



California Department of Health Services

Registered Environmental Health Specialist Program (REHS)

UPDATE June 2006

The proposed regulations for continuing education are currently being reviewed by the Office of Regulations, California Department of Health Services (CDHS).. The public comment period will not be scheduled until the regulation package has been approved by several state control agencies including the Office of Administrative Law. We will keep you informed on the progress of the regulation package through the California Environmental Health Association (CEHA) journal and CDHS internet page. In the meantime, the regulations enjoy strong support of the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee, CEHA and California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH). As the continuing education regulations are refined through the review process, we are developing a draft implementation plan in order to have the stakeholders identified and goals and objectives clear.

Senate Bill 1759 has been amended to provide additional funding for the REHS Program and includes increased fees for biennial registration renewal, new applicants, and examinations. Fees from the proposed increases will be used to support the continuing education requirement. This bill will also add a provision for criminal record investigations for applicants seeking registration as an environmental health specialist.

Four of the five approved environmental health university programs have been reviewed and received approval from the CDHS.

California State University, Northridge - Approved

California State University, San Bernardino - Approved

Loma Linda University- Approved

California State University, Fresno - Approved

The University of California at Los Angeles is scheduled for review this year.

California State University, Chico faculty has submitted a proposal to CDHS to establish a new environmental health program. The proposal will be

shared with the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee Education Subcommittee for review and comment.

CDHS maintains a database of REHS applicants that meet the minimum education requirements starting with applicant's letters dated July 2003. These applicants have received their certification letter and are eligible to work as trainees. We can provide their mailing labels, sorted by zip code or alphabetical, for a fee of \$50. Currently we have over 900 individuals in this database. In April we sent out a survey to 500 applicants who have received their certification letter between January 2005 and April 2006; we received 155 responses. We are analyzing the responses to determine why there are so many certifiable applicants and yet some counties have difficulties with recruitment.

REHS program staff participated in the CEHA Annual Educational Symposium in Garden Grove by helping to arrange and promote the Student Forum. The Forum was a great success with presentations by Brenda Faw, Director of Tuolumne County; Todd Frantz Food Safety Manager at Disneyland; Christine Graulau Hazardous Waste Program Manager for the US Navy; and Janis McBride, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist in Orange County. Staff also presented on the topic of Ethics with a discussion of the existing legal restrictions for Registered Environmental Health Specialists and the limits of the statute.

The current listing on the REHS web site of active REHSs was posted in April. The list includes the name, REHS # and expiration date for all current and active REHSs. There are 3062 on the active list.

Training Coordinator meetings are facilitated by CDHS two or three times a year. Currently the group is developing a comprehensive outline of the information needed by a new REHS. The process involves using the knowledge and skill statements developed during the job analysis as a starting point and expanding on them until a complete description of the program responsibilities emerges. An outline for the Food and Consumer Protection program was developed at the October 2005 meeting; Inspections & Investigations and Recreational Health were drafted on May 8, 2006 at the AES. The next program areas will be general science and drinking water this fall.

The Registered Environmental Health Specialist exam is continually updated by adding new questions and revising existing questions. Two groups of experienced REHSs (Subject Matter Experts) were convened in March 2006 in Los Angeles and Sacramento to review, refresh, and revise test questions. Panels will be held again in the fall if you are interested in participating submit your resume to .

California Department of Health Services
Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program
Subject Matter Expert Panel
MS 7404
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If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Blood at (916) 552-9991.

REHS Program Web Page - We encourage you to visit the REHS program web page at: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/environmental/rehs/rehs.htm>.