

**INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST OF 2013**

MARTHA MAYNES, REHS



INTRODUCTION

Mrs. Maynes began her career with Indian Health Service in the Bemidji Area, Rhinelander District Office, in 2011 after serving and working for the US Army. Upon arriving in the Bemidji Area she rapidly became an exceptional environmental health specialist who has voluntarily taken on the responsibility of mentoring junior staff. She also has been instrumental in ensuring the continuation of services for several tribes not assigned to her during staff vacancies. Most recently she played a crucial role in the development and orientation of a new Minnesota District Environmental Health Officer and a Service Unit Environmental Health Specialist for the Rhinelander District. She worked with new staff to assist them in understanding environmental health procedures and policies. She took the initiative to schedule surveys, handle ongoing environmental health issues, and plan meetings to orient the new staff.

SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mrs. Maynes' dedication, motivation, and professionalism have substantially elevated the development, growth, and quality of the environmental health program in the Bemidji Area as a whole. In addition to her usual workload of providing field environmental health services to three tribal communities in Wisconsin, she has risen to assume a lead role in key tribal initiatives including sustainable solid waste management and resilience within tribal communities. This work included the documentation of over 80 open and closed dump sites into the Sanitation Tracking and Reporting System (STARS). She has made a significant contribution to our program's efforts to work with Tribal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal EPA, and State programs to end open dumping on reservations. This was accomplished by monitoring and closing dump sites, strengthening tribal laws and ordinances, cleaning up sites, and developing sustainable solid waste management programs. She has played a key role in identifying funding opportunities and resources to expand solid waste programs to include the realization of a comprehensive environmental sustainable solid waste program.

Mrs. Maynes worked with three tribes to identify community housing issues and develop resolutions for those issues. Her assistance was requested to document living conditions at the Bad River Tribal Elderly Living Apartment Complex. The documentation she provided and partnership with multiple agencies resulted in a \$200,000 renovation of the Bad River Tribal Elderly Living Apartment Complex. This project was scheduled for completion in December 2013 with residents returning to their homes in January 2014. This renovation improved the safety, security, and living conditions for 15 elderly residents. In addition to the apartment complex, fifteen private homes were assessed on the Bad River Reservation resulting in over \$138,000 in remodeling efforts completed in 2013. Her participation was requested by the tribe in a community development planning project for 80 homes. This included attending meetings, providing site development information, sustainable housing ideas, community sustainability concepts, input on utility requirements, and community design concepts.

Mrs. Maynes provided 22 trainings to four tribes including one tribe in Minnesota to assist the new Minnesota District Environmental Health Specialist. The trainings were attended by 334 tribal staff and the topics included Serv-Safe, safe food handling, temporary venue safe food handling, Head Start health and safety, and housekeeper health and safety. In addition to the above, she completed 100% of the facility surveys determined by the Bemidji Area to be priority facilities.

She worked with facilities to establish safety policies, employee health exclusion policies, and worked with several programs to ensure staff training was completed.

Mrs. Maynes worked with two tribes to develop environmental sustainability projects that not only reduced the tribe's impact on the environment, but also provided an opportunity to teach children about the sustainable environment and healthy active lifestyles by providing community gardens and natural walking paths. These projects have the potential to reach the entire tribal membership from young to the old. With her assistance the project was completed ahead of schedule and the project was able to obtain additional support and funding from the tribe. The total funding for this project exceeded \$25,000.

Another sustainability project she was actively involved in was the expansion of the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Tribal Farm. The farm was a successful project that provided naturally grown foods (meat and vegetables) to tribal members and programs that fed tribal communities (commodities and elder programs). She assisted them in developing a project to expand the existing facilities by adding a commercial cooking facility to begin processing and preparing their own products. The proposal also included the development of a picking and processing station to increase the efficiency and quality of produce when stored. This has allowed the farm to offer additional services and products to a greater number of tribal community members. The project was funded by a partnership between the LCO Tribe, University of Wisconsin, USDA, Farm Service Administration, and others. The total funding received for the project exceeded \$20,000. In addition to support of this project, she was able to assist the tribe in writing and receiving a \$10,000 special project award from the Bemidji Area.

Mrs. Maynes began working with child care centers to decrease the amount and types of chemicals that are used in the facilities. This included smart purchasing and elimination or exchange of hazardous chemicals with safe alternatives. The purpose of this process was to eliminate any chemicals that contained endocrine disruptors that have been linked to developmental issues in day care and Head Start aged children. These centers include over 40 staff and provide services to over 150 children aged 6 months to head start age. With her help, all three Head Start and day care facilities have eliminated household pest control products. One facility replaced floors requiring constant waxing and cleaning with one that requires no wax, eliminating a product identified as being a high hazard. One facility reduced the amount of hazardous chemicals used to one product with no endocrine disruptors and all other cleaning products are now environmentally friendly, and safer for use in the child care centers.

PROFESSIONALISM

Mrs. Maynes has obtained the following credentials: REHS (NEHA), Certified Playground Safety Inspector, HAZWOPER Certification, and Aquatic Facility Operator. She has a Master's of Science in Occupational Health and Safety and a Bachelor's in Natural Science.

INNOVATION

Mrs. Maynes' understanding and technical assistance on the use of the WebEHRS database has served as an outstanding resource for Bemidji Area. She has utilized the tool to create new tracking methods and developed ways the database can be used in the field. She was also instrumental in suggesting improvements to the program to track inspections and activities. This provided staff in the Bemidji Area and at the national level the ability to reduce the time spent writing reports, and aided the Bemidji Area in tracking completion of surveys, number of deficiencies, trainings provided, number trained, and percentage of time spent on activities. Her input on the use of WebEHRS for tracking activities has increased the ability of the Area to focus limited resources and staff time on areas identified as having a greater impact on environmental health and safety.

SUMMARY

Mrs. Maynes has shown outstanding leadership and accomplishments in providing outstanding environmental health services to the tribes within the Bemidji Area Indian Health Service. She accomplished this by assisting the program in sustaining a high level of service during staff vacancies, partnering with tribes and multiple programs to implement environmental sustainability initiatives, by resolving complex environmental health and safety issues, increasing the benefit of tools provided by the national program services, and achieving the mission of the Division of Environmental Health Services. Based upon the above, Mrs. Martha Maynes is nominated for Environmental Health Specialist of the Year.