



# Environmental Health Services

● *Healthy Environments = Healthy People* ●

**DEHS Director Meeting: 01/10/2013**

**Next quarterly meeting is scheduled for  
Thursday April 4th, 2013 at 1:00 pm EST**

**Aberdeen:** Not on Call

**Alaska:** Keith Cook

**Albuquerque:** Brian Hroch, Bob Bates

**Bemidji:** Diana Kuklinski, Casey Crump,  
Tim Duffy

**Billings:** Joe Amiotte

**California:** Gordon Tsatoke

**Environmental Health Support Center:** Not on call

**Rockville:** Kelly Taylor, John Smart, Susan McCracken, Nancy Bill, Darren Buchanan, Jessica Schwarz

**Nashville:** Kit Grosch

**Navajo:** Wayne Hall

**Oklahoma:** David Hogner

**Phoenix:** Kenny Hicks

**Portland:** Celeste Davis

**Tucson:** Don Williams

## 1. DEHS National Performance Measures: Kelly

- a. Kelly sent out a reminder that performance measures need to be reported on. The two measures are environmental surveillance and injury prevention interventions for seatbelt use.
  - i. Five areas have already reported on their environmental surveillance measure. As a reminder you do not need to report a new incident rate, just the list of interventions you performed in 2012. Send your reports to Kelly.
  - ii. Two areas have reported on the injury prevention interventions. For TIPCAP sites with interventions to increase seatbelt use, please report to Nancy.
  - iii. The reports should be brief (1-3 bullet items). For the environmental surveillance measures please contact Kelly, for injury prevention please contact Nancy first if you have questions.

## 2. Workforce Development Workgroup: Susan

- a. The Core Team developed clear expectations for the new workgroup. Rob Morones is the leader of the new team that will be working on the workforce development group. Thank you to all of the areas who have agreed to support staff to participate in this workgroup.
- b. Two people have left the Core Team, Leisa Cook (went to USDA) and Ron Zabrocki (retired). Two new recruits to fill the spots are Bill Justice and Celeste Davis. Susan will be retiring from the team February 28<sup>th</sup> and will be replaced by John Smart.

## 3. Division of Environmental Health Services National Meeting Update: John

- a. Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey to provide feedback about the meeting. From those responses a draft agenda was formed. The survey responses and draft agenda were emailed to the directors.

- b. The majority indicated that they wanted the meeting to be co-located with the sanitation facilities construction (SFC) meeting, which will be March 5-7 in Albuquerque, NM. Environmental Health Support Center will be heading up the meeting logistics and are working on meeting rooms and hotels. No details are available yet.
- c. There will be a need to formulate some joint topics for DEHS and SFC. If you have ideas for topics please send them. Celeste mentioned the National Tribal Water Center out of ANTHC could probably present. If you would like to volunteer to help with the general agenda and the joint agenda please let John know. It would be good to have 1-2 field representatives helping with the agenda.
- d. Directors and protégés are invited to attend, though we realize traveling additional personnel is difficult at this time. The injury prevention and institutional environmental health meetings will be held separately so those individuals do not need to attend this meeting.

#### **4. Commissioned Officer Student Training Extern Program (COSTEP) Selections: John**

- a. We went over to the Division of Commissioned Corps. Personnel and Recruitment (DCCPR) to look at the applications this week. Each area who wanted COSTEPs was sent a packet of applicants to interview. If you did not receive a packet or need assistance let us know.
- b. There are “next steps” that need to occur. Students must be interviewed as soon as possible. If you would like to select the student you need to let them know, and initiate the 1662 process as soon as possible.
- c. Kenny shared an interview worksheet and a “welcome letter” that others might find useful. He will give it to John to forward to everyone for use.
- d. Areas need to closely monitor the process, as there have been issues with cutting orders the past three years. If you don’t see any movement in the process by March please let Kelly know.

#### **5. Web Environmental Health Reporting System (WebEHRS): Darren**

- a. CDP is finishing up corrections to reports from the original contract.
- b. The items that were approved from the change control board are in the process of being changed. There were about 20 changes approved. Some highlights include resetting the “timeout” timer to 30 minutes.
- c. The change control board will be meeting again on January 11<sup>th</sup> on items collected from feedback inputted to the system. One item on the list is to provide quick responses to individuals providing input so that they know something is being done with their request, and if appropriate, when the changes are made. Another major one is changing the survey web interface to make it look more like a survey sheet from the mobile version.
- d. Kenny asked if the feedback used in the survey monkey survey were incorporated into feedback given to the change control board. Susan said some of the issues had already been submitted to the board, but the main function of the survey was to rate CDP on their contract. If you have a change you want to happen in the system the main mechanism is to use the feedback feature in WebEHRS. This allows the requests to be tracked and managed.
- e. Dave Hogner asked how mobile is working out for people. Celeste said her staff uses it and if he has questions she’d put him in touch with people who are using it. Casey said they use mobile and staff like it. He also said the oracle interface is getting better and it is easier to get data out of the system.

- f. Mobile can be installed on your desktop to input surveys. The surveys work much better than the web version. If you would like to get mobile on your computer please let CDP (customersupport@cdpehs.com) know so they can help get you scheduled for install.

## **6. Injury Prevention (IP) Updates: Nancy**

- a. Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program (TIPCAP) annual reports were due November 30<sup>th</sup>. There were lots of questions about budget and carry-over. Nancy is working with the sites on those issues.
- b. The annual TIPCAP workshop will be in Denver April 12-13, prior to the annual lifesavers meeting. People who attend the TIPCAP workshop should plan on attending the lifesavers meeting immediately following the workshop.
- c. There is an adobe connect training session for TIPCAP coordinators on data collection. The training will be held on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:00 pm EST. They will attempt to record it so that it will be available for use later. If you would like to join the training let Nancy know so that she can send you information.
- d. Nancy has been working with Holly Billie on a curriculum for the epidemiology core course for the past 15 months. They are hoping to pilot the course in late May/early June of this year.
- e. Kenney asked if the surveillance course would be offered online, Nancy said it is still in the works.
- f. Joe asked when the next round of TIPCAP grants would start. Nancy said the new announcement is projected for 2015. She is working on the process now.

## **7. Institutional Environmental Health (IEH): Brian (for Dave)**

- a. The basic course for safety officers will be occurring in Phoenix the week of January 14<sup>th</sup>. The cap was 40 students, there are 36 people registered. There may be another one held later in the year based on the interest.
- b. The IEH protocol workgroup has a call scheduled for January 28th. They have identified protocols they would like to have developed, and are working with a contractor to identify tools that already exist and making them relevant for Indian Health Service healthcare facilities. The workgroup consists of Matthew Ellis, Michael Box, Dave McMahon, Brian Hroch and Keith Cook.

## **8. Introduction to Yammer: Jessica**

- a. There is a one-pager available. Yammer is a sharing network that is HHS wide. It is available to anyone HHS wide. It is free and we started a DEHS group. You can use the tool to post files, poll a group, and many other things. It is a tool you may find useful and should give it a try. Sign up by going to [www.yammer.com/hhs.gov](http://www.yammer.com/hhs.gov).
- b. Since we don't have access to the portal anymore we are using this for some collaboration, especially the new workforce development group so that they have a collaboration space.
- c. There is a community called HHS Yammer 101 to teach you how to use it, and some very useful 5 minute videos.
- d. Keith asked specifically about tribal health corporation use. There is a mechanism to create external networks for folks outside of HHS. If you would like more information let Jessica know. There is also an IHS Yammer representation here at headquarters if you need more information.

## 9. EHS of the Year: Jessica

- a. Nominations are due January 25<sup>th</sup>. You should have received an email with the files. They are also available on the DEHS website, including write-ups from past years in case you need examples or are missing the scoring criteria.

## 10. Annual Report: Jessica

- a. The call for data went out. Staffing numbers are due Friday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. If you need assistance please let Jessica know. Thank you so much for compiling this information.
- b. The call for projects also went out and they are due back March 8<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Please include photos with your projects and encourage your staff to submit as many photos of field work as possible. They can be sent directly to Jessica, and will be included in the photo contest submissions as long as they are submitted before February 15<sup>th</sup>.

## 11. Final Announcements: Kelly

- a. This is Susan's last DEHS director call before she retires. Be sure to send your well wishes to her before she retires March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 12. Area Reports:

### a. AB: Not on Call

### b. AK: Keith

- i. The grant used for the Healthy Homes Initiative has been very successful. They did baseline studies and identified risks in homes to include VOCs, particulates and carbon monoxide. They have installed more efficient wood burning stoves and ventilation and providing education. The post sampling has shown improvements but most importantly they have seen improvements in children's health.
- ii. There is a vacancy at ANMC for a safety manager, Valerie Herrera is transferring to Sitka to work for SEARHC as the safety manager, and Chris Chestnut started at TCC as their safety manager.

### c. AQ: Brian Hroch

- i. Anthony Candelaria retired after 28 years of service. Molly Madson was hired into the Santa Fe Service Unit. There are vacancies for a term position in Albuquerque, and the selectee for Ignacio fell through so it will be re-advertised soon. Mescalero should have a joint safety and environmental health position advertised, and the DEHS director position should be advertised soon.
- ii. IEH has been doing mock surveys to get establishments ready for joint commission surveys.
- iii. The online food handlers training was a major accomplishment this year. They are looking to expand that format to provide other training and other services.
- iv. They will be using WebEHRs to develop a risk control plan for food establishments, and help them be more proactive when fixing sanitary programs. Darren asked that they keep track of what their approach is so that best practices can be shared with the other areas.
- v. The Taos well project has been very successful in the past year in addressing a serious health and safety issue of abandoned wells.

- d. **BE: Diana Kuklinski**
  - i. The transition to WebEHRS and getting staff trained and using tablet PC's has been a major accomplishment this year. Casey and Tim have helped tremendously in getting staff trained and pushing this forward.
  - ii. There are four vacancies coming up shortly. Two field: Bemidji and Rhinelander, and two management: district sanitarian in Bemidji and a senior staff in Bemidji. They have refused to include REHS as a selective factor until there is legislation backing it, which is why there is a push to include that verbiage in Chapter 11. Diana's position should be advertised soon if they can get it through human resources, as she will be retiring May 1<sup>st</sup>.
  
- e. **BI: Joe Amiotte**
  - i. Joe started last week. There is a lot of good work happening in the area but he's still getting oriented.
  - ii. Jodee Dennison will be retiring at the end of February. There are a few positions open that are advertised.
  
- f. **CA: Gordon Tsatoke**
  - i. They have established two new strategic vision items, 1) getting more community input into the program and 2) food safety partnerships.
  - ii. They have established many new technical and administrative guidelines and policies and procedures. They are hoping to finalize the set of guidelines and policies in the upcoming year.
  - iii. They hired a new entry level person at the Ukiah duty station. They do not anticipate any other staff changes.
  
- g. **NS: Kit Grosch**
  - i. Two service units were added to the area in the past year, Mashpee Wampanoag and Lockport. They have been reviewing blueprints for two new dental clinics one at Micmac and one at Mashpee. There haven't been any new hires and it looks like they will not be able to due to budget.
  - ii. The OEHE Director is leaving to be the Deputy Director at DCCPR.
  - iii. For the year, each of the clinics have maintained their accreditation for the year and this was a major accomplishment.
  
- h. **NV : Wayne Hall**
  - i. There has been lots of activity with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. There have been some great successes in the past year addressing these challenges.
  - ii. Director of DEHS for Navajo was advertised and they hope to fill it soon. There will also be an advertisement for the Division of Occupational Health and Safety Management (DOHSM) Director. Jeff Conner was hired as the Navajo Area Institutional Environmental Health officer for DOHSM.
  
- i. **OK: David Hogner**
  - i. Field staff have been able to persevere through staffing shortage and have been pulling double-duty. Many thanks for their hard work and dedication.
  - ii. The OEHE Director position just recently was advertised. Shawnee Service Unit was able to hire a new staff person due to a program retroceding to the area. Kayla Davis was hired for the position just a few weeks ago.

**j. PH: Kenny Hicks**

- i. There was lots of work in relation to Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. There was a pilot project in partnership with CDC to form a comprehensive response and intervention at San Carlos. They were able to pilot a pre-market dog collar with an effective dose of 8 months. The project applied pesticide at 600 homes, collared 1000 dogs and spayed or neutered 200 dogs. After the study 99% of the dogs in the study population were shown to be tick free. They're working now on figuring out how to sustain and replicate the project in other locations.
- ii. Two tribes passed primary occupant restraint laws. Preliminary results show a 3.5 times better usage rate for seatbelts.
- iii. OEHE staff at the area have been working on leadership development activities to include emotional intelligence training, coaching, workshops, and management is undergoing 360 reviews.
- iv. Three staff converted from civil service to Commissioned Corps. Isaac Amadu was hired at Parker, and Jose Velascosoltero reports to San Carlos on January 14<sup>th</sup>.
- v. Panels were received for field positions. Selections should be made soon.

**k. PO: Celeste Davis**

- i. Over the past two years they were able to reduce occupational health and safety incidents 57%. Staff conducted 1000 inspections, They will start to use WebEHRS to track risk factors and quantify the impact of their actions.
- ii. Two interagency agreements with EPA have many achievements including increasing tribal compliance for underground storage tanks from 60% to 80%, as well as many strides in integrated pest management and the children's environment among other initiatives.
- iii. One of the staff converted from civil service to Commissioned Corps. They lost a Jr. staff member to a move, and they need to re-hire the interagency agreement staff. The vacancy announcement for these positions closes Friday.

**l. TU: Don Williams**

- i. Keeping the program going with many personnel changes and vacancies has been a major accomplishment this year. Also Three staff were promoted in 2012.
- ii. Julie Frazier has been hired as the technician in Sells.
- iii. The position in Casa Grande closed on the 24<sup>th</sup>. They hope to place someone soon.
- iv. Introduction to Injury Prevention I course will be held February 19-22.
- v. Don continues work on his Injury Prevention Fellowship project.

**m. EHSC: Not on call**

**Call ended at 2:32PM EST  
END OF NOTES**