

Hawaii Environmental Health Association

HEHA HERALD

MARCH 2006



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 2005 Hawaii Environmental Health Association Annual Educational Conference proved to be one of the best conferences thus far. Evaluations by

the conference attendees were very positive with excellent comments on the speakers and topics.

One of the highlight speakers was Captain Richard Collins from the Centers of Disease Control Office of Terrorism Preparedness and Disaster Response. Captain Collins gave three presentations; Infectious Disease on Cruise Ships, Federal Response to Natural Disasters, and the National Environmental Health Association. Captain Collins responded to Hurricane Katrina and based his Natural Disaster Response presentation on actual events of Hurricane Katrina, which I believe grasped the attention of everyone.

David Ludwig, who is the Environmental Health Manager of the Maricopa County Environmental Services Division, presented Maricopa County's West Nile Program. Learning the magnitude of Maricopa's West Nile Program, regarding the number of surveillance and sampling sites, population density, and overall size, will positively impact the Vector Control Branch. "Lucky we live Hawaii."

Another presentation that I got a lot of positive comments and one that I personally found very interesting was the Hawaii Invasive Species Program by Mindy Wilkinson. I did not realize that many of the species which I grew up with and experienced my whole life is not indigenous to Hawaii.

The closing of the 2005 AEC was a relief, but much more a sense of accomplishment for all of those who worked hard and sacrificed their time and effort in planning such an event. In the pursuit of HEHA's mission, to provide educational opportunities for the environmental health professional, the work is never ending. We have booked the Manoa Grand Ballroom for the 2006 AEC on December 7th and 8th and have started the planning process all over again.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to HEHA's Governing Council and to the Environmental Health Services Division for their dedication and continued support of HEHA.

May your new year be filled with joy, peace, and good health.

Sincerely,
Eric Honda

hehaonline.com

Coming soon....hehaonline.com! Hopefully within the year, environmental health professionals will be able to access information to upcoming workshops, seminars, and the annual educational conference. Also included will be past and present HEHA newsletters, technology reports, and articles related to environmental health. Stay tuned!

GOT NOISE?

By James Toma

In the context of protecting the public health and welfare, noise implies adverse effects on people and the environment. Noise causes hearing loss, interferes with human activities at home, work, in schools, and is in various ways injurious to people's health and well-being. Although hearing loss is the most clearly measurable health hazard, noise is also linked to other psychological problems.

Noise annoys, awakens, angers and frustrates people. It disrupts communication and individual thoughts, and affects performance capabilities, such as speech communication. Noise is one of the biological stresses associated with everyday life.

The numerous effects of noise combine to detract from the quality of people's lives and the environment.

The Noise Program was started in 1972. The program consists of a supervisor and four inspectors for the entire State of Hawaii. Program duties include handling noise complaints, and monitoring noise from construction, industrial, agriculture and stationary sources. The program also works with other agencies such as the Honolulu Police Department, the Department of Education and the Liquor Commission. The inspectors also conduct outreach programs to educate the general public by giving presentations to neighborhood boards and community associations. For more information contact the Department of Health NRIAQ Branch at 808-586-4700.



Maui District Health Laboratory Capabilities

by Evelyn Cabalo

- Water testing –tests pre-selected beaches for ocean coliforms, Enterococci faecalis and Clostridium perfringens. Potable water not tested by the county such as hotels, Haleakala Visitor Center, Molokai Ranch and the like are tested specifically for presence/absence of E. Coli. In addition, heterotrophic plate counts are done on surface water systems submitted for potable testing.
- Clinical testing on probable food poisoning for Staph aureus, Bacillus cereus and Clostridium perfringens can be done with toxin studies sent to the State Lab Division. Clinical stool samples can be tested for Salmonella and Shigella.
- The lab is certified to accept specimens for Gonorrhea testing and to report preliminary results to submitting agencies.
- Dengue and West Nile assays have been run routinely by a modified Elisa double antibody system
- The lab runs yearly Q.C. unknown testing for water purveyors on Turbidity and Chlorine detection. It is a measurement of accuracy and precision utilizing their instrumentation.
- Shipment of infectious and diagnostic specimens referred to the State Lab Division by DOH programs are handled by the lab. All staff is certified for 602/650 shipping following IATA guidelines.
- Infectious material from state agencies are accepted by the lab for disinfection by autoclaving.

Latest News from Kauai.....

By Lisa Otoman-Murayama

Registered Sanitarian, Ricky Oyama attended the NEHA conference in Rhode Island in June 2005. The NEHA conference exposed more awareness on the different aspects of Environmental Health. Some of the sessions that were of interest were, the Art & Science of Inspection; Potentially Hazardous Food: The Evolving Definition of Temperature Control for Safety which offered a lot of interesting and informative concepts which provided valuable, current information and a better understanding of the latest trends.

On a sad note, the staff has lost a friend and co-worker, June E. Sugioka on September 07, 2005. June will be remembered as a great chef for couple of her famous dishes such as Chicken Hekka and Nishime. She was also very fond of any four-legged canines, especially her 4 beloved dogs. She also will be remembered for her most generous and giving personality to help others especially her friends and coworkers.

As of September 12, 2005 we welcomed our new District Health Officer, Dr. Dileep G. Bal. Dr. Bal has public health degrees from Harvard and Columbia Universities. He recently retired after twenty five years from the state Department of Health of California.

News From the Big Island...



The Big Island Sanitation Branch would like to welcome its newest sanitarian Kyla Takai. Kyla joined the BI Sanitation Branch September 1, 2005 and is currently working in the West Hawaii District. Kyla is a recent graduate of the University of Hawaii at Hilo with a BA in Biology. Her hobbies include reading, drawing, and puzzles. Welcome Kyla!

★ **NEHA AEC** ★
SAN ANTONIO
TEXAS ★
★ **June 25-28, 2006** ★

For more information: www.neha.org or see your local HEHA representative.



HEHA 2006 GOVERNING COUNCIL

Elections for the Hawaii Environmental Health Association's Governing Council took place during the 2005 HEHA General Assembly Meeting. The General Assembly Meeting was held on December 1, 2005 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Tapa Ballroom. HEHA Officers serve a two year term and must be a member of the National Environmental Health Association while Directors serve a one year term and must be a HEHA member. Currently, there is no military representative on the governing council and the position will remain vacant until a representative is found. At this time I would like to introduce the 2006 HEHA Governing Council.



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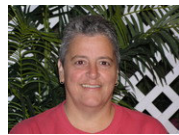
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OYSTERS ANYONE?

By Lori Nagatoshi

Hello Everyone! Eric Honda asked me to write a shellfish-related article since he knew I did something with shellfish, but did not really understand exactly what I did. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to explain the shellfish program.

Do you know why we have a shellfish program? Every state is required to have a shellfish program since every year, millions of Americans consume raw, molluscan shellfish, especially clams and oysters. However, for some individuals eating raw or undercooked oysters or clams can cause serious illness from *Vibrio vulnificus*. Between 1989 and 1996, the Center of Disease Control (CDC) reported 149 serious illnesses resulting in 75 deaths from *V. vulnificus* infections.

What is *V. vulnificus*? *V. vulnificus* is a bacterium that can cause serious illness or even death in some people, who eat raw oysters or clams. *V. vulnificus* is naturally occurring in coastal waters. *V. vulnificus* is NOT a result of pollution, and can be found in waters approved for oyster and clam harvesting. *V. vulnificus* does NOT change the appearance, taste, or odor of oysters or clams. If the clams and oysters are thoroughly cooked

the *V. vulnificus* bacteria are destroyed and there is no risk of infection.

Currently, I am the Shellfish Standardization Officer for the State of Hawaii. I inspect four firms under the shellfish program. Why do I inspect only these four firms and not all of the establishments that wholesale shellfish? The answer is that these four firms introduce shellfish into interstate commerce, which means that they sell shellfish to the cruise ships, military commissaries, or back to the mainland. These firms can be found in the current listing of the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shipper's List (ICSSL). The list may be viewed at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/%7cear/shellfis.html>.

During the inspections, I look over the shellfish records, which includes the HACCP plans, storage temperature logs, receiving/distributing logs, sanitation records, and ensuring that most of these records have been checked within a week of their action. In other words, I review tons of paperwork, which may take a few hours. The last part of my inspection is the plant inspection, which includes the basic sanitation. The most common violation that I see is when firms store boxes of shellfish directly on or near other products, which is a potential for cross-contamination.

Hopefully, I expanded your shellfish knowledge and if anyone has any questions, no shame – please ask