



REHS Program Update September 2009

Continuing Education Ahead

The regulations for continuing education are on track to be adopted this fall and become **effective starting January 2010**. If your registration expires this year in 2009 you will have the next two years until December 2011 to accrue **the 24 contact hours** of continuing education. We recommend that you **keep copies of the training certificates for courses you have completed**, these are required to be maintained by each REHS for five years following completion of each course.

Approved courses must be accredited by an Accreditation Agency (AA) approved by CDPH. Prior to enrolling, check that the course provider is accredited by an AA. A list of approved AAs will be maintained on the REHS web site starting this winter.

What is a contact hour?

A contact hour is equivalent to 50-60 minutes of participation in an organized learning experience. Some courses are not measured in "contact hours" but in college units or Continuing Education Units (CEUs). The number of contact hours per unit can vary among colleges and training providers but generally
1~ CEU =10 contact hours;
1~ quarter unit=10 contact hours;
1~ semester unit= 15 contact hours.

Can I be exempted from meeting the continuing education requirement?

REHSs may seek exemption from the continuing education requirements for registration renewal on the grounds of emergency or hardship by applying to the Department in writing, setting forth

the reasons why such exemption should be granted. The Department will review each request to determine if it qualifies for exemption from the continuing education requirement.

Who will approve the continuing education courses?

CDPH will approve AAs who are responsible for approving and monitoring course providers. AAs will accredit and approve courses and providers of continuing education for CA REHS. Once course providers are accredited they are called Recognized Providers (RPs). RPs provide approved training for the REHS. Several organizations have expressed interest in becoming an AA including the California Environmental Health Association, (CEHA), National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), Environmental Health Institute, California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), California-Nevada American Waterworks Association and California State Universities.

What subjects will be approved for continuing education?

Food protection, solid waste management, liquid waste management, medical waste management, water supply, housing and institutions, bathing places, vector control, hazardous materials management, underground tanks, air sanitation, safety and accident prevention, land development and use, disaster sanitation, electromagnetic radiation, milk and dairy products, noise control, occupational health, rabies and animal disease control, recreational health, bioterrorism, emergency preparedness, lead poisoning, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, epidemiology and communicable diseases, public health, environmental health administration and management. While not an exclusive list, it indicates topics and subject matter appropriate for REHS continuing education.

Where can continuing education courses be taken?

It is anticipated that local colleges, universities, state funded training, county-based training, professional organizations and online courses will be approved through the AAs.

Is my employer responsible for paying the registration fees for continuing education coursework?

An employer may choose to pay registration fees based on a contract agreement with an employee union. However, there is no statutory or regulatory requirement for an employer to pay for registration fees for continuing education.

Are existing continuing education courses required to be reviewed and approved?

Yes, all continuing education courses are required to be accredited through an AA and taken during the biennial renewal period for credit toward registration requirements.

How do I verify course completion?

At the time of your biennial renewal, you will be required to submit a form listing all of your completed courses. You

REHS Statistics as of August 2009

Active and current REHS	3371
Retired REHS	291
Suspended REHS * 1	338
New REHS in 2008 *2	142
Certifiable applicants*3	1792
Total	3900

must keep copies of certificates and documentation of completed courses for five (5) years.

Do existing continuing education trainers have to be approved as Recognized Providers?

Yes, existing continuing education trainers need to apply with an AA and become a RP before their coursework will be accepted as meeting the registration requirements for continuing education.

Are retired REHS required to meet the continuing education requirements?

No, however, if a retired REHS returns to active status they must meet the continuing education requirements by completing 24 contact hours of continuing education and pay the biennial renewal fees.

Additional information on the continuing education requirement can be found on the Registration Program web site cdph.ca.gov/REHS.

*1 Currently suspended for failure to pay registration fees
*2 Included with active REHS
*3 Applicants who meet the minimum educational requirements

New Staffing

Gina Rambeau joined the REHS Program in January 2009; her dedication is only surpassed by her enthusiasm. Deann Kanenaga continues to shepherd the continuing education regulations through the system and is preparing for implementation starting in January 2010. Amy Kuang, Office Technician, ably assists the Program staff in times of need and Margaret Blood is the REHS Program Administrator.

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