

KEHA Spring/Summer Newsletter



SUMMER 2019

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June 2019



Message from the President

As the days and weeks turn into months and years, everything is constantly evolving. Kansas Environmental Health Association (KEHA) is no exception. As your incoming president, I'm not out to change the world, but I would like to see KEHA continue to be an industry leader - in providing training and other educational opportunities, not only to our membership, but others as well. The Soil Profile Training in Butler County is a prime example of how the KEHA Board stepped up and helped fulfill this mission. We provided scholarships to new sanitarians to help them begin their educational journey into our industry.

KEHA also awarded two scholarships to students (see exert later in this issue). One was for academic success and future potential in the environmental field and the other was for a family member of active KEHA members. If you know of a worthy student looking at environmental issues as a career, be sure to have them apply for next year's scholarship offerings. And as an active KEHA member, maybe you have a family member in need of a little extra for college. The KEHA organization continues to strive to help our students. As a member, consider donating to this worthy cause.

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President's Message Cont'd

I would love to introduce you to our 2019 KEHA leadership.

Newly elected for this year, officers are:

Robert Torres – President, Pratt County

Tanner Langer – First Vice President, Cowley County

Melissa Wilson—Second Vice President, FDA

Mark Bradshaw – Secretary, Wichita, retired

Beth Rowlands—Treasurer, Lawrence, retired

Shawn Esterl – Past President, Saline County

Perry Piper – Member at Large, Riley County

Randy Barten – Special Section Chair, Dickinson County

Allison Blodig – Infiltrator, Vendor Representative

Travis Daneke – KDHE

Nancy Larson – K-State, Industry Education

Other members include:

Jennifer Millbern – Scholarship Selection Chair – Lyon County

Keena Privat – Silent Auction Chair – Lyon County

Openings available for Historian Committee Chair, Public Relation Committee Chair, or simply join a committee to help the chair.

In order for KEHA to continue to be at the forefront of education and training, we as an organization continue to seek an expanded membership and a passionate board to lead. Any organization loses members due to age or other reasons, and these members need to be replaced. If you have a passion for our industry and would like to help lead, as we encounter the future, don't be shy, don't wait to be asked. Instead ask us how you can be part of the team. Don't feel overwhelmed. Committee members only focus on those tasks assigned to them. Leadership opportunities can always come later as you become comfortable in our industry. FMI, call or email me at 620-672-4127 or rtorres@prattcounty.org.

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President's Message Cont'd

As current members of KEHA, you can help – is your local sanitarian, health department or installer a member? If not, ask them to join. Membership is only \$20 a year. More members will help us keep membership costs down and saves money in training.

There are numerous training opportunities upcoming. (See below in the newsletter.) Building on the success of last year's training with the Soil Workshop and ATU Training in Pratt and the Fall Conference in Salina we want to continue to promote educational training opportunities.

The KEHA Board is working hard on putting together our annual Fall Conference. Last year's Fall Conference in Salina was very well attended and appreciated. Watch your email for more details as this year's Fall Conference develops. Mark your calendars now for September 24, 25, 26, 2019 and plan on being in Hutchinson. The conference is going to be held at the Atrium Hotel. When you register, don't forget to bring a friend. Our developing agenda has some very powerful training. Any By-Law changes that need addressing will be discussed at the conference- so plan on attending.

A big thank-you goes out to Shawn Esterl, last year's KEHA President, as he was mainly responsible for the success of the 2018 Fall Conference. Thanks Shawn, you did a GREAT job last year. I only hope I can continue to keep KEHA in its leadership role for our current and future membership.

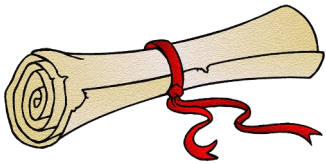
Robert Torres

2019 KEHA President

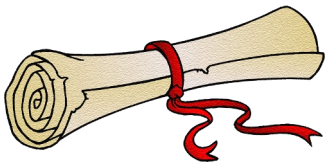
2019 Scholarship Winners

ALL OF THE
SCHOLARSHIPS ARE \$500.
THE FUNDS ARE GENERATED
BY THE FALL SILENT
AUCTION AND SUPPORTED
BY ALL THOSE WHO
DONATE ITEMS TO AUCTION
OFF.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL
OF YOU WHO HAVE HELPED
WITH THIS THROUGH THE
YEARS!



Gabe Barten from Chapman, Kansas will be awarded one of two Bill Spaniol Memorial Scholarships from the Kansas Environmental Health Association. Gabe is going to the University of St Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas starting this fall.



Regan Rhodes from Mullinville, Kansas has been awarded the second Bill Spaniol Memorial Scholarship from the Kansas Environmental Health Association. The scholarship will assist with her attendance to Wesleyan University in Salina, Kansas this upcoming school year.

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Coliform Bacteria

Background/Overview

Biological organisms are among the oldest health threats to drinking water quality and the agents currently responsible for most waterborne diseases. They are the most common contamination incident water operators will encounter. Organisms known to cause disease include bacteria, protozoa, and viruses; some algae and helminths (worms) may also be capable of producing disease. These disease-causing organisms thrive in the intestines of warm-blooded animals. They are easily transmitted to drinking water if the feces of an animal contaminates a water supply for which there is not suitable disinfection. Potential sources of contamination include sewers, septic systems, feedlots, and animal yards.

Role of coliforms in detecting contamination

Unfortunately, specific disease-producing (pathogenic) organisms present in water are not easily identified. It would be very difficult, expensive, and time consuming to monitor for them. For this reason, it is necessary to select an easily measured “indicator organism,” whose presence indicates that pathogenic organisms may be present. A group of closely related bacteria, the total coliform, has been selected as an indicator of harmful organisms in drinking water.

Sources of coliform bacteria

Total coliform (TC) bacteria are common in the environment (such as in soil) and the intestines of animals and are generally not harmful. Fecal coliform (FC) and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria are found in greater quantities than total coliform in animal fecal matter. If FC or *E. coli* is detected along with TC in drinking water, there is strong evidence that sewage is present; therefore, a greater potential for pathogenic organisms exists.

Response to coliform detection

The MDH monitors drinking water for public water supplies (PWSs) on a routine basis. If FC, or *E. coli* is detected in the distribution system of a PWS, the system must be disinfected. In most cases this includes emergency chlorination, which can last for two to five days. At the same time a system is being disinfected, customers of the PWS are ordered to vigorously boil their drinking and cooking water (Boil Order) for one minute before using it. Once the system has been disinfected and flushed, the MDH tests the water again for coliform bacteria. If none are detected, the Boil Order is lifted.

If only TC is detected (without the presence of fecal coliform or *E. coli*), the source is most likely from contamination from the environment, introduced during construction or while repairs to plumbing or a water main were underway. The system will identify the source of the contamination, correct the problem, and thoroughly disinfect its system. The public will also be notified of the situation; however, unless unusual circumstances exist to cause particular concern about the safety of the water, a Boil Order will not be issued.

Exceptions

Total coliforms are not a perfect indicator of the actual or potential presence of harmful organisms. Some disease-producing organisms, especially protozoa such as *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*, are able to withstand treatment which kill the total coliform. These two protozoa are often found in surface waters (the principle carriers of these organisms) contaminated by human sewage or wildlife. However, for the majority of PWSs this is not a significant threat since most PWSs obtain their water from wells rather than surface-water sources such as rivers and lakes. For those PWSs that use surface water, a combination of coagulation, filtration, and disinfection has been successful and is recommended to reduce the risk of *Giardia* or *Cryptosporidium* contamination.

Health effects

Symptoms of waterborne diseases may include gastrointestinal illnesses such as severe diarrhea, nausea, and possibly jaundice as well as associated headaches and fatigue. It is important to note, however, that these symptoms are not associated only with disease-causing organisms in drinking water. They may also be caused by a number of other factors. In addition, not all people will be affected to the same degree; young children and the elderly are usually more susceptible.

Marcie Bata, Director of Environmental Health

Central Valley Health District

Jamestown, ND

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Radon and Testing in the Home

Radon is a naturally occurring gas given off by the breakdown of uranium in the soil.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Only smoking causes more deaths from lung cancer.

Testing in the home is the only way to know if radon levels are elevated, however there are different types of testing available.

Active and passive radon tests can come in both short term (2-90 days) and long term (90+ days). When testing for the first time short term test are usually done. If the results from the first test come back elevated a short term or long term retest is done.

Long term test will give a more accurate annual radon level average.

Tests are available through your local public health unit, hardware stores or through your local extension office. Active tests are usually more expensive, like the continuous monitors which are used in some real estate transactions.

When taking a short term test it is important to use the test as specified. In general instructions ask the following

- Close windows and doors for at least 12 hours prior to starting a test

- Don't test during high winds or severe storms

- Record pertinent information –date and start time of test

- Place device in a location it will not be disturbed (away from exterior wall off the floor etc)

- Record date and stop time reseal package and send immediately to designated location for analysis.

Contact your local public health unit about availability of radon test kits.

Marcie Bata

Director of Environmental Health

Central Valley Health District

Jamestown, ND



Kansas | 2019 Environmental Conference

August 13	August 14	August 15
Pre-conference Workshops Pre-conference workshops held: Clean Air Act Advisory Group (CAAAG), Basic Hazardous Waste Training, Advanced Hazardous Waste Training, Swine Certification Live, Brownfields, and KDHE Environmental Services Contractors Meeting.	Conference Kick-off Special Opening Plenary speakers including Lee Norman, M.D., Secretary; KDHE, Leo Henning, Division of Environment Director; KDHE, the City of Manhattan, and Dr. Kenneth Burton, Coordinator; National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF).	Snapshot Sessions & Closing Stay with us for our final snapshot sessions, exciting biodiversity focused closing plenary, and buffet lunch complete with prize drawings.

**Spoiler Alert: This year's sessions are fresh, exciting and fast moving to provide you with picture perfect information!** Our "snapshot sessions" will give you multiple speakers addressing issues, impacts, case studies, resolutions, and concludes with a summary and panel.



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

www.kdheks.gov/sbcs/environment_conf.html





Kansas Environmental Health Association

SPRING / SUMMER 2019

The objective of the Kansas Environmental Health Association is to promote competency and effectiveness in sanitarians and other environmentalists engaged in the regulation of the Kansas environment including, but not limited to, food service establishments, commercial food preparation facilities, dairy product businesses, meat processing plants, bakeries, commercial lodging and hotels, swimming pools, water supplies, wastewater treatment and disposal, solid waste collection and disposal, air pollution control, radiation control, hazardous waste materials management, pesticide usage, institutions, schools, nursing homes, hospitals and health care facilities, recreational camps and public events.

We're on the
web @ keha.us

