

New Mexico Environmental Health Association  
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NMEHA

# What's New In New Mexico?

## March 2019

### UP AND COMING EVENTS:

The 2019 annual Vector Conference will be held April 16-17th at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid North, 5151 San Francisco Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

CEUs are available for New Mexico, Colorado, and Texas.

Room rates are \$94/ night at the Marriot Pyramid. For reservations call 505-798-6440.

Save the date. NMEHA annual conference will be held October 22nd and 23rd.

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

HAZWOPER refresher course will be offered as a pre-conference for the annual vector conference on April 15, 2019 at Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid. Cost for training will be \$75 which will include NMEHA membership.

### INTERNSHIP/VOLUNTEERING

Contact Bernalillo County for availability at 505-314-0310

### COMMITTEES

NMEHA currently has 5 committees which include:

Auditing—chair Travis Bowser (travis.bowser@ihs.gov)

Education—co-chair Travis Bowser, co-chair Sam Frank (Samuel.frank@ihs.gov)

Membership and Public Relation—chair Ed Fox (ed.fox@state.nm.us)

Professional Advancement—chair Kellison Platero (kplatero@berncq.gov)

IT/Internet—chair Kaitlin Greenberg (kgreenberg@cabq.gov)

If you are interested in joining a committee please contact respective committee chair.



## President's Message

NMEHA's history is broad and deep. Our objectives are clear: to excel in providing training and certificate opportunities, be a strong advocate for public health and environmental health policies, provide networking opportunities, and lead in the field of environmental health. Our focus remains strong and our commitment to improve environmental health is paramount. It is my deep desire to focus our actions in line with the [national environmental health topics](#) of food safety, air quality, water quality, healthy homes, preparedness, climate change, vector and pests, and tracking and informatics. We need your help!

NMEHA's standing committees are looking for your participation to achieve our goals and objectives. The Education Committee seeks to increase environmental health educational opportunities. The Membership and Public Relations Committee is committed to grow and needs your input, thoughts, and participation. The Professional Advancement Committee desires your involvement to bring innovative approaches to enhance our environmental health professional. The Awards and Scholarship Committee identifies and administers the awards program and you can help achieve that. The IT/Internet Committee is focused on improving communications with our professionals. Let us know how you can help participate to achieve our mutual goals. You are NMEHA!

NMEHA is exemplified through our past President, Cecilia Garcia, past Board, and recent awards recipients. I thank all of you who have worked hard to improve NMEHA.

I look forward to serving with you to bolster our commitment to New Mexico's environmental professionals.

Sincerely,

Bart Faris

#### **BERNALILLO COUNTY UPDATE:**

Bernalillo County is currently working on updates to our food regulations which include adopting the 2017 food code, temporary food establishments, and manufactured foods. We plan to introduce the final draft to the commission before the end of the calendar year. Last year we conducted a surveillance of *Listeria Monocytogenes* and collected 27 deli slicer swab samples from 18 food establishments. There were no positive samples for LM. We also collected samples of soft ice cream, shakes, and paletas (frozen fruit treats) for coliform count analysis at 20 food establishments. A standard of 40 CFU/g was borrowed from the Texas Food Establishment regulations. There was a total of 52 samples taken from the 20 food establishments. There were 16 samples that were equal to or greater than 40 CFU/g. 11 samples were greater than 100 CFU/g. The majority of the elevated coliform were due to improper cleaning and sanitization of equipment. Follow up visits were conducted with facilities with high levels to inform the importance of proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures.

#### **INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE UPDATE:**

The Albuquerque Area Indian Health Service has had a very eventful beginning to 2019. The partial government shutdown impacted several operating divisions within the agency, including the Division of Environmental Health Services (DEHS). Shortly after the shutdown ended, Ms. Debra Grabowski, DEHS Director, announced her retirement at the end of February. After dedicating over 40 years of public health service to the City of Albuquerque and IHS, Debbie's excellent leadership and experience will be greatly missed. DEHS continues working towards fulfilling all of the requirements for the FDA Voluntary Retail Food Regulatory Program, a nationally recognized rigorous food program improvement model. Other work includes building capacity to better serve tribal communities in all facets of environmental health and injury prevention including: child passenger safety, elder fall prevention, and school bus transportation safety

#### **NEHA'S 2019 ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION:**

Registration is open for the National Environmental Health Association Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition in Nashville, TN. The AEC will be held July 9-July 12, with pre-conference workshops beginning on Sunday July 7, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center.

The theme of the 2019 AEC is **Local Voices. Universal Language**. Celebrating the local voices of agencies and industries and how they fit into the Universal language of environmental health. Learn how these "voices" ensure the safety of the public and environment, and how they contribute to the advancement of the environmental health profession.

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**Want to stay healthy this cold and flu season? Wash your hands!** Did you know that handwashing is the number one way to avoid getting sick and spreading illness to others? But we need to do it correctly! For the most benefit follow these steps. Step 1: Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold will do!). Step 2: Apply soap and rub your hands together. Make sure to get between your fingers, the backs of your hands, under your nails, and your wrists and thumbs. Step 3: Continue scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Step 4: Rinse your hands with clean, running water. Step 5: Dry hands with a clean paper towel or let them air dry. You should always wash your hands: before, during, and after preparing food; before eating; before and after caring for someone who is sick; after using the bathroom; after changing diapers; after handling garbage; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Finally, alcohol based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol can be used to clean hands in a pinch, but should not replace washing your hands with soap and water.



### **Officers and Executive Board**

President: Bart Faris (bfaris@cabq.gov)

President Elect: John Rhoderick  
(john.rhoderick@state.nm.us)

Past President: Cecelia Garcia (cgarcia@cabq.gov)

Treasurer: Travis Bowser (travis.bowser@ihs.gov)

Secretary: Samuel Frank (Samuel.frank@ihs.gov)

Board Member: Ed Fox (ed.fox@state.nm.us)

Board Member: Kaitlin Greenberg

(kgreenberg@cabq.gov)

Board Member: Kellison Platero (kplatero@bernco.gov)