.

You may ask: "What does OEHA mean to me?" As you may have realized by now, OEHA is more than words in a document; it is the sum of our members. We are the associated professionals that both make-up and act in concert in this organization. Over time, we have pursued different areas of focus. However, we have always stayed true to our core goals: to foster an effective and honorable profession.

OEHA invites all environmental health professionals to participate by becoming members of OEHA<sup>4</sup>, contributing to this newsletter, promoting our profession in your local community, participating on the OEHA Board, contributing to our fundraising initiatives and attending the annual education conference.

Regards,

**Ian Stromquist, REHS,  
Oregon Environmental Health Association, President**

## Fellowship with Int'l Food Protection Training Institute

Holly Skogley, REHS, of Linn County, recently completed a fellowship in Food Protection with the International Food Protection Training Institute. Her work culminated in a report titled "Enabling Small Local Environmental Health Programs in Oregon to Fulfill Their Role in an Integrated National Food Safety System". The purpose of her study involved exploring ways for small local environmental health programs to build capacity, and fulfilling their critical role in establishing a national integrated food safety system. Capacity related to foodborne illness investigation and emergency preparedness response at the local level was used as an indicator. Epidemiological data and completion of Standard 5 of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (VNRFRPS) were used to gauge if local jurisdictions were prepared to respond to outbreaks and emergencies within the national food safety system. Additionally, the structure of Oregon's retail food safety program was reviewed to determine if capacity-building enhancements could be made using available resources.

Discussions were held with stakeholders to explore the level of preparedness within different size jurisdictions, and lessons learned from previous and ongoing attempts to build capacity in other states were considered. A literature search was conducted to identify models to use for a potential pilot project in Oregon to improve the state's readiness to respond to future outbreaks and

emergencies.

For much more information than we can fit in the newsletter, please contact Holly at [hskogley@co.linn.or.us](mailto:hskogley@co.linn.or.us).

## Clean Team Handwashing Demonstration Trailer

**Reserve NOW**  
**for summer**  
**events!**

OEHA partners with Rotary International to provide two hand washing trailers that are available to go out to fairs and festivals. By using a fluorescent [GloGerm](#) powder and black lights, the public is educated about the importance of proper hand washing in the prevention of illness.

For hand wash trailer availability and scheduling, please contact Greg DeBlase at:

[gdeblase@co.marion.or.us](mailto:gdeblase@co.marion.or.us)

**The 2012 Reservation schedule is posted on the OEHA website and is updated regularly to show availability of trailer.**



<sup>2</sup> Public Health International can be found online at: <http://publichealthinternational.org/>

<sup>3</sup> The 'Intel Northwest Science Expo' may be viewed online at: <http://www.nwse.org/>

<sup>4</sup> An OEHA membership application may be found online at: <http://www.oregoneha.org/membership.htm>.

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**Center for Domestic Preparedness** - Annette Pampush, REHS of Tillamook County recently travelled to the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Alabama this past September to attend an Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response course. The trip was paid for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The weeklong course was very well done and provided EH professionals with information to be better prepared to respond to emergencies. The CDP is a former military base which currently provides hands-on training in chemicals, ordnance, biological and radiological response. The CDP website (<https://cdp.dhs.gov/>) provides details on this course and many others. They are hoping to put together a more advanced course for 2012, this one was probably geared more for newer EHS'.

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## 2012 Annual Education Conference

The 2012 OEHA AEC will be held on October 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> in Corvallis at the [LaSells-Stewart Center](#) on the Oregon State University campus, in collaboration with the [Oregon Public Health Association](#). As always, registration fees are substantially lower for OEHA members!



The keynote speaker for this year's conference will be [Richard Jackson, MD, MPH](#). Dr. Jackson lectures and speaks on issues related to the built environment and health. He is the Chair of Environmental Sciences at the UCLA School of Public Health. He will host a 2012 public television special [Designing Healthy Communities](#), and authored a separate book by the same name.

The much awaited OEHA '[call for abstracts](#)' for our annual education conference has been announced. Abstract review will be conducted jointly by OEHA and OPHA on July 11th, 2012. Ensure that all abstracts are submitted by 4pm, Tuesday, July 10th, 2012 to OEHA President [Ian Stromquist](#), REHS.

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**Well, if you made it this far, consider this message an invitation for you to submit an article for inclusion in the next issue of the OEHA newsletter! Announcements of EHS retirements, new hires, research, upcoming events, etc., are all welcome. Simply email your materials to any Board member. The more submissions, the better!**  
**Thanks for reading.**