



Oregon Environmental Health Association

Furthering the Education of the Environmental Health Professional

Newsletter

September, 2010

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MEMBERSHIP

OEHA membership is made up of Registered Environmental Health Specialists and Waste Management Specialists from Oregon's Public Health Agencies and private industry; Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Health Services, Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Agency, Oregon Department of Agriculture, local county health depts. This variety provides an excellent cross-section of knowledge and expertise to handle day-to-day issues concerning public health and the environment.

CHANGING MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REQUIRES SUPER-MAJORITY VOTE *by Ian Stromquist*

During a regular meeting of OEHA on July 5th, 2010, Board Members discussed changing the due date for membership renewal. Timely membership renewal has slowed in recent years. With the conference held in September many members have opted to wait until then rather than renewing by April 1st as required by our constitution.

The OEHA constitution does allow members to wait until the conference so long as the conference occurs before May 1st. Changing these requirements requires a two-thirds super majority vote during an annual general membership meeting.

The advantage of this change would be that the

OEHA board will no longer need to track which members remain in 'good-standing' and which ones do not. In addition, employers are more likely to pay a membership fee that is incorporated into a training conference. The original due date was originally created because the annual conference was held in the spring. Now that the education conference is held in the fall the financial pressure has greatly decreased during the spring months.

The disadvantage of this change is that OEHA may become financially unstable during the period leading up to the annual education conference. Without membership renewal fees arriving in the months leading up to the conference, it may prove



Caption describing

difficult to generate facility deposits for the upcoming conference while still providing scholarships and other benevolent activities.

OEHA provides more to Environmental Health Specialists throughout Oregon than just an annual education conference. We play an active role in environmental health policy development in the State of Oregon. We have active members serving and/or advising several legislative advisory committees such as:

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Contemporary Issues at the Oregon Environmental Health Registration Board *by Ian Stromquist*

We, registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS), are members of a regulated profession, sanctioned by the Oregon State Legislature, who are exclusively mandated to administer quality sanitation evaluations of public facilities including all natural and built environments. As required by statute, we are highly educated professionals overseen by the power of law.

On July 27th, 2010, we were informed that the Oregon Health Licensing Agency (OHLA) had proposed increasing our annual professional license fee by 83% along with other fee increases. Immediately, OEHA responded by passing the news to our members and colleagues.

Thanks to the work (and words) of many of our mem-

bers, on August 10th, 2010, during a meeting of the Environmental Health Registration Board, it was announced that no license fee increase would take place. However, fees for applications would increase by 33% (as proposed).

This event once again sparked discussion regarding the role of the Oregon Health

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NEHA Conference: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.

By Jim Solvedt

The Good: I was thrilled to represent OEHA at the NEHA conference this spring. It was an honor to be selected by fellow board members; actually I was selected by default since our OEHA President could not attend.

The Bad: I chose many training seminars in various Environmental Health disciplines to walk away a brilliantly educated man and bring back to Oregon a wealth of knowledge. I attended classes concerning solid waste, onsite sewage, emergency response, vectors, green chemistry, and foodborne illness. Instead I

walked away with very little new information. The classes were just too general. Maybe I did learn something the last 16 years – 12 of those years in Oregon. I took away the fact that Oregon does a great job of preparing and training Environmental Health Specialist.

The Ugly: The timing of the travel was not good. I arrived in New Mexico during record setting heat (102° F). And due to the bad economy, the conference did little to satisfy your hunger and thirst. No snacks during breaks. The water cooler was the water

hole, and it did remind me of a water hole. The containers were dirty and the containers were filled with tap water, awful tap water. Apparently the tap water was good enough for the cockroaches. I had one large cockroach greet me one evening in my room. I guess I am a spoiled Oregonian with high expectations.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

OEHA has teamed up with Rotary International, in creating two hand washing training trailers which go to fairs and other events to promote proper hygiene.

These can be rented through OEHA. Contact information is on the website.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES, CON'T

administering the Environmental Health profession. OHLA has stated that they are committed to keeping your license fees as they are for the near future. If fact, our opposition helped inspire a substantive internal review of our profession's fee structure by the new management of the OHLA.

Whenever policy issues arise, OEHA acts to protect both our profession and the quality of public health in Oregon.

OEHA SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year OEHA awards scholarships to high school students who enter an Environmental Science project in the Intel Northwest Science Expo. This year's winning projects are:

“Are there differences in bacterial content in a porcelain verses aluminum fountain?” by Sherry Liao and Viet Phan

“The Effect of Atorvastatin Calcium on the Regeneration of Planaria” and “The Effect of Lipitor on the Regeneration of Planara.” by Jane A Crotteau

“Bacteriological Water Quality Monitoring, Comparing Dry and Rainy Days, in Four Tributaries of the Sandy River.” by Elijah Kolmes

“Toxicity of Primary Neurons

Treated with Herbicides.” by Reddy Tejaswini

The winners were awarded \$60 per project. Congratulations to you all!



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL, CONTINUED

Oregon Drinking Water Advisory Committee, the Committee of Local Environmental Health Supervisors, and the Oregon Health Licensing Agency. Whenever policy issues arise, we act to protect both our profession and the quality of public health in Oregon.

Without strong financial support from our membership, there may come a time when our volunteers are not available to do this important work because of personal financial constraints.

While you consider this is-

sue leading up to our general membership meeting on September 13th, 2010 in Bend (first day of the annual education conference), consider the advantages of these changes and the repercussions for the future.

Look on your website for how to update your membership with

OEHA.

Make sure to spread the word to all EHS, old or new!

Post agency job openings on our website! For more information visit:

www.oregonoeha.org

A LOOK AT YOUR 2009-2011 BOARD

President	Ian Stromquist (Hood River County)
Past President	Gerhard Matheis (Multnomah County)
President-Elect	Jim Solvedt (Polk County)
Vice President	Terry Westfall (Douglas County)
Treasurer /Member Services	Jenifer George
Secretary	Morgan Poloni (Tillamook County)
Northwest Regional Director	Randy Howarth (Multnomah County)
Mid-Willamette Regional Director	Bob Anderson (Private Industry)
Southwest Regional Director	Greg Adams (Private Industry)
Eastern Regional Director	Vacant

Each year OEHA sponsors annual and regional conferences covering topics which may include food production & safety, waste water disposal, industrial hygiene, epidemiology, disaster response, and other educational seminars as the need arises. The speakers for these educational conferences are recruited not only from Oregon, but also from other parts of the U.S. Speakers come from local, state, federal agencies, universities, and private industries.