

The Journal



Newsletter of the *Indiana Environmental Health Association*

Volume 28, Issue 3

Fall / Winter 2013

From the President's Desk

This is the Journal column I have been dreading writing so I have put it off until the very last minute. I am savoring every last minute. Being the President for 2013 had many rewards and many challenges. We moved forward in getting some much needed policies written and in place. I had a wonderful and educational NEHA conference in Washington DC.

The EPA ranks Indiana highest in categories of Air, Land and Water. What we do makes a difference. I hope our membership continues to grow

and meets the needs of the new generation of Environmental Health Specialists as they come forward.

I know I am leaving my Presidency in the much more capable hands of Mike Mettler. I would like to personally thank him for all the help and directions, and providing a shoulder to lean on during my time at the helm. We have many years of strong leadership coming up with strong ideas. I am excited. Our future is so bright that I might have to wear shades. Alas, I see Ciridan in the distance, with Elrond, Galadriel, Gandalf, and, oh look, Frodo and

Bilbo are waving, which means my time is nearing the finish. It was my humble honor to serve this association as the President. I followed behind many great Presidents and hoped I did the office justice. The ship is near and I see Josh waving me aboard as my time is growing short.

I wish you all the Happiest of Holiday Seasons. Stay safe, stay healthy and stay happy, my friends.

Christine



From the Journal Editor

As this year draws to a close, it's hard to believe that this completes three years with me doing the Journal. This would not have been possible without the support of members

who not only shared kind words, but offered articles, or article ideas.

I'm not sure of the term limit on this job, (I think it might be three years.) but

in the meantime, keep ideas coming. I plan to continue the two formats, PDF and flip page.

Ed

Points to ponder

- TWO VILLAGES IN GUYANA NOW HAVE SAFE WATER, THANKS TO A HOOSIER GROUP.
- THE 63RD IEHA ANNUAL FALL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE HAD A UNIQUE AWARD.
- FOOD DATE LABELS MAY NOT MEAN WHAT YOU THINK.
- DO OUTBREAKS HAPPEN TO NON-PROFITS?

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Fall Conference: something for all tastes



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

Unless otherwise noted, conference photos are by Jana Sanders.

“As with previous conferences, general sessions, breakout sessions highlighted Monday and Tuesday.”

The 63rd Annual Fall Education Conference, sponsored by the Indiana Environmental Health Association, is now part of history, but attendees went home with memories that will last for years.

Conference chair, Mike Mettler, tried to provide something for all environmental tastes with breakout sessions covering food topics of interest to inspectors, to onsite systems, to speakers discussing timely general environmental issues.

The conference began with general sessions on Monday that featured a video presentation with Mindy Waldron, Administrator of the Ft. Wayne - Allen County Health Department, and members of the staff. The unique presentation



Conference chair Mike Mettler welcomes attendees to the IEHA Annual Fall Educational Conference held in Ft. Wayne.

provided a humorous account of the challenges of public health.

As with previous conferences, general sessions

were held Monday and Tuesday mornings, with breakout sessions those afternoons. Attendees could choose between Food Protection, Wastewater Management, or General Environmental / Terrorism & All Hazards Preparedness topics. Some sessions were so popular that rooms were filled beyond capacity.

The AFEC for 2014 will be in southern Indiana.



Award Committee Chair, Josh Williams presents the Harry E Werkowski Award for outstanding IEHA chapter to Wabash Valley Chapter President Jennifer Asbury along with other members of the chapter.

Conference award winners announced

The Monday evening awards banquet at the 2013 IEHA Fall Educational Conference provided a new twist - two recipients for the *Environmental Health Specialist of the Year* award.

“The Awards Committee felt both were equally deserving,” said Josh Williams, committee chair. **Mike Sutton** and **Denise Wright** were the winners.

In other awards, **Jennifer Asbury** was chosen the

Tim Sullivan Memorial Award winner, and the *Harry E. Werkowski Memorial Award* for the outstanding chapter went to **Wabash Valley**.

Other awards included

(Continued on page 6)



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

Can confusing food date labels be fixed?

Are consumers throwing away good food because of the country's confusing date labels? According to a recent study by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Harvard Law School's Food Law and Policy Clinic, the answer not only is "yes," but up to 90% of Americans may be wasting food because of it.

"Expiration dates are in some serious need of myth-busting because they lead us to waste money and throw out good food," says Dana Gunders, NRDC staff scientist.

Phrases like "sell by," "use by," "best by," and "expiration" are poorly regulated and often misinterpreted. Gunders called

the current food date labeling system "well-intended but wildly ineffective."

In the US, manufacturers are left to determine shelf life any way they choose, and nearly all the time, those dates have little to do with food safety.

The NRDC / Harvard study, "The Dating Game: (Continued on page 9)



SWiG provides safe water to two villages

The Indiana group Safe Water in Guyana (SWiG) says its mission is just as the name says, to provide safe drinking water to residents of the South American country who don't have it.

The group, with IEHA member Mike Sutton, set out for the Pomeroun River area last May equipped with the materials needed to install a water purification system in each of two villages. Prior to this, water for everything from bathing to cooking came from rain water collection systems, or out of the river, which is impacted by agricultural runoff and sewage.

The group arrived this time to find the area was in the midst of a waterborne illness, a situation not uncommon with the lack of safe water. It struck the group why water purifiers were so badly needed.

The two Guyana villages, Kabakaburi and Karawab, where water purifiers were to be installed, had heard promises from humanitarian groups before but never heard from those groups again. Villagers didn't believe SWiG would really return so hadn't completed any preliminary work requested by SWiG from a previous visit.

When villagers realized the

SWiG visitors were serious, they quickly joined the project.

While one of the villages saw quick success, SWiG members had asked the second village to do the preliminary work to get a pump running to supply water for purification from the Pomeroun River to the purifiers' collection tanks. When the group found that nothing had been done, they worked a 14-hour day through heat and heavy rain to alter the purification facility to accept rain water only.

There was some disagreement among SWiG team members whether they

(Continued on page 5)

"Water for bathing to cooking had come from rain water, or out of the river, which is impacted by agricultural runoff and sewage."





2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

Traveling to conferences in style

It is not a secret to many that long-time IEHA member Patty Nocek travels to each Annual Fall Educational Conference in the family RV, often accompanied by her husband, Carl.

This year's conference was held in the Ft. Wayne Courtyard, which is adjacent to the new Parkview Field, home of the minor

league baseball team, the Ft. Wayne TinCaps.

A newspaper photographer caught Carl, and the family's three dogs camping out in a Parkview Field parking lot while wife Patty attended the conference.



Photo by Chad Ryan, Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette

“As many as 5,000 people attend the annual event to eat barbecue pork and chicken. Up to 95 persons are ill with Salmonella.”

Outbreaks can happen to non-profits

Over 100 persons are reported ill in North Carolina from Salmonella after eating at a church barbecue.

Food Safety News has quoted Pastor Garin Hill of the Sandy Plains Baptist Church in Shelby as saying that up to 5,000 people

may attend the annual event to eat barbecued pork and chicken. Pastor Hill said that such an outbreak hasn't happened before.

Infection from Salmonella usually comes as a result of eating raw or undercooked meat, poultry or eggs. The

illness, with symptoms of diarrhea, fever, and cramps, generally lasts no more than seven days. It can also be caused by cross contamination if food handlers touch the cooked food after handling the raw meats.



Yelp posting restaurant inspection scores

Local Internet search site Yelp plans to offer inspection scores of local restaurants in Louisville, according to Food Safety News.

Louisville is the second city after San Francisco to offer restaurant scores

among other business attributes when a user searches.

Yelp Director of Public Policy, Luther Lowe, says the scores are available on government websites, but those sites can be

“unwieldy.”

Kathy Harrison, communications director for the Louisville Metro Dept. for Public Health and Wellness, calls this a “great tool to teach the public about food safety.”

SWiG provides safe water (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

should proceed with the project if villagers didn't seem to want it.

As part of the installation of the water purifiers, SWiG members provided training to villagers on how to operate and maintain the units. The group was impressed that more people showed up to learn about the water purifiers than they had expected, some equipped with notebooks. English is spoken in Guyana, so language wasn't a problem. The group expects that those who receive training on the water purification units will then train others.

One of the purifiers is located near a school. Not only can students see one



Above left, a permanent concrete base is prepared to hold the purification unit. Right, Mike Sutton gives perspective to the size of the tanks. Below, a completed water purification unit on a temporary base.

of the units, but will be main beneficiaries of the safe water it makes.

Since one of the villages is on a main travel hub to other villages, it is hoped that the safe water projects will have a more wide-spread positive health benefit than just the immediate area.

SWiG says this latest mission was possible because of sponsorship of the Indiana Environmental Health Association. The group



offers its sincere thanks to IEHA and firmly believes that the villages of Kabakaburi and Karawab in Guyana will be positively impacted for many years.



A young Kabakaburi resident gets his first taste of pure water.

“SWiG offers its sincere thanks to IEHA and firmly believes the two Guyana villages will be positively impacted for years.”

Southern chapter learns about snakes

Members of the Southern Chapter now know that there are 32 different species of snakes in Indiana, and four are venomous. A few are endangered. Members learned this because Jarrett Manek, naturalist at O'Bannon Woods State

Park gave a live demonstration at a recent chapter meeting.

Manek discussed the problems with people obtaining snakes and other wild animals for pets, then releasing them into the wild.

Manek said that those who own any snake over six feet long need a special license to house dangerous animals. You can keep a snake, he says, but after 30 days, it's yours for life and cannot be released.

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Naturalist Jarrett Manek talks about one of the nine Indiana snakes he showed to Southern Chapter members.

WC chapter tours POET Biorefining



Hard hats were part of the uniform for West Central members during their tour of POET Biorefining in Cloverdale

“POET Biorefining uses 400,000 gallons of water daily, but it is either recycled back into the plant or evaporates.”

A plant that produces ethanol and animal feed products played host to members of the West Central chapter recently. Members got an inside glimpse at POET Biorefining in Cloverdale, which delivers around 90 million gallons of ethanol yearly from 30 million bushels of locally grown corn.

Brandon Endress, Plant Manager, and Michael Rattliff, Environmental Health

and Safety Specialist, led the tour and informed members that the plant also makes 246 thousand tons of “Dakota Gold,” a high quality brand livestock feed.

The plant is environmentally aware, using about 400 thousand gallons of water daily, but discharging none. POET says water is recycled back into the process, or evaporates.

(contributed by Lisa Chandler)



WC members listen (above) as Brandon Endress explains the plant's operation. The plant produces ethanol and animal feed (below).



Awards banquet (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

Sanitarian Emeritus presented to **Dr. Dave McSwane**, and **Loren Robertson**, and *Lifetime Membership* to **Steve Cale**. *Honorary Memberships* were awarded to **Amy**

Jones, Katie Clayton, and **Aster Bekele**.

NEHA Merit Awards were given to **Jason LeMaster** and **Mike Mettler** and the *Chris Ulsas Volunteer of the Year* award was presented to **Ed Norris**.

Two chapters presented awards. Central Chapter presented its *Mark Fry Award* to **JoAnn Xiong**, while Wabash Valley Chapter chose **Terri Hansen** for its *Karl K. Jones Award*.

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2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

TAHP sponsors disaster response training

A recent training program sponsored by IEHA's Terrorism and All Hazards Preparedness Committee bought out 31 attendees representing organizations from state and local health departments to Indiana Dept. of Homeland Security to the Indiana State Police. Participants engaged in discussions and a tabletop exercise to learn

how their agencies might respond and interact with each other should a disaster happen. The course, "Community Healthcare Planning and Response to Disasters," was taught by the National Center on Biomedical Research and Training from Louisiana State University.



Mary Stiker takes a question from the group during the recent "Community Healthcare Planning and Response to Disasters" training course.



A tabletop exercise was a major part of the recent TAHP-sponsored disaster response training.

Southern learns about snakes (continued)

(Continued from page 5)

He mentioned that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has captured alligators, and has also found some snakes not native to the state. Animals, like mountain lions have been seen, that could have been released in another state.

Snakes are identified by coloration, pattern, and texture. All snakes have a keen sense of smell sensed through their forked tongues, and sense touch, but most have poor eyesight except up close. Although lacking ears, snakes can sense sounds through bones in their heads, and

they can feel vibrations. Some snakes can detect subtle changes in air temperature.

Snakes can swim and all drink water. They can survive over 10 years in the wild and well over 20 years in captivity.

Of snakes found in Indiana, the king snake is very common and is immune to the venom of venomous snakes. This is prompting research to learn how this snake resists the venom.

Snakes generally don't like to interact with people but act when threatened. Manak says if you encounter a snake in the wild, it's best to just leave it alone. It

may try to "scare" you away by rearing up, or discharging a "musk" odor.

Manek identified the venomous snakes found in the Hoosier state as Massasauga Rattlesnake, Cottonmouth, Copperhead, and Timber Rattlesnake. Most of these are found only in Southern Indiana.

If bitten by any snake, don't try to pry it off as the teeth curve backwards. Snakes will bite and let go. About half the time, Manek says, venomous snakes don't release venom, but always seek medical help. Take a picture of any snake that bites for identification.

(Contributed by Jennifer Hellers)

"Snakes don't like to interact with people but will act if threatened. If you see a snake, it's best to leave it alone."



Fall Conference award winners (continued)



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

“Deserving members are recognized each year during the Monday evening Awards Banquet.”



An IEHA Annual Fall Educational Conference first - Two winners of the Environmental Health Specialist of the year. Past President Josh Williams presents plaques to Mike Sutton (above) and Denise Wright (below).



Jennifer Asbury accepts the Tim Sullivan Memorial Award from Josh Williams.



Ed Norris received the Chris Ulsas Volunteer of the Year award from Conference Chair Mike Mettler.



Current IEHA President Christine Stinson recognizes immediate Past President Josh Williams for his service to the association.



Fall Educational Conference quotables



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

- “Nine people die from asthma every day.” Susan Buchanan, MD, MPH.
- “Average lead levels have gone down, but there is not a blood lead level below which there is no concern.” Helen J. Binns, MD, MPH.
- “Forty six percent of foodborne illness outbreaks involve fresh produce.” Amanda Deering. (This is up from 1% in 1970.)
- “Refugees bring a multitude of health problems to the community through no fault of their own.” Nicole Hartman.

Other awards presented at conference



Kelli Whiting of Central Chapter presented its Mark Fry Award to JoAnn Xiong (left), while Wabash Valley Chapter chose Terri Hansen for its Karl K. Jones award, presented by Jennifer Asbury (right).



Sanitarian Emeritus awards were bestowed upon two IEHA members. Loren Robertson (left), and Dr. David McSwane (right). Presenting the awards was Josh Williams, IEHA Awards Committee chair.



*2013 Annual Fall
Educational Conference*

Confusing date marks (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

How Confusing Food Date Labels Lead to Food Waste in America,” was the first legal analysis of its kind to look at the “tangle of lose federal and state laws related to date labels in all 50 states.” The report found that confusion leads to results that undermine the labels’ intent.

Date labels are most often used to indicate when a manufacturer believes the food will no longer have the quality, taste, color, texture, or consistency it wants. Wording on labels can mislead consumers to believe food is unsafe when it isn’t.

Some guidance: “Sell by” is mostly for retailers’ stock control. That is, the date to pull the product and replace it with new.

“Best by,” or “Use by,” are for consumers but are most often based upon the factors indicated earlier to do with quality, etc. Consumers generally have no way of knowing how these dates are calculated.

“Expiration” is more strict, meaning that food may become unsafe. Such dates could reflect “microbiological stability,” according to Health Canada. But storage practices will affect how long a food is safe, especially with

TCS (Time / Temperature Control for Safety) foods. If potentially hazardous foods are not temperature controlled, safety will be an issue much sooner.

The study concludes that as a result of date label confusion, not only do over 90% of consumers throw good food away, but retailers do as well, discarding food past its label dates that is still good. The present labeling system is one factor leading to an estimated 160 billion pounds of food thrown out each year in the U.S. Food waste is the largest single contributor of solid waste in American landfills.

“As a result of date label confusion, over 90% of consumers throw good food away. Many retailers do as well.”



What does a “sell by” date really mean? It has a different meaning to retailers than to consumers.

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IEHA Fall Educational Conference in pics



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference



“This was the 63rd Annual Fall Educational Conference sponsored by the Indiana Environmental Health Association.”

How many of these conference attendees can you name?

Confusing date marks (continued)

(Continued from page 9)



Surveys have found that even retail food employees are confused by the date labels.

What can be done? The study concludes that in-

creasing the use of safe handling instructions and adding “smart labels” that provide information to consumers might help. Using a more uniform, easily understandable date system that communicates to consumers would help, making

clear the difference between quality vs. safety-based dates. Dates should be placed consistently in similar places on packages.

(info via NRDC press release)

Is there a “micromarket” near you?

What is a “micromarket?” Wabash Valley Chapter members recently learned the answer. The concept resembles a vending machine area, but customers may reach in to a cooler, for example, retrieve what they want, then scan and pay for it at a kiosk. It’s entirely self-service, but customers can look at a product more closely before purchase than a vending machine would allow.

Kris Jordan and Todd Milby of Treat America Food Services showed members exactly what a micromarket facility looks like. Dan Miller of the ISDH Food Protection Program presented the regulatory perspective. He discussed a recently released guidance document intended to aid local health departments.

At issue is the fact that by rule, a “person in charge” or PIC is required because it is a retail food establishment. Micromarkets are unattended but are monitored by video surveillance.

Thus far, micromarkets are only inside other facilities

not open to the public, like factories.

Milby told the group that potentially hazardous food like sandwiches from his company are made at a company commissary, and delivered in company trucks.



Unlike traditional vending machines, micromarket displays are open to customers, who are on the honor system to pay.



Opportunities to Volunteer & Attend International Conference Coming to Indy!

Volunteer During IAFP in August 2014

- *Registration Desk Volunteer
- *Silent Auction Volunteer
- *Presentation Rooms Volunteer
- *Hospitality Hosts
 - Directional Assistance
 - Opening Session Host
 - Awards Banquet Event



Local Arrangements Committee

- *Core group
- *Organize Prior to Event
- *Recruit Volunteers
- *Obtain Donations

Contact: Katie Clayton with what you are interested & for more details!
Katie-clayton@purdue.edu

By the numbers

600+ - number of Cyclospora cases now reported in the multi-state produce outbreak reported in the last issue.

1,600,000 - number of ac-

cidents per year attributed to texting while driving.

296 - number of active, paid IEHA members. Add to this lifetime members and sustaining members.

3,000,000,000 - number of telephone calls made daily.

3,000,000,000 - number of telephone calls made daily with data intercepted and stored by NSA.





2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

General session speakers' topics varied

How scary is your fresh salad? Amanda Deering (shown right) from Purdue University talked to conference attendees about research to find how bacteria may move through vegetables plants and then infect humans who consume them.

Deering noted that bacteria can enter a plant through cuts and bruises. Research



is ongoing to find if bacteria may also enter through plant seeds, or from the soil through a plant's stem. She added that while 1% of foodborne illness outbreaks were produce-related in 1971, that number has risen

to 46% today.

Tracynda Davis, Wisconsin Environmental Health Consultant, (shown left) said aquatic facilities are not as safe as we'd like. She said pools are like communal bathing, with cryptosporidium cases numbering 740,000 each year. Cryptosporidium is resistant to chlorine.

"One of the first issues to overcome was the language barrier as many spoke little English"

Health Dept. helps refugees adjust

The panel of speakers from the Ft. Wayne - Allen Co. Health Dept. told attendees of the challenges brought to the Ft. Wayne community.

"They bring a multitude of health problems through no

(Continued on page 13)

Clockwise from the top left, Mindy Waldron, Nicole Hartman, Amy Hesting, and Dave Fiess discuss "Refugees: A Local Perspective on the Medical and Environmental Impacts" during one of the conference's general sessions. The panel talked about the influx of Burmese residents to Ft. Wayne and the related public health issues.



Members making news



Jason LeMaster has been honored by the Indiana Public Health Association. Jason was awarded the *Tony and Mary Hulman Health Achievement Award* in the Environmental category. Jason's ongoing efforts for which he was rec-

ognized included helping to create Indiana's environmental health emergency response team, and securing a federal grant to purchase needed equipment. Jason is also sought after as an expert speaker.

Charles Burton, Life Member of IEHA, was honored recently by family and friends in celebration of his 86th birthday. Charlie was chief environmentalists at the Carroll Co. Health Dept. for 34 years before retirement.

Two members receive NEHA Merit Awards

Two of IEHA's active members were honored during the Annual Fall Educational Conference with Certificates of Merit from the National Environmental Health Association.

Jason LeMaster received recognition for his part in development of the Indiana Environmental Health Emergency Response

Team (INEHRT). He is also managing a large federal grant to purchase much of the equipment needed to facilitate the team's responses to emergencies.

INEHRT responded to the tornado outbreak in Southern Indiana in 2012.

Mike Mettler was recog-

nized, not just for his efforts as Director of Environmental Health at ISDH, but for his tireless work on behalf of the state and national associations helping shape policies benefitting public health.

Jason and Mike have been active members of IEHA for many years with a positive impact on Hoosiers.



2013 Annual Fall Educational Conference

Health Dept. helps refugees (continued)

(Continued from page 12)

fault of their own," said Nicole Hartman. She was referring to the influx of Burmese people who had recently taken jobs at area businesses. They may be lacking proper immunizations.

One of the first issues to overcome was the language barrier as many refugees spoke little or no English. This was handled by securing interpreters.

Another issue was the difference in culture. Mindy Waldron explained that

many had to be educated on what is acceptable behavior and about proper sanitation practices.

"What is normal for us is not normal for them," expressed Dave Fiess.

"What is normal for us is not normal for them."

New test could quickly reveal food bacteria

Is that food contaminated? What if you could place a sensor on the food and quickly get the answer. Sound like science fiction? Perhaps not.

Food Safety News has reported a doctoral student at Auburn University's

Center for Detection and Food Safety, Yating Chai, has developed a "magnetoelastic biosensor," a two-part device that is placed directly on the food's surface. The special glass sensor is coated with a particular virus that reacts quickly to a specific

bacterium. Should the sensor contact a certain bacterium, it's electrical properties change and are detected by a special scanner.

Yating said this would provide results much faster than current methods.





The Mission of the Indiana Environmental Health Association is to promote, preserve and protect environmental public health in the state of Indiana, and to encourage a spirit of cooperation among all environmental health stakeholders while serving its members in the regulatory, industry, and academic communities.

Newsletter of the *Indiana Environmental Health Association*

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IEHA is an Indiana not for profit organization in existence since 1951.



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More about IEHA



The Indiana Environmental Health Association (IEHA) was founded in 1951 as the Indiana Association of Sanitarians (IAS). There were 16 charter members. The name was officially changed to the Indiana Environmental Health Association in 1985.

IEHA is affiliated with the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), and the International Association for Food Protection (IAFP).

IEHA is comprised of eight regional chapters. They are Central, East Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeastern, Southern, Wabash Valley, and West Central.

There are four standing committees, which include Food Protection, General Environmental Health Services, Terrorism And All Hazards Preparedness, and Wastewater.

The operations of IEHA are governed by an Execu-

tive Board that meets monthly. The Board and various standing committees are made up of voting and non-voting members. Information plus meeting dates, times and locations for the chapters and standing committees may be found on the IEHA website listed on this page.

All meetings are open to any member or guest but voting privileges and active participation are limited to voting members.