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Indiana Environmental Health Association, Inc.

CONFERENCE BACK TO VALLE VISTA

The annual one-day IEHA Spring Educational Conference returned to the Valle Vista Conference Center in Greenwood after several years in other locations. The venue provided an ideal setting for the 119 members who attended to hear a variety of speakers talking on topics ranging from “Flushable Wipes” to “Water and Quality of Life” in Indiana.



“STOP THE BLEED”

Dr. Michael Kaufmann, (left) Medical Director of the Indiana

Department of Homeland Security, along with Jason Smith, Southeast EMS District Manager, during the keynote address, provided an overview of the “Stop the Bleed” campaign meant as a means to engage the public in being “initial” responders (different than first responders) to be able to take action immediately after a shooting or other incident that leads to massive bleeding. Dr. Kaufmann outlined the evolution of EMS response from “passive” to “active.”



IEHA President JoAnn Xiong-Mercado (above) welcomed attendees while Vice President Holley Rose (below) provided an overview of the day's speakers.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Spring conference returned to Valle Vista.
- The Keynote speaker talked of engaging “initial” responders to act during mass bleeding events.
- “Flushable” wipes might not be as advertised!

FROM THE ED DESK



Here's the latest Journal for you to enjoy! I know we have members who never quite take the time to read the Journal, so please invite someone else you know to check it out. You'll find recent back issues on the IEHA website listed by year. Because of the cost, the Flip Page version will be available only for the current issue.

Keep the ideas for articles coming. You'll find the contact information on the last page.

Ed

INDIANA'S STATE EGG BOARD ASSURES EGG SAFETY

Mark Straw, Director of the Indiana State Egg Board (ISEB) told Wabash Valley Chapter members recently that there are a lot of eggs produced in Indiana - 9.88 billion eggs to be exact, and that's per year. Indiana is one of the largest egg-producing states with over 34,200 laying hens, and this doesn't include the small producers (less than 2000 chickens) which are exempted from law.

Mark reminded the group that the ISEB only looks at chicken eggs, not quail, turkey or duck eggs. "Those other eggs fall to the local health department inspector," he said.

He pointed out some of the misconceptions about eggs. For example, "cage free" doesn't mean "outside". He added that "organic" does mean the chicken has outside access, but not that the eggs are safer. Eggs can be laid on the ground which is less sanitary than in cages.

2 Grade A will allow eggs to be dated 45 days

out, but when it comes to eggs, "Sell By," "Use By," and "Expires" all mean the same thing.

Mark added that egg cartons can cross contaminate and therefore should not be reused. The ISEB storage requirement for eggs is an ambient temperature of 45° F. which differs from the food code. Eggs should not be held lower than 29° F. as eggs will freeze.



Andie Mears, ISEB inspector, says there are good reasons that eggs are graded and inspected, and much of his job is to assure that only high quality eggs are sold in stores. Eggs need to be properly

washed to remove external material, inspected under a light (candling), inspected for cracked shells, and graded to assure that all eggs placed in cartons are safe.

A permit is required to sell eggs and can be obtained from the ISEB, located on the Purdue West Lafayette campus.



Here are some of the 119 attendees at the IEHA Spring Educational Conference. The conference was held at the Valle Vista Conference Center April 11.

Photo credit: Holley Rose

SPRING CONFERENCE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

“EMS responders used to have to wait until a situation was secured before they could respond to injured victims. Now EMS personnel can be embedded with responders,” he said.

An “evolution” of response began after the December 14, 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School with a goal of improving survival. Changes included training citizens to act on uncontrolled bleeding until emergency responders can arrive. Dr. Kaufmann said that emergency response can take 5 to 30 minutes, but a victim can bleed to death in a few minutes. The Stop the Bleed initiative provides training for anyone to learn how to control a victim’s bleeding by applying pressure, packing wounds or properly using a tourniquet.

“Anyone can be an initial responder,” he said.

WATER AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN INDIANA

W. William Weeks is President of the Conservation Law Center that provides legal counsel and works to improve conservation law and policy. He told conference attendees that our bodies, and the earth, are both about 70% water, but we don’t “regard” our water.

“Ninety five percent of our lake acreage is impaired with PCBs, mercury, and excess nutrients,” he said. This includes direct pip-

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2020 OFFICERS, CANDIDATES ANNOUNCED

The slate of officers to serve IEHA next year has been set.

Nominations chair Mike Sutton has announced these are the candidates for 2020.

President - Jammie Bane;

President Elect - Holley Rose;

Vice President - Krista Click, Jennifer Heller;

Secretary - Lisa Chandler;

Treasurer - Gretchen Quirk;

Auditors - Matt Herrick, Catherine Hess;

There will be an election for Vice President. Other offices have no contests. There are two Auditors, and the Treasurer serves a two year term.



Above, State Trainer Lisa Harrison discusses the objectives for the “Foods 101” training, while, below, Logansport attendees listen intently about current code interpretations.



Tess enjoys the attention as attendees in Brown County listen to State Trainer Lisa Harrison discuss food safety issues important to inspectors.

CHAPTERS SPONSOR TRAININGS

More than two dozen IEHA members and guests attended the recent “Foods 101” training designed for inspectors hosted by the Wabash Valley Chapter at the Ivy Tech Community College campus in Logansport. The class was presented by Lisa Harrison, State Trainer for the Food Protection Program at ISDH who delved into the basics of conducting inspections, and the value and necessity of having a trained workforce that is knowledgeable of the applicable laws and regulations in Indiana.

Lisa stressed that making sure the food is safe is a priority.

“All the code sections are important,” she said, “but assuring the food is safe would be more important than citing a hole in the wall.” She followed up by detailing the importance of a proper menu review to determine what type of foods are being prepared, and when. She mentioned the importance of determining if meats, for example, are raw or pre-cooked, and that it is important to ask the right questions to guide inspectors as to what to check. A menu review exercise helped bring home the importance of determining what foods are being served. The training also emphasized other risk factors such as having a written illness reporting policy.



At about the same time, Southern Chapter also sponsored a similar training session with about two dozen attendees at the Brown County Annex Building in Nashville. Both sessions included plenty of time for a question and answer session. Jennifer Heller reports that the Southern Chapter training also included a pizza buffet.

CONFERENCE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 3)

ing of untreated sewage. He added that more than 7,000 miles of Indiana streams and rivers are polluted from runoff, and that failed septic systems adds another 1,200 miles more.

“The total length of polluted Indiana rivers and streams is equal to a direct line from Alaska to Florida, and back, Weeks said.



“Manufacturers claim wipes are disposable when tests show they don’t degrade, blocking sewage systems leading to costly repairs.”

FLUSHABLE WIPES - OR ARE THEY?

At the recent IEHA Spring Educational Conference, speaker Rob Villee from the Plainfield (New Jersey) Area Regional Sewage Authority was on hand to explain the growing issue with so-called “flushable wipes” including the damage caused to plumbing systems worldwide. He put the blame on manufacturers that claim their products are disposable when tests have shown the products don’t degrade. Instead, Villee said, they build up in sewage systems and create blockages that can be costly to repair.

The problem comes from the fact that most such wipes contain plastic that might add strength and durability, but they won’t break down quickly enough, if at all, once flushed away. And with plastics already causing a disposal problem in the earth’s oceans, such wipes only contribute to the environmental problem.

With pressure applied to manufacturers, some have reformulated their products to break down in about a half hour once disposed in a sewage system. Villee also added that the newer toilet papers may also contain embedded plastic, which can contribute to similar disposal and clogging issues.

He added that agreements with the wipe industry call for package labels to clearly state “not flushable” but this information can be hidden and not clearly visible to consumers.



Some of the current officers and past presidents pose during the recent IEHA Spring Educational Conference in Greenwood. Pictured from the left are Holley Rose, Vice President, Mike Sutton, Jason Doerflein, JoAnn Xiong-Mercado, President, Jason Ravenscroft, Patty Nocek, Mike Mettler.

(Photo credit: Patty Nocek)



*“How long does it take to create 1 inch of top soil?
Answer: 500 years.”*

INDIANA FOOD SCRAP INITIATIVE

One of the projects of the Indiana Recycling Coalition (IRC) is the Food Scrap Initiative. Emily Jackson, Program Manager for the IRC, told attendees at the IEHA Spring Educational Conference that we waste a lot of food. That’s an estimated 52 million tons nationwide with an estimated loss of \$218 billion. Jackson said that all this food waste going into landfills results in substantial methane emissions.



Jackson told the group that the Indiana program is modeled after ones in Oregon and Washington and is currently working to implement curbside recycling in Indianapolis. She pointed out that some of the challenges include logistics like truck costs, storage space, and cost. Food can be composted, she said, but contamination of the food from foreign objects is a concern.

The IRC has created “strategy groups” to come up with ways to address food scrap issues, such as addressing source reduction, food rescue, and composting. More information can be found at <https://indianarecycling.org>.

(Donna Walker contributed to this article)

ISDH HOSTS SAFE WATER CONFERENCE

A conference on the Importance of Safe Well Water for Maternal and Child Health was co-hosted by the Environmental Public Health and Laboratories divisions of Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) last fall. The conference focused on arsenic and other contaminants that can impact the nearly 900,000 Indiana residents using private, unregulated water wells. An estimated 14% of private water wells in Indiana have over 10 µg/L of arsenic, higher than the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act limit. Gestational diabetes, low birthweight, and infant mortality have all been linked to arsenic exposure before and during pregnancy.

The conference was directed at clinicians, primarily OB/GYNs, pediatricians, and public health nurses, to bring them together with environmental health specialists and environmental health laboratory scientists. Featured speakers included Steven Wilson, a Groundwater Hydrologist and private well expert with the Illinois State Water Survey, who presented on well water testing, and Dr. Susan Buchanan, Director of the Great Lakes Center for Children's Environmental Health, whose topic was the importance of environmental health during pregnancy and childhood. Attendees also heard from Andrew Pappas from ISDH on arsenic prevalence in Indiana, and Mark Bash from IDNR on Indiana's water well construction standards.

A round table session followed with groups made up of individuals from all backgrounds that had a moderated discussion regarding the information presented in the morning. Topics included raising awareness, improving communication between environmentalists and clinicians, private well water contaminants of concern, and financial resources available to well owners. Participants were able to share problems and solutions they have discovered during their careers.

Future steps for the Indiana State Department of Health include adding information to the Liv App, a smart phone app focusing on pregnancy. The information will include details of private well water testing, certified laboratories, and treatment options. Well owner workshops are being conducted around the state as a partnership between ISDH and local health departments, and ISDH is now capable of conducting rapid arsenic screenings from drinking water in the field.

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NEONICOTINOIDS CONSTANT THREAT TO BEES

Dr. Christian Krupke is a professor of entomology at Purdue University. He told attendees at the IEHA Spring Educational Conference that the use of serious pesticides don't align with risks posed by the pests they're intended to eliminate.

Dr. Krupke identified clothianidin and thiamethoxam as two of the neonicotinoids that are very toxic to honey bees, pollinators needed for the survival of many food crops. While intended to kill insects that feed on a plants roots, he said such products are highly water soluble, allowing them to migrate into Indiana soils. They can be found in soils up to three years after being applied. When such products are applied by spraying, there are no safe areas for bees to forage as bees will encounter the pesticide dust. Pesticides have been found in the honey bee's produce.

BALD CYPRESS TREES FOUND IN NC THREATENED

Ancient bald cypress trees dating more than 2,000 years old are threatened by logging, water pollution and sea level rise, says The Nature Conservancy. North Carolina's legislature is considering protecting the Black River State Park in hopes of protecting remaining old trees. The trees are living along the North Carolina coastline in an area along the Black River, and will be threatened by climate change.



One of the oldest trees known to exist is the 2,000+ year old bald cypress trees growing in the wetlands of the Black River preserve. (Photo from IOPscience.)

OLDEST TREE FOUND IN N. CAROLINA

North Carolina is home to the forested wetlands of Black River and includes many living bald cypress trees. Research has determined that many of these trees are well over 1,000 years old with one tree determined to be at least 2,624 years old making the tree (*Taxodium distichum*) to be the oldest known wetland tree species in eastern North America, as reported by the website *IOPscience*. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has led efforts to preserve the watershed of the Black River, which contains the trees, but climate change leading to sea level rise could threaten the water and trees. TNC says it owns over 15,000 acres in and around the old growth area, but says thousands more acres need protected.

The process of dating the trees included dendrochronology (the scientific method of dating tree rings) and radiocarbon dating to determine the longevity of the trees. *IOPscience* says the research provides quantitative evidence for the ecological integrity of the wetland system. The age of the trees was determined by first selecting the trees showing evidence of "great age," typically trees with large twisted and low taper stems and flat crowns. Core samples were taken to study the rings, and for correlations with other tree samples of known age. Radiocarbon dating was used to independently test the trees.

Tree rings studied indicated many trees were over 1,000 years old, and two trees more than 2,000 years old. Growth rates of such trees are known to be very slow, but such old trees are very rare. How long such trees can live is, so far, unknown.

SAFE WATER CONFERENCE (CONT.)

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The conference was funded by a grant from the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Environmental Health Environmental Hazards and Health Effects Division. APHL staff provided planning support.

For more information about private drinking water wells in Indiana, contact Mike Sutton at msutton@isdh.in.gov.

(contributed by Amy Hancock, MPA, Environmental Public Health Division, ISDH)

PASTEURIZED EGGS ARE SAFER

Chicken eggs may be contaminated with Salmonella, so therefore, cooking is required for safety. But with proper equipment, it is possible to pasteurize in-shell eggs, rendering them safe and acceptable for use in recipes using raw eggs as an ingredient.

Although food operators (and consumers) could technically pasteurize in-shell eggs themselves, the equipment to do so properly is not readily available. Pasteurizing eggs in the shell is accomplished by placing ambient temperature eggs in water and bring the water temperature to 138° to 140° F. and holding that temperature for several minutes. Without equipment to maintain precise temperature control (including an accurate thermometer), the temperature could easily rise above the necessary temperature and cook the eggs, or not get hot enough.

Eggs that have been commercially pasteurized will have a “P” stamped on the end of each egg. Without that mark, assume the egg is raw.



A pasteurized egg can be identified by the “P” stamped on the end of each egg.

“Although anyone could technically pasteurize an egg, the equipment to do so with the precision needed is not readily available.”

TAHP HOSTS PROTECTIVE MEASURES CLASS

In April, the Terrorism and All Hazards Preparedness Committee sponsored the PER-336 Class “Protective Measures” presented by the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Bombing Prevention. Twelve participants from various agencies attended, including Eskenazi Hospital Security, IU, ISDH, and various health department personnel.

The class was presented in modules with a group exercise covering planning protective measures for an event at a large arena.

TAHP committee chair Jennifer Heller says the committee will be sponsoring a “Bombing Awareness” class on July 19th at the Brown County Annex Building. Register on the ACADIS Portal, www.acadisportal.in.gov or call Jennifer at 812-988-2255 for more information.



AGING SEPTIC TANKS, RAISING CONCERNS IN FLORIDA

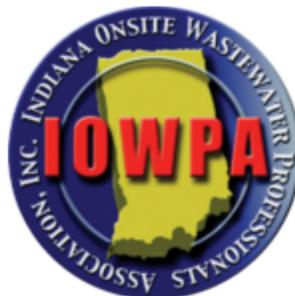
Like in Indiana, many Florida residents believe that once it goes away, sewage is gone. But Florida residents are facing threats to inland waters from such issues as algae blooms and contaminations from aging septic tanks that are too close together and getting too old.

The *Gainesville Sun* has reported that out-of-sight onsite systems, an estimated 2.7 million in the state, are feeding nitrogen and other pollutants causing algae blooms that kill fish and sea grasses. Most of these old systems were never designed to treat nitrogen and allow pollutants to get into Florida’s porous sand, limestone, and aquifers. One hears about red tide making headlines, the Sun reported, but aging septic systems are adversely affecting Florida’s springs with algae that can choke off native grasses, and deprive oxygen from anything living.

Cost will be an obstacle to clean up the mess with estimates of \$1 billion a year for 20 years. Home owners could be asked to pay upwards of \$20,000 for replacements, or over \$5,000 to hook on to a utility. And, like Indiana, many homeowners don’t think their tank is the problem.

Ginger Adair, Volusia County’s director of environmental management says most septic systems are doing what they were supposed to do, protect human health. “What they weren’t designed to do was protect environmental health,” she said, “even if the system is working well.”

SUSTAINING MEMBERS BIG HELP TO IEHA





The Century Center on the St. Joseph River in South Bend will host the IEHA conference in September.

FARMERS MARKETS POSE CHALLENGES

With the season of farmers markets in Indiana, challenges face inspectors as vendors become more creative in their food offerings. While the sale of fresh produce is encouraged in the state, the produce may be cut only to facilitate harvest. Any additional “processing” like cutting, chopping, slicing, leads to additional food safety rules about safe handling and storage. There are fine lines between acceptable and not, with sellers now offering items like sprouts, shoots, and microgreens. Then there’s aquaponics (like live seafood). Products still “living” are not “processed” and therefore likely OK, that is, not regulated.

As Sharon Pattee with the Food Protection Program at ISDH points out, the confusion about the Home Based Vendor rule allows only the sale of certain products only at certain locations. Any product that is “value added” will require specific labeling, and in no case can it be sealed up or “canned.” Additional requirements would apply. Sharon says sellers are either Wholesale, Retail, or a Home Based Vendor. They can’t be more than one, and each has its own requirements.

She advises that there are issues with many farmers markets that aren’t inspected, and inspectors can’t ignore them. “Be out there, and be aware,” she says.

CONFERENCE RETURNS TO SOUTH BEND

The Century Center in South Bend will be host site for the Annual Fall Educational Conference slated for September 23,24,25, with pre-conference events on the preceding Sunday.

Lodging will be at the nearby DoutleTree Hotel. The special conference lodging rate is \$98 per night and on-site parking will be available at \$5 per night.

Reservations may be made now by calling 574-234-2000 and say reservation code IEH.

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

"The Mission of the Indiana Environmental Health Association, Inc. 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."

More about IEHA

The Indiana Environmental Health Association, Inc. (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 Executive Board that meets regularly. 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 only "voting members" may vote or hold an office.

