

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST REGISTRATION COMMITTEE (EHSRC)

## MINUTES

**April 1, 2013**

**10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

California Environmental Health Association (CEHA) – Annual Educational Symposium  
Sheraton Universal Hotel  
Universal City

### Members Present:

Ms. Terri Williams, Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS), California Conference of Directors of Environment Health (CCDEH) Chair

Dean D. Peterson, PE, REHS, California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Mr. Kelvin Yamada, Executive Officer, California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Environmental Management Branch Chief

Mr. Todd Frantz, REHS, Secretary, Private Sector Representative

Ms. Sara Crossman, REHS, Public Sector Member at Large

Ms. Catherine Caldwell, MS, Senate Rules Committee Appointee

Dr. Antonio Machado, Ph.D., REHS, University Representative

### **QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

### Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program Staff Present:

Ms. Veronica Malloy, REHS, Program Administrator

Mr. Mark Jeude, REHS, Chief, Environmental Health Services Section

### Members Absent

Dr. Charles Mosher, MPH M.D., Health Officer, Mariposa County, California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO)

Dr. Lal Mian, Ph.D., REHS, University Representative

LeAnh Irish, REHS, CEHA Representative

### Visitor

Doug Turner, Retired REHS

### **Election of 2012-2013 Officers**

Dr. Charles Mosher replaced Dr. Dean Kelaita as the CCLHO representative and will serve his first term beginning January 2013 and ending January 1, 2017.

Ms. Catherine Caldwell was again appointed by the Senate Rules Committee and will serve her second term beginning January 1, 2013 and ending January 1, 2017.

Ms. LeAnh Irish handed in her resignation on February 20 2013. The committee received a nomination from the CEHA President Brenda Vanschaik Faw. Ms. Faw nominated Ms. Graciela Garcia to fulfill the duties of the CEHA Representative in place of Ms. Irish.

### **Approval of the Minutes from the August 2, 2012 Meeting**

Ms. Williams opened the meeting at 10:15 am and asked for comments and corrections to the meeting minutes from August 2, 2012. Ms. Caldwell mentioned that her nomination is pending approval of the Senate Rules Committee and suggested the minutes reflect this fact. The minutes were corrected.

Mr. Peterson moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Machado seconded, all were in favor. The August 22, 2012 minutes were approved.

### **CDPH Environmental Management Branch Update**

Kelvin Yamada, Executive Officer

Mr. Yamada discussed two new pieces of legislation that may have impacts to the Environmental Management Branch (EMB) in the near future. Assembly Bill 145 (Perea and Rendon) seeks to transfer the duties and responsibilities for the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund from the Drinking Water Program located within the California Department of Public Health (department) to the State Water Resources Control Board. The bill would also transfer the authority, duties, powers, purposes, responsibilities and jurisdiction of the department. The objectives of this 2013 reorganization of the state's drinking water program include maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of drinking water, groundwater and water quality programs in a single agency whose primary duty is the regulation of groundwater, the distribution of funding for drinking water projects, and the comprehensive protection of groundwater quality for drinking water purposes for all Californians. Mr. Yamada commented that if this reorganization is successful, the new Institutions management contract which was just renewed through EMB, will have to be reworked.

The second new piece of legislation introduced is Assembly Bill 333 (Wieckowski) which seeks to rewrite the Health and Safety Code relating to medical waste. Currently, the language of the bill includes revisions to Section 117630 pertaining to biohazard bags, but Mr. Ron Pilorin, chief of the CDPH Medical Waste Section is part of the CCDEH Medical Waste Technical Advisory Group and he believes there will be significant changes to the existing language. The legislation was originally promulgated in 1991. There have been no significant changes or rewrites since then. Mr. Yamada expects the bill to remain in legislation for a number of years to include all comments from stakeholders and interested parties.

The two other ongoing amendments to existing legislation is SB 443, the organized camp legislation and the update to the California Health and Safety Code, Title 22 to incorporate the new pool regulations.

### **Continuing Education and Accreditation Agencies Update**

Mark Jeude, Section Chief, Environmental Services Section

Mr. Jeude gave a brief overview of the 2012 CEU Audits and the Accreditation Program. The 2012 Biennial Renewal Applications were mailed to 1749 active and retired REHS during the month of July, three months earlier than previous years to provide additional time for registrants to contact the REHS program with questions about meeting the new CE requirements. In keeping with the 10% rule for continuing education audits, the REHS program conducted 127 audits. Exemptions were granted to 5 applicants who were either on active duty or suffered severe illness during this two year renewal cycle. 14 applications and renewal payments were returned to the applicants for failure to meet the continuing education requirements.

There are currently 52 Accreditation Agencies offering continuing education units. The REHS program completed 16 audits and will be sending out 23 renewal requests to those agencies whose registration expires May 1, 2013.

### **University Accreditation Evaluation Status**

The university self surveys for Loma Linda University and California State University, Northridge were submitted to the REHS Program in February 2012. The final reports were distributed to the EHSRC members before the meeting. Dr. Machado, Mr. Frantz and Ms. Malloy visited the Loma Linda University campus and met with administration, faculty and students on August 23, 2012. During the meeting with faculty, Ms. Malloy inquired as to why so few graduates actually sit for the REHS exam. The faculty thought one issue might be the

amount of debt the graduates ultimately have upon graduation. Ms. Malloy suggested that perhaps the REHS program could do the transcript evaluations rather than CPS HR Consulting. She will try to offer all transcript evaluation to the Option V schools.

Dr. Machado reported that the program's greatest challenge is laboratory space but the young faculty is doing their best to meet the needs of their students. Mr. Frantz was impressed with the upgrades to the microbiology laboratory. The technological advances in equipment allows the professor to project slides from the instructor microscope to a large screen which can be seen by students as they are sitting at their own microscopes. He added that the program enjoys very strong support, although the REHS track is not their main focus.

Mr. Frantz moved to approve the 3-year commitment for the REHS program, Dr. Machado seconded, all were in favor.

The Loma Linda University REHS program is approved and will be scheduled for a curriculum review in 2015.

The site visit for California State University, Northridge (CSUN) was conducted on November 2, 2012. Dr. Mian, Ms. Irish and Ms. Malloy met with administrators, faculty and students. Dr. Mian commented that the CSUN Environmental and Occupational Health Department enjoys the support of the College of Health and Human Development and the University Administration. During the meeting with faculty and while discussing the CSUN graduates exam success rate, Dr. Hatfield commented the test may be more heavily weighed on regulations and field experience rather than on environmental health principles. Mr. Turner mentioned a study was done years ago by the Professional Examination Service (PES) from New York which found that student who completed field training scored highest on the test. Ms. Williams suggested a study into the statistics of those exam candidates who take the exam right out of the Option V schools compared to those required to complete the on the job training element. The team then talked about including the university staff on the subject matter expert panel when they meet to develop test questions for the REHS examination.

Ms. Caldwell moved to approve the 3-year commitment to the REHS program, Mr. Peterson seconded, all were in favor. Motion passes

The California State University REHS curriculum is approved and will be scheduled for a curriculum review in 2015.

### **Educational and Professional Standards Subcommittee Report**

The subcommittee recommendations from the October 17, 2012, November 14, 2012 and January 2 2013 meetings were distributed to all committee members prior to the meeting.

Dr. Machado, the subcommittee chair, reported the following unanimous recommendations from these meetings held by conference call: University of New England – Microbiology for Health Professionals (lecture only), Medical Organic Chemistry I (lecture only) and Physics for Health Professionals (lecture and laboratory). Dr. Machado and Dr. Mian reviewed the at-home tool kit for the Physics laboratory course and agreed the interactive nature of the kit and the lesson are an appropriate alternative to a classroom setting. They continue to reiterate their belief that any “wet” laboratory course should remain as a live, group activity. They point out that sometimes the most valuable lessons are learned from interacting with the instructor and other students in a traditional university setting. The subcommittee also recommended an overturn of the CPS HR Consulting decision to deny science credit for a course in Marine Biology from Sierra College.

Ms. Caldwell moved to accept all the subcommittee recommendations, Mr. Peterson seconded, all in favor. Motion passes.

### **Registration Process Subcommittee Report**

A Report to the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee was distributed to all members prior to the meeting. Mr. Peterson, the subcommittee chair, requested two versions of the Code of Ethics be prepared – one with signature and one without. Mr.

Peterson suggested all Directors of Environmental Health can sign one and distribute it to the individual REHS. Ms. Williams adds the Code is one instrument to communicate the standard of expectation to all new and existing employees. She will add this to her AES Ethics presentation scheduled for Thursday. Mr. Frantz suggested that the addition of a date line will enhance the certificate and made a suggestion for language change. Ms. Crossman will prepare the corrected version and send to Ms. Williams before her session. Dr. Machado moved to approve the changes, Mr. Frantz seconded, all in favor. Motion carries.

The subcommittee is reviewing the disciplinary ranges in Section 106715(b)(6)(D) to determine the appropriate course of action the committee may take when a new applicant or renewing registrant discloses past convictions or has been found to have done any of the four actions noted in Section 106715(a). Before the meeting, Ms. Malloy distributed five examples of responses received from applicants and registrants explaining past convictions. Dr. Machado asks if it is appropriate to deny registration if the sentence has already been served. Mr. Frantz points out that we may not have the ability to judge right now but this behavior certainly does not align with the Code of Ethics. Mr. Turner adds that if the applicant is not employed, the county can simply decide not to hire the individual. Ms. Williams adds that this may be a serious liability issue, if we know the individual is convicted in a rape case, do we just excuse that behavior? Mr. Frantz points out that there is precedent to uphold prior convictions – Megan’s Law; in this case we can uphold the decision to never let them register. Mr. Turner agrees, someone convicted under Megan’s Law should never work in organized camps and have access to young children. Mr. Frantz adds that some of this responsibility does lie with the county Human Resources Department. Ms. Williams suggests the issue is what we do with the ones we did this year and getting caught up with the past and moving into the future. Ms. Crossman recommends this issue be returned back to the subcommittee for discussion. This item is an ongoing discussion at the subcommittee level and will be continued at the next subcommittee meeting to be scheduled at a later date.

The subcommittee is developing a protocol guidance document for committee members to use during the informal disciplinary hearings which are scheduled by CDPH to determine if a complaint or accusation made against a REHS is a violation of the statute. Ms. Williams asks to send this back to the subcommittee to give them the opportunity to develop a guideline.

## **Discussion Items**

**REHS Self-ink Stamp Design:** Ms. Malloy introduced the standardized self-ink stamp design and the price quote she received from A-Plus Stamp and Design. Ms. Williams suggested to post the design on the webpage, each REHS should investigate their own company to use for processing.

**Complaint Process Review:** Ms. Malloy introduced the Complaint Review timeline to the committee members as a review of the department follow up on complaints received. She mentioned one complaint is still pending and will know soon if it must be reviewed by the committee

Coursera Distance Learning courses will be reviewed by the Educational and Professional Standards subcommittee at the next conference call meeting.

Ms. Williams described a project currently underway initiated by the Directors of Environmental Health that would result in the design and publishing of a postage stamp dedicated to the environmental health field. She is currently the spokesperson for this particular group and admits it might be quite a lengthy process but is looking forward to final approval.

**New Business**

Ms. Williams would like the committee to consider reciprocity for individuals who hold a credential as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian from the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). Mr. Peterson added those individuals would potentially be eligible to sit for the California examination, if approved.

**The next meeting will be held in Sacramento on August 5, 2013 from 10 am to 1 pm.**

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Frantz moved. Ms. Caldwell seconded. No one opposed. Adjourned at 12:35 pm