

Dedicated to the promotion of high standards in environmental health for the general welfare of the public



### President's Message

Greetings,

I am humbled with the trust you have endowed with me to lead our organization during this year. I am always surprised at the depth of experience we have in environmental health throughout our state, from establishment inspections to the built environment, our profession is one that is ever changing. I personally thank you for your continued hard work to advance our profession in public health.

As a board, we have established objectives to move towards the goals based on feedback you provided as we began this journey last October. The key issues that we are focusing on are:

A significant amount of energy of the leadership of NEHA this year, has

- ◇ **Presenting NEHA as a more professional organization**
- ◇ **Advocating for REHS's in district health departments**
- ◇ **Being proactive in legislative issues**

been put into bringing about a more professional organization.

One way this has been undertaken is through the use of committees. Committees are essential in any organization to get work done. In the past, NEHA has relied on the entire board of directors to scrutinize decisions and projects like putting together the fall conference. One of my observations during the last few years is that we could improve how things work behind the scenes at NEHA. Boards are meant to make broad decisions and policies and not to determine what flavor of BBQ sauce is to be served at meals. The product of this labor can be evidenced on page 3 of this newsletter.

In addition, I hope you will find a more consistent message coming from your organization. In the past, correspondence would come out from many different board members. This was confusing and often unprofessional. We are working hard to bring about a consistent message from your organization. This can be evidenced by all correspondence coming from the president.

Many district health departments are in a unique developmental position in relation to environmental health. In most cases, very few 'core' environmental services are conducted by district health departments. Food inspections are typically conducted by the NE departments of agriculture and health. The NE department of health additionally conducts inspections of swimming pools, trailer parks, well and septic property transfers, etc. Where does this leave district health departments in relation to environmental health? One of the characteristics of environmental health is the field is always changing. District health departments should explore new and developing sectors of environmental health. A great way to do that is to conduct an

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## 2010-2011 NEHA BOARD

### YOUR BOARD AT WORK!



**PRESIDENT** Jeremy Eschliman  
Central District Health Department  
jeschliman@cdhd.ne.gov



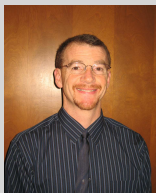
**VICE-PRESIDENT** Ryan King  
Central District Health Department  
rking@cdhd.ne.gov



**SECRETARY** George Hanssen  
Nebraska Department of Agriculture  
george.hanssen@nebraska.gov



**TREASURER** Jere Ferrazzo  
Douglas County Health Department  
jere.ferrazzo@douglascounty-ne.gov



**PRESIDENT ELECT** Scott Holmes  
Lincoln –Lancaster County Health Department  
sholmes@lincoln.ne.gov



**MEMBER-AT-LARGE** Jared Jensen  
Douglas County Health Department  
jared.jensen@douglascounty-ne.gov



**MEMBER-AT-LARGE** Nate Hartman  
Lincoln –Lancaster County Health Department  
nhartman@lincoln.ne.gov



**PAST PRESIDENT** Kathy King  
Lincoln –Lancaster County Health Department  
kking@lincoln.ne.gov



## 2011 STANDING COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES

### Membership (Jere\*, Jared)

- Network with 4+ like minded organizations for potential partnerships by April 2011.
- Increase pd memberships by 15% within 12 months

### Education/Program (Ryan, Nate\*, Jeremy)

- Plan annual conference by September 15, 2011
- Conduct 2 additional trainings/CEU ops by September 1, 2011

### Publications (Ryan, Nate\*, Jeremy)

- Establish marketing plan by January 15, 2011.
- Publish 1+ newsletter by March 15, 2011.
- Revise website, logo, etc. by April 1, 2011

### Legislation/Resolution/Bylaws (Scott\*, Jere)

- Review bylaws and suggest 2+ improvements by January 15, 2011.
- Keep membership informed of legislative issues by February 15, 2011.
- Take positions on 2+ EH legislative issues by February 15, 2011.

### Nominations (Kathy\*, George)

- Obtain at least 2+ willing candidates for every open board position by August 1, 2011.
- Review election procedure for improvements by August 1, 2011.

### Awards (George, Scott)

- Solicit 2+ candidates for each award by August 15, 2011.
- Review current award structure for relevancy (Is there interest in continuing current awards? Any new awards?) by April 1, 2011



Do you have an idea you would like to present to NEHA? Would you like to see behind the scenes? Be active in your organization! Become a member of one of NEHA's Standing committee! NEHA bylaws prescribe board members as committee chairs, however ANY member can be part of the process and become committee member! Involvement is typical limited to e-mail or brief teleconferences. E-mail your committee chairs today!



## WHAT'S GOING ON AT COMMITTEE LEVEL...

### **Education/Program & Publications (Nate Hartman, Ryan King, Jeremy Eschliman)**

Our committee has been working diligently on a time and place for our annual fall conference (NEWS TO COME!). In addition, our committee has been working on CEU events, website hosting and development and publishing this newsletter. Much going on behind the scenes

### **Legislative Committee (Jere Ferrazzo, Scott Holmes)**

Our committee reviewed numerous legislative bills and resolutions this session. The process began by reviewing every "One Liner" description of each bill or resolution and then reading the text of any that appeared relevant to the practice of EPH, or the protection of public health from environmental exposures. For the most relevant, a written synopsis was put together for discussion. The following bills: were reviewed: LB 20, 27, 28, 29, 30 31, 36, 52, 55, 110, 114, 126, 127, 144, 156, 204, 229, 248, 252, 305, 314, 340, 366, 395, 458, 487, 526, 529, 562, 578, 629, 645, 682, 683. The committee determined that none of the bills demanded NEHA to take action, although NEHA could have taken positions on several of the bills, for example:

- supporting LB 144 which requires mobile home parks to have shelter plans, or
- opposing LB 229, which would direct \$7,000,000 from the Environmental Trust to a single use (groundwater).

In addition, the Governor decided to not allow the food code update to come forward in the form of a bill. The Governor's stance of no new fees and no new regulations appeared to be quite firm and NEHA decided our role in advocating for updating the food code would be unsuccessful.

As the session continues, the focus will become budget issues and priority bills. Many changes can happen during the ongoing legislative process and if NEHA members become aware of any changes that may be of interest to our organization, please contact any Board member.

If you have not been on the Legislature's web site, you may want to take a look at: <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/>

### **Awards Committee (George Hanssen, Scott Holmes)**

Our committee presented a proposal for modifications of the current awards criteria at the January board meeting. After discussion, the criterion was reviewed by the board. At the February 11, 2011 board meeting, the proposed recommendation of the Awards Committee was voted upon and approved. The recommendation is:

- Notify members through the newsletters that they may nominate anyone for a reward. Let the nominator provide the reason for the award.
- Criteria may include something heroic or something dealing with health and safety, or other noteworthy action or event.
- To the best of the Boards' information, those NEHA members retiring during the year will be recognized.
- The Board will have final decision on Awards.
- An award does not have to be presented every year.

With the passage of the Committee's recommendation, the current charges to the Committee have been fulfilled.

**Committees... where the work is done!**



## NEBRASKA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



### Nebraska Department of Agriculture Realignment

Several divisions in the Department of Agriculture are in the process of combining or shifting duties. This is all due to changes made to better utilize staff and as always, reduce costs.

Divisions combining include the Bureau of Dairies and Foods combining with the Division of Weights and Measures. The new division may be (final name yet to be determined) called the Food Safety & Consumer Protection Division. The most notable change will be in the support area.

Field activities will remain unchanged.

Another change is the combining of the dairy division with the food division. Dan Borer is retiring as Dairy Division Manager. The milk sanitarians will now be under the Food Division Manger. The Dairy Division Manager will not be replaced.

The Plant Industry Division and the Bureau of Animal Industry will also combine into the Animal & Plant Health Services Division.

The transition is hoped to be completed by July 1.

Submitted by: George Hanssen, NE Dept of Ag, NEHA board member



**We like feedback!**

**Let us know how we did...good, bad or otherwise**

Publications Committee



## DID YOU KNOW...

...you can submit an environmental health article for the fall edition of this newsletter? Tell everyone what is going on in your organization, department or program. Share a success story or let everyone know of your research findings.

## HOW?



Just submit your article to a NEHA Board member. Visit the NEHA website listed on the front of this newsletter for contact information.



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Suite 1000-N  
Denver, Colorado 80246-1926  
Phone (303) 756-9090  
Fax (303) 691-9490  
www.neha.org

# National News



## Annual Educational Conference (AEC) June 18-20, 2011 Columbus, OH



### E-News and/or Facebook

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) AEC is so much more than a conference. It is the nexus for environmental health (EH) training, education, networking, and advancement. It is the national event environmental health professionals – like you – attend to acquire practical and real-world information and expertise, and to network with colleagues from across the country. It is also the EH event that provides a return on investment (ROI) because you'll leave the NEHA AEC trained, motivated, inspired, and empowered to further advance your organization, yourself, and the EH profession! Visit [neha2011aec.org](http://neha2011aec.org) for more information about the NEHA AEC, June 18-20, 2011 in Columbus, OH. Register to attend the AEC in-person or virtually.

The 2011 NEHA General Election for Second Vice President is open through March 31, 2011, 11:59 PM, MST. Candidate information is available with the online ballot.

### To register your vote, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Go to <https://eballot4.votenet.com/neha/login.cfm> by March 31, 2011.
2. Login into the site using the following unique credentials:
  - NEHA Membership Number
  - Password (supplied by NEHA)
1. Cast one vote for one of the two candidates for Second Vice President, and if you live in Region 7\*, you may cast your vote for one of the two candidates for Region 7 Vice President.

Candidate information is available within the electronic ballot and on the NEHA Web site: [http://www.neha.org/about/election\\_candidates.html](http://www.neha.org/about/election_candidates.html)

You will receive an e-mail confirmation that your electronic ballot was cast. Voting ends March 31, 2011.

*If you have specific questions about the electronic ballot or voting process, please contact the NEHA voting administrator ([nehaelections@neha.org](mailto:nehaelections@neha.org)).*





# Opportunities



Job Openings in EH:      Locations: Norfolk and Lincoln  
 Contact:                      [jack.daniel@nebraska.gov](mailto:jack.daniel@nebraska.gov)



## Environmental Health Officers of the U.S. Public Health Service “Advancing and Protecting the Nation’s Health”

### What is an Environmental Health Officer?

Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) serve in several U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) agencies providing basic environmental health services related to food, water and waste; and more specialized services in areas of injury prevention and institutional environmental health; and highly specialized services in areas such as counterterrorism, industrial hygiene, health physics and hazardous waste.

PHS EHOs carry out their responsibilities by performing a wide variety of activities, including surveys, investigations, research, teaching and training, consumer education, technical assistance, regulatory compliance, and codes and standards development. Each agency is actively involved in counterterrorism efforts and EHOs play an integral role in emergency response. These activities are carried out by a cadre of approximately 375 EHOs assigned to the agencies and programs listed below.

### What subject areas do PHS EHOs specialize in?

Air and Water Pollution • Communicable Disease Control  
 Emergency Preparedness • Food and Drug Safety  
 Hazardous Materials Management • Health Care Administration  
 Injury Prevention • Institutional Environmental Health  
 Industrial Hygiene • Interstate Travel Sanitation  
 Occupational Safety • Radiological Health  
 Recreational Facilities • Solid Waste Management  
 Zoonotic Disease Control

### What are the required qualifications to become an EHO?

A candidate must possess a qualifying degree or professional certification in one of the following:

- A bachelor’s or master’s in environmental health that is accredited by the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council, <http://www.ehacoffice.org>;
- A bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree in industrial hygiene that is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology for the American Board of Industrial Hygiene, [http://www.abet.org/accredited\\_programs.shtml](http://www.abet.org/accredited_programs.shtml);
- A master’s or doctoral degree in environmental or occupational health from a school of public health that is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health, <http://www.ceph.org>;

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# Opportunities



## Continued

d. Certification as an Industrial Hygienist (CIH) by the American Board of Industrial Hygiene,

<http://www.abih.org/>; or

e. Certification as a Health Physicist (CHP) by the American Board of Health Physics,

<http://www.hps1.org/aaahp/abhp/abhp.htm>.

For additional information and considerations regarding appointment boards and appointment standards please consult the **Division of Commissioned Personnel, Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual**, at [http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF\\_docs/ccpmtransmittal663\\_2.pdf](http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/ccpmtransmittal663_2.pdf)

Candidates must be a U.S. citizen, generally under 44 years of age, and must meet medical requirements including height and weight standards. Officer is in probationary status during the first three years of active duty.

Civil Service (non-commissioned) Environmental Health positions are available throughout the agencies listed on the first page of this document. Specific qualifications and benefits for those positions are described within the specific job announcement.

### **What are some of the benefits?**

Benefits include: Noncontributory retirement based on a 20 to 30-year career, Social Security coverage, noncontributory medical care at uniformed service facilities, noncontributory medical care for dependents at uniformed services facilities or shared cost care in the private sector, life insurance, survivor benefits, disability benefits, tax-deferred contributory investment program, burial allowances, Veteran's Administration benefits, use of military commissaries and exchanges, and reimbursement of travel expenses related to assignment.

### **How can I apply?**

The following website includes the forms and instructions that are needed to start your active duty application, <http://www.usphs.gov/applynow>. Please note that the application process to be called to active duty in the Commissioned Corps of the PHS is a **dual process**. You must apply for a commission in the

PHS, and you must also apply for jobs at Agencies or with Programs that accept PHS officers for assignments. The above website contains the application to the commissioned corps. Go to our Commissioned Corps Jobs Database ([http://dcp.psc.gov/VATS/rpt\\_category\\_button.asp](http://dcp.psc.gov/VATS/rpt_category_button.asp)) to apply for individual jobs.

### **Who can I talk with to get more information?**

LCDR Jennifer Freed, Lead Associate Recruiter & EHOPAC Marketing and Recruitment Subcommittee Chair

770-488-3650 [jen7@cdc.gov](mailto:jen7@cdc.gov)

CAPT Alan Parham, EHOPAC Marketing and Recruitment Subcommittee Co-Chair

770-488-3657 [axp9@cdc.gov](mailto:axp9@cdc.gov)

Submitted by: Brian L. Lewelling, REHS, MPH CDR, U.S. Public Health Service



## Foodborne Illness Outbreak Leads To Education

Four Corners Health Department had an outbreak of E. coli O111 in its jurisdiction in July of 2008. It was the first outbreak of any size that the department had investigated. The meat served at a customer appreciation day meal by a retail store proved to be the transmission vehicle. No licensed caterers were involved. The meal was prepared by the manager of the store who had a friend who barbecued large quantities of pork in a homemade cooker. Although there were lots of food safety breaches, the problem most likely did not stem from the cooking of the meat, but instead from the handling, cooling, reheating and holding the meat. The 80 pounds of pork was sliced and put into 2 large roasters that were held for 2 ½ days (in the roasters) in a household quantity of meat in the large roasters did not cool quickly in the 2 ½ days and any in the warm and moist environment. pork was frozen after the event and willing to have it tested. Testing Lab in Lincoln was done and nine grew E. coli O111, which late from stool specimens.



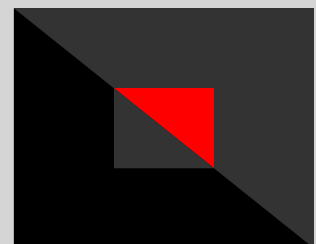
refrigerator. You guessed it. The quantity not allow the meat to get cooled very bacteria present incubated and multiplied. Luckily 4-6 pounds of the barbecued stored in the freezer and the manager was the pork at the State Agriculture Food out of ten samples were shiga toxin positive was the same organism as the human iso-

An intense environmental investigation done by Troy Huffman, REHS Officer, and Four Corners Surveillance team. Dr. Bryan Buss, CDC Epidemiology Field Investigator. This was an investigation not to be forgotten by any involved. It was done very thoroughly and in an educational manner proven to be beneficial in so many ways. Needless to say this customer appreciation day has not repeated itself. The steel cooker was retired from use and Four Corners Health Department surveillance staff learned so much about environmental investigations.

REHS certified individuals hold high respect and admiration by those that have worked with them. NEHA's goal as envisioned by Jeremy for all health departments to hire or train an REHS staff is a lofty one that has tremendous value for Public Health.

As a result of this outbreak, Four Corners Health Department wishes they could say that we have experienced no more outbreaks, but that is not the case. However, this department has achieved some excellent experience in the environmental investigation arena. Since that first outbreak, Four Corners is committed to providing Servsafe Starters classes emphasizing food safety at a nominal fee each spring and fall. These classes are targeted for restaurants, caterers, schools, hospitals, nursing homes and other facilities or organizations that prepare and serve food. Four Corners has partnered with the Department of Agriculture, the Nebraska Restaurant Association and the UNL Extension services to provide these classes for front line employees. The registration form for the next Servsafe classes to be held March 28 and March 29 can be found on [www.fourcorners.ne.gov](http://www.fourcorners.ne.gov) website. The classes will be held at Seward Memorial Health Care Services. Since July 2008, 180 food handlers have taken the Servsafe Starters classes and have obtained their certification with the help of Four Corners Health Department.

Submitted by: Lynda Zieg, MT (ASCP), Four Corners Health Department, NEHA member





## What Is An Environmental Health Officer?

Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department brought forth a Property Transfer Code in September 2006. The code requires inspection of both on-site water and wastewater systems prior to sale, transfer or conveyance of property within Lancaster County NE upon which the system is located.

In 1996 test results of a property located in Lancaster County sampled in conjunction with a prior USDA grain fumigant site identified Carbon Tetrachloride contamination. The concentration was identified as 144 ppb, above the Clean Drinking Water Act's Maximum Contaminant Level of 5 ppb.

This year the property was put up for sale by the property owner. The owner was aware of the contamination and contacted the LLCHD to inquire about disclosure to prospective buyers. LLCHD staff informed the owner of the Property Transfer code which utilizes licensed professionals to inspect the on-site systems and provide a report. After review a determination letter is provided to the owner and Title Company prior to closing. A denial letter is provided to the company prior to closing. A denial does not stop the sale but identifies deficiencies which are typically addressed prior to approval determination. In cases where a serious public health violation does exist, LLHCD may take legal action. As part of the on-site water supply system, typically samples for the acute contaminants of Total Coliform, to include E. coli, and Nitrate-Nitrogen are collected. In the case of known contamination additional parameters may be requested. In this case a sample for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) was again collected. The results of the sample indicated continued groundwater contamination with a concentration of 88 ppb. LLCHD informed the owner that a denial determination would be issued based on testing for VOCs.



The owner had previously requested the nearby village to let them connect to their system and was denied. Based upon the high levels of Carbon Tetrachloride and the property transfer determination letter the Village will allow the property to connect to their system. In addition, LLHCD will require the well to be properly decommissioned to protect public health and to receive an approval determination for property transfer.



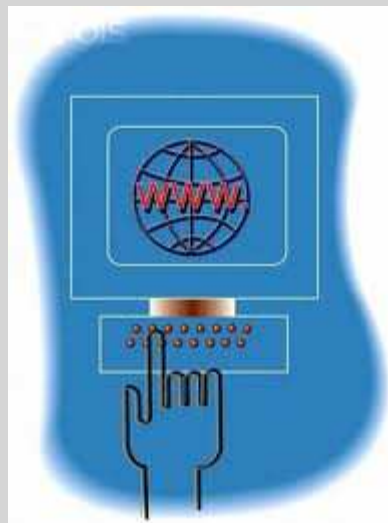


## Website Changes Make For Easier Access

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Food Safety Program has made changes to its web pages, making it easier to find information on line. The pages have been divided into topic areas, each opening to separate pages. This structure reduces clutter and makes the pages easier to read. Short, descriptive text has been added to each topic or link. This text allows users to determine where to find the information they need. Graphics added to the pages break up the text, relate to the topics, and make the pages more attractive and user friendly.

Users can find regulations, government contacts. The CDC, among other state and information about permit ties, and updates on our regulations are posted on

Food handlers can find current Safety Program web pages. There are links to educational materials and to the on-line information about employee contamination, and sanitization layout.

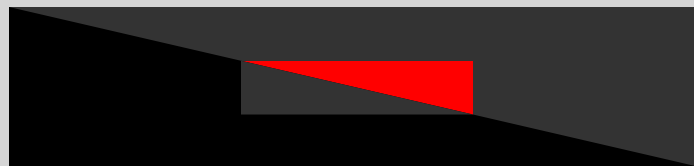


product recalls, food alerts, and pages have links to USDA, FDA, federal agencies. Users can find requirements, training opportunities. Federal, state, and local these pages.

current class schedules on the Food Safety Program web pages. There are links to educational materials and to the on-line information about employee contamination, and sanitization layout.

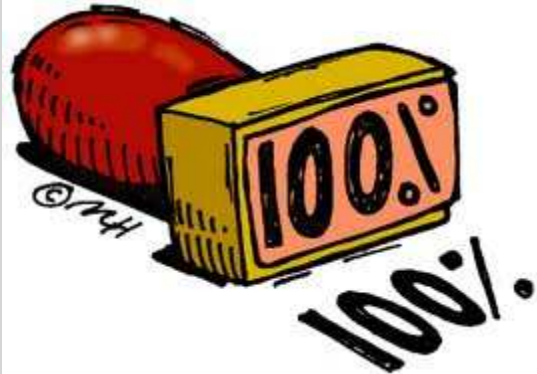
We are very proud of and excited about the new look to our web pages. We believe that they will enhance our ability to meet customer needs. The pages can be accessed by navigating to the City's main page ([lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov)) and typing "food" in the search box.

Submitted by: Phillip J. Rooney, Ph.D., CP-FS. Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, NEHA member





## 100% Food Handler Permit Compliance Required



Food handler training is better than ever, and getting a food handler permits is easier than ever. The Food Advisory Committee guided the Health Department in modifying the training to better fit food industry needs. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)/Health Department on-line food handler training makes training and permits available at all times, every day. However, some food establishments still do not require their employees to hold a food handler permit before allowing them to work. Not having food handler permits is the most common critical item violation on inspections and the number one reason for inspectors issuing Notices of Violation (NOVs)

and Food Enforcement Notices (FENs) during inspections. Receiving a poor inspection report brings bad publicity to a business and puts it at legal risk.

Why should every food handler have a permit? Simply put, it's the law. The local food ordinance requires that every person who works in a food establishment must have a food handler permit. The training required to obtain a permit reduces the risk that customers and employees will become sick. Trained food handlers know how to reduce the risk of foodborne illness by washing their hands, keeping hot food hot and cold food cold, preventing cross contamination of ready to eat from raw products, etc. Untrained employees pose a risk to your customers and are a legal and financial liability to the owner and manager. Finally, it's the right thing to do. Would you want to eat food prepared in a licensed food establishment by someone that has never learned about proper hygiene, how to prevent cross contamination, or keeping food at safe temperatures?

Due to the lack of compliance of some food establishments, at staff's request, the Food Advisory Committee and the Board of Health updated the food handler enforcement policy to make it more strict. In this revised policy, establishments that *do not have 100% of employees holding the proper food handler permit will receive a Notice of Violation (NOV)*. Establishments with less than 90% of employees holding the proper permits will receive an FEN. The Lincoln Journal/Star publishes the names of all food establishments that receive FENs as a public service to protect the community.

Under the revised policy, for one time only, an FEN can be reduced to an NOV if the Food Manager or owner contacts the Food Handler Education Coordinator *within three business days* of receiving the FEN to develop a written compliance plan. The establishment will be monitored for ongoing compliance with the plan and the policy.

Submitted by: Phillip J. Rooney, Ph.D., CP-FS. Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, NEHA member





## NEHA NEWS



### New Staff:

On June 28, 2010, Cody Kreifels was hired by the Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture as the food sanitarian in a four county area. Jeff is stationed in Fremont. Prior to coming to the Department, Jeff was the food service manager with the Park Hill School District in Kansas City, MO.

### Retirement:

Bill Gingery, long time food sanitarian with the Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture, retired on June 1, 2010. Bill began his career with the Department on July 14, 1986. He worked in numerous areas including the southeast Nebraska Beatrice area, the north central O'Neill area, and most recently the Fremont area.



### New Staff:

In September 2010, Doug Tangeman was hired by the LLCHD as an Environmental Engineer for the Air Quality Program. In October 2010, Laura Conant was hired by LLCHD as an Environmental Health Specialist for the Food Program.

### Promotions

Gary Bergstrom- Senior Environmental Health Specialist, Air Quality  
Clancy Dempsey, REHS- Environmental Health Specialist II, Water Quality  
Brittney Bui, REHS- Environmental Health Specialist II, Disease Prevention  
Maritza Leon, REHS-Environmental Health Specialist II, Disease Prevention

### Retirements:

Diana Lane, administrative support for the water quality program, retired.  
Gary Walsh, senior environmental engineer for the air quality program, retired.



### New Staff:

Central District Health Department has added a new Environmental Health Specialist to its staff. Jeff Hamik joined the staff of CDHD in January 2011. Jeff comes to CDHD from the testing laboratory at Tyson Foods. Jeff is a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a graduate of Adams Central High School near Hastings, NE.



Do you know someone who recently was hired, promoted or retired in environmental health? Let us know and we'll include them in future postings.

—Publications Committee



## NEBRASKA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Nebraska Environmental Health Association Member,

I am writing to ask that you consider serving NEHA as a member of its Board of Directors.

The environmental health scope of practice is extremely broad and dynamic. A diverse board with a passion for environmental public health is needed to represent today's membership, and to ensure a legacy of professional leadership into the future. Action items currently being addressed are: increased diligence in the legislative process (especially as it impacts environmental and public health), improved public outreach and education efforts, and promotion of the REHS/RS credential in Nebraska.

Recent changes in how the board conducts its business meetings have reduced the time and travel commitment required by its members. This enables one to serve on the board while also meeting their professional and personal commitments.

Your membership in NEHA demonstrates pride in your profession and an interest in environmental health issues. Please contact our nominations committee members (listed below) if you have questions or would like to be placed on the ballot at this year's annual meeting and educational conference. George Hanssen [george.hanssen@nebraska.gov](mailto:george.hanssen@nebraska.gov) or Kathy King [kking@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:kking@lincoln.ne.gov)

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Eschliman, REHS  
President, Nebraska Environmental Health Association



assessment of the community. I had the opportunity to facilitate a community health assessment in my district and it is quite interesting that what is important in one jurisdiction may or may not be the same in another jurisdiction. The only way to determine this 'community flavor' is to live it. Ask questions. Hold community meetings. A community health assessment with a focus on environmental health is key to the future of environmental health in district health departments. NEHA's role should be to facilitate this statewide discussion.

Economic times are not easy. The public sector is continually being asked to do more with less. This situation is echoed from the state capital to local county boards. This sediment is evident with the current legislative session. The third of the focal points for NEHA has been to be proactive in the legislative process. As you will see on page 3, the legislative committee has been active tracking and analyzing legislative bills.

Finally, we need input from you! Organizations are not made by the action of a few board members, but through the action of the membership. Let us know how we are doing. If you have an opinion, share it. We all grow stronger through collaboration!

Kind Regards,

Jeremy Eschliman, REHS  
2010-2011 President, Nebraska Environmental Health Association



Kathy King, REHS of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department was a recent graduate of the Environmental Public Health Leadership Institute.

The National Environmental Public Health Leadership Institute is coordinated and developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Public Health Leadership Development Network. The year long program was developed based upon CDC priorities that identified a need for improving leadership capacity in environmental public health practice. Emphasis is placed on the core functions of public health as a foundation for achieving public health goals and the need for proactive environmental public health leaders to mobilize resources in response to the changing public health environment.

Program Fellows develop and implement a project for the good of their agency and the practice of Environmental Health in general. Further information on the program may be obtained at <http://www.heartlandcenters.slu.edu/ephli/index.html>

## What's Happening?



### Nebraska Food Safety Task Force.

The annual Food Safety Task Force will be held March 22 and 23, 2011 in Lincoln, NE. This year the Task Force was fortunate to have the First Responder Training course *A Coordinated Response to Food Emergencies: Practice and Execution* presented by FEMA and the National Center for Biomedical Research and Training Academy of

Counter-Terrorist Education Center. The two-day course presented modules following a foodborne illness from report to final determination of cause.

Again this year, the Task Force will be able to provide financial assistance to many attendees.