

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The 2007 HEHA Governing Council has proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Proposed amendments include Article V- Authority, and Article VII- Officers sections 2,3,and 4.

Thanks to one of our members, the council was notified that Chapter 415B, Hawaii Revised Statutes of Article V- Authority had been repealed and replaced by Chapter 414D, Hawaii Revised Statutes thus leading to the first proposed amendment.

The second proposal involves the composition of the governing council and terms as stated in Article VII- Officers. During the last 3 years, the military position on the governing council has been vacant. We have been unsuccessful in

filling the position due to current issues that have demanded so much time and manpower from the military. The governing council also foresees future difficulties in filling council positions. To address this shortcoming, we are proposing that in the event where the nomination and election proceedings **do not** identify a candidate for the Board of Directors position, the Governing Council can appoint a HEHA member to fill the position. Lastly, we are proposing to change the terms for the officers from two years to one year. The Governing Council believes that these proposals will assure that all council positions are filled and will provide more opportunities for HEHA members to serve on the Governing Council.

If there are any concerns or questions that you may have feel free to contact me at anytime by phone, email, or through our website.

C.W.B. *By Gary Ueunten*

The Clean Water Branch is committed to protecting recreational waters in Hawaii. CWB monitors fecal bacteria levels at beaches on Kauai to ensure that the waters are safe for recreational use. In total 38 beaches on Kauai are monitored, 5 are considered significant and are sampled twice a week, and the remaining beaches are sampled weekly on a six-month rotating schedule. Indicator bacteria, Enterococci and Clostridium perfringens are used to evaluate the fecal contamination from warm blooded animals. Temperature, salinity, oxygen, pH and turbidity are measured to help with the evaluation and interpretation of the bacteria counts.

Data collected from the routine monitoring is used to establish baseline levels used to evaluate long-term changes in water quality,

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Asbestos Regulations: Ongoing Outreach

By Tom Liliekis, NRIAQ

Although it is not illegal nor a health hazard to occupy a space with asbestos-containing materials in good condition, there are regulations with regards to performing renovation, demolition, and general disturbance activities at regulated facilities.

Commercial and public buildings, condominiums and apartment buildings are all considered **regulated facilities** under the Federal and State of Hawaii's Asbestos Rules (Title 11, Chapters 501 through 504, Hawaii Administrative Rules). These



requirements are designed to help protect public

health during demolition and renovation activities which may disturb asbestos.

As part of its outreach program, the Hawaii Department of Health is collaborating with the various county building permit offices in helping to educate and inform building permit applicants of their responsibilities in protecting occupants and complying with the rules.

The general asbestos requirements include (but are not limited to) the following:

- A state certified asbestos inspector must be used to identify suspect asbestos-containing

materials prior to the renovation/demolition activities which may disturb them.

- A licensed and certified asbestos contractor must be used to properly remove, containerize and dispose of the regulated asbestos-containing materials.
- Owners/operators must file proper notification documents with the State Department of Health.

Please contact the State Asbestos Office at (808) 586-5800 if you have any questions.

More Volunteer Opportunities for Emergency Preparedness

By Rachel Heckscher, Maui District Health Of-

The enthusiastic response to disaster preparedness training programs on Maui this year shows that volunteer spirit and concern are abundant in Maui County. Maui County Health Volunteers, American Red Cross, and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are building well-organized teams to help with many aspects of disaster response. Churches are training leaders as part of the new Aloha Disaster Network.

We have received several requests to explain the differences between these four initiatives and the reason why so many groups exist. In fact, each group fills a slightly different niche and potential volunteers can choose the most appropriate organization based on their availability, interests, and abilities. Each response organization will require that volunteers have an emergency plan and survival kit ready as a prerequisite to becoming a team member. In addition, volunteers will need to take a realistic look at what obligations they have to their family and employer in case of a disaster.

Maui County Health Volunteers (MCHV) is the local unit of the Medical Reserve public health functions when emergencies overwhelm the capacity of the local health department. In Maui County, Dr. Lorrin Pang coordinates this group. Once trained and credentialed, members can help respond to public health threats in Maui County (or beyond if they choose). Pang plans to involve MCHV members in planned events such as drills or vaccinations clinics to “practice” for real disasters. Members will also be required to complete several standardized training online, and attend a live local training or meeting approximately every 3 months. While the function of MCHV is to provide “surge capacity” to bolster the Department of Health, the organization needs just as many people without healthcare training as those with healthcare training. To register for an orientation, or for more information, call 808-243-8649.

The **Maui Office of the American Red Cross, Hawaii State Chapter** has a brand new director, Melissa Ross, who has hit the ground running. A major component of Ross’s job is to keep Maui County’s disaster volunteers trained and prepared to assist the community in response to all types of disasters- from major hurricanes to smaller, yet more frequent disasters such as house fires.

Volunteer led Disaster Action Teams (DATs) are the first Red Cross responders when there is a local disaster. DAT team members may be called upon to perform a variety of functions, from assessing the damage caused by the disaster, to interviewing affected families and determining what services they need, to opening shelters. Licensed professionals also volunteer on these teams to help clients with special medical needs and to address the psychological impact of disasters. There are other volunteer opportunities as well for individuals more interested in playing a “behind the scene” role in areas such as public affairs and logistics.

Red Cross disaster training is provided at no cost to all volunteers. For more information on the training schedule and requirements, contact

rossm@hawaiiredcross.org or visit the ‘Disaster Volunteers’ section at

www.hawaiiredcross.org. Melissa Ross can also be reached at 808-357-1526.

The **Community Emergency Response Team** program, known as CERT, is part of a Citizen Corps federal initiative. CERT provides 20 hours of free instruction under the direction of Maui Fire Department, including information about fire and hazard reduction in the home and workplace, how to assist emergency responders, light search and rescue, extinguishing small fires, and how to reduce survivor stress. Once trained, CERT volunteers become a local asset in emergency response, helping in their own neighborhoods or supporting response efforts in other areas. CERT programs on Maui have been so popular that all training spots in 2007 have already been filled. For more information and to get on the waiting list for future CERT courses, call Maui county Civil Defense Agency at 808-270-7285.

The **Aloha Disaster Network** is a new group founded by people from Christian churches on Maui. The group’s goal is to recruit and train teams to coordinate preparedness efforts for their congregations. Disaster coordinators will work to motivate their congregations to make family preparedness kits and plans, and to promote preparedness education and planning at all levels within each church organization. This new organization held a highly successful public education forum in May, and has held several liaison meetings to date. ADN plans to provide ongoing trainings for the coordinators, with special attention paid to preparing for the spiritual and psychological needs of individuals after disasters. For more information regarding Aloha Disaster Network meetings, and/or workshops, email ADN_Maui@hotmail.com.

So give us a holler! As you can see, each of the four groups described above fills a slightly different role. Consider your interests, schedule, and availability, and give a call to find out which volunteer group would be best for you. Remember, all potential volunteers must consider their obligations to family and employer before committing to help in a disaster. We look forward to meeting you!

Rachel Heckscher, MPH, is the public health educator for the Emergency Preparedness Branch, Maui District Health Office. She can be reached at 808-243-8649.

2007 HEHA AEC

NOVEMBER 28 & 29

ALA MOANA HOTEL



Know Your Produce: It's Good Business Sense

BY LYNN NAKAMURA-TENGAN, CTAHR

Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. The variety of produce available from the local and global market enables eateries to offer attractive, delicious and nutritious options to customers. At the same time, several foodborne disease outbreaks and food recalls are now being identified with contaminated fresh produce. Proper cooking will kill most pathogens that may be present in food. However, there is no "cook step" when serving fresh produce, so it is important to select and handle produce safely in order to reduce the risks of foodborne illness.

These are tips to enhance produce safety:

Know your suppliers. Are they using Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) appropriate for their farm or wholesale operation? Is the food grown, harvested, packed, processed and distributed in a manner that minimizes microbial contamination?

Clean all produce before eating,

cutting or cooking. Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water. Rinsing pre-packaged greens before serving can help reduce potential surface contaminants and refresh your product. For produce labeled "ready-to-eat"*, rinsing with water adds a measure of safety. Foods that will be peeled should also be washed first.

Fruits and vegetables with firm skins should be rubbed under running tap water or scrubbed with a clean cloth, paper towel or clean produce brush. Dry with a clean towel to further reduce bacteria that may be present.

For melons, use a bleach solution to sanitize the outside before cutting. A clean knife can transfer bacteria from the rind of an unwashed cantaloupe to the edible flesh.

Using bleach or detergent to wash produce other than melons is not recommended.

Be sure to wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot,

soapy water and sanitize between preparation steps.

Separate fruits and vegetables to be eaten raw from other foods such as raw meat, poultry or seafood.

Reduce risk of cross-contamination with color-coded cutting boards. Green for produce, white for dairy, and red for meat, yellow for poultry, tan for fish, and blue for cooked meat.

Chill all produce that is purchased pre-cut or peeled—bagged salad greens should be refrigerated to maintain quality and safety.

Cut fruits and vegetables should be kept chilled in a refrigerator or on a bed of ice. Discard produce that looks rotten. Cut away damaged or bruised parts of fresh fruit and vegetables before preparing and/or eating. Discard leftover cut produce from the service line.

Food safety is everyone's business. As educators, regulators, business operators, and consumers, using safe food handling keep the public safe and companies in business.

Worried About Pesticides? Food and Drug Puts Your Mind at Ease

By Blaine Shishido, Food and Drug

One of the key programs conducted at the Food and Drug Branch is the monitoring of pesticide residues on Raw Agriculture Commodities (RAC). The health risks due to eating pesticide-contaminated food are significant, including the possible development of cancer. Sources of pesticide contamination include the use of unapproved chemicals, misuse of approved chemicals, drifts and run-offs from neighboring fields, and tainted soil. To ensure the safety of the food supply, Food and Drug collects routine samples of fruits and vegetables which are either grown in Hawaii or imported and submits to DOH Chemistry Laboratory for analysis.

The program focuses on collecting 20 routine samples on a monthly basis from wholesalers. Collection of routine

samples from the wholesaler proves to be more practical than from

individual farms. At the wholesaler you have access to a number of different growers from a single location and the identity of the grower is usually known. Samples are collected from farms only for follow up on a known or suspected violation or to follow up on Department of Agriculture reports of pesticide misuse. Occasionally samples are collected at the retailers because they sometimes carry minor crops which are delivered directly to them by the grower.

A pesticide violation occurs when pesticide residue is detected on a particular fruit or vegetable for which no tolerance or exemption from tolerance exists or tolerance exists and the amount of the residue exceeds the tolerance. If a pesticide violation occurs, enforcement action is taken and a recall is conducted.

The Department of Agriculture investigates to determine the source of the contamination and proper steps needed to prevent similar contamination in the future.

Since the program began in 1987, Food and Drug has sampled a total of 5847 commodities, 2449 (41.9%) of which had residues. The number of commodities having violative residues is 229 (3.9%).

Future program goals are to sample more types of foods such as baby food, flour, eggs, and raw meats.

As a consumer, you can reduce residues if they are present by following some simple tips:

- Rinse produce with large amounts of cold or warm tap water, do not use soap;
- Scrub with brush when appropriate;
- Throw away the outer leaves of leafy veggies such as lettuce and cabbage.

For more information, contact the Food and Drug Branch at 586-4725.



NEHA AEC and Exhibition

By John Nakashima

For those that have just joined the Environmental Health Services Division and even some of you who have been here a while, you may have heard about the NEHA AEC but are not aware of what it is all about. This is a short look into what I consider the best conference value that is out there today.

Every year the National Environmental Health Association of which the Hawaii Environmental Health Association is affiliated with has an Annual Educational Conference and Exhibition. The conference moves location every year alternating from the East Coast on odd years and to the West coast on even numbered years. This past year the conference was held in Atlantic City, next year's (2008) conference is set for Tucson, Arizona and the 2009 AEC is going to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. This conference is not the largest around but it still has approximately a couple of thousand health professionals from not only from the United States but worldwide.

The conferences are split into a multitude of topics, including: Food Safety & Protection, Terrorism & All Hazards Preparedness, Onsite Wastewater Systems and a multitude of General Environmental Health subjects like; Indoor and Ambient Air Quality, Environmental Health Leadership, Emerging Pathogens,

Vector Control and many more. Session speakers are some of the best in their fields and have a tremendous amount of information to give. One of the best part of the conferences is that you are able to speak to these individuals on a one to one basis and "pick" their minds with any questions that you may have.

There is also an Exhibition Hall during the first 2 days of the conference. The exhibition has approximately a hundred vendors from all environmental fields, this is a great time for all to be able to speak to vendors and get more product information on a more personal level.

The conference along with formal presentations have what are called "poster sessions." These are presentations done on poster boards and the presenters are present at a specific location so you may review each of their individual posters and ask questions. This is a good informal way you can meet a wide a variety of people here, many from academia others from regulatory and much more.

The conference is not only all presentations and hard work, they try to install times for people to meet and get to know others in their profession. They have a "networking luncheon", door prizes given away at the exhibition hall, "silent" auctions and a wide variety of extra curricular events that you may choose to par-

take of. The conference experience is basically what "you" make out of it. The attendees have the opportunity to meet people and network with these people, many of the speakers that have presented at our own HEHA Annual Education Conference were found and recommended by persons who have attended the NEHA AEC.

For more information about the AEC and the experience that goes along with it talk to anyone that has attended the conferences, it is a wonderful experience that hopefully someday all staff at one time or another will be able to attend. Some of those who have attended include John Nakashima, Dennis Loo, Peter Oshiro, Newton Inouye, Ricky Oyama, Lori Nagatoshi, Angel Ramos, Lance Wong, Lynn Alborano, Lynn Nakasone, James Toma, Reiko Otsuka, Shawn Haruno, and more.

FYI Honolulu has been listed as a possible site for the 2010 NEHA AEC along with Albuquerque, New Mexico and Salt Lake City, Utah. If the conference were to be held in Hawaii, it would be a great opportunity for all Environmental Health personnel in the State.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me at:
john.nakashima@doh.hawaii.gov.

2007 HEHA Membership

JERRY HARUNO
AARON UENO
CLYDE TAKEKUMA
DALE NAGATA
GERALD TAKAMURA
JOHN NAKASHIMA
HERBERT MATSUBAYASHI
RICHARD PANTAGES
LANCE WONG
REUBEN BILAN
ERIC HONDA
NEWTON INOUE
PATTI KITKOWSKI
ED MIYABARA
CRAIG NISHIHARA
ANGEL RAMOS
DONALD TAKETA
WALTER TAMAO
JAMES TOMA
REIKO OTSUKA
LYNN NAKASONE

PINGJUN YANG
BEN KOBATA
CURTIS TAKAI
LARRY SHIRO
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C.W.B....continued

potential problems and for detecting sewage discharges. Sampling is coordinated under the EPA Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act of 2000 which works to measure and inform the public of recreational water quality. The Clean Water Branch in Hawaii uses a watershed-based environmental management approach utilizing permit issuance, monitoring, enforcement, sponsorship of polluted runoff control projects and education.

During the forty-two days of rain on Kauai in the Spring of 2006, monitoring data was used to warn users of the hazards of storm runoff and to guide people to the beach areas least affected by storm water runoff. The Clean Water Branch is continually working to improve sampling methods, data quality and communication with the public.

