

Virginia Environmental Health Association

2014 Annual Report to the Membership

The Virginia Environmental Health Association (VEHA) board is pleased to present its annual report to the membership for calendar year 2014. This report documents the progress of VEHA over the past year, from the perspective of the board members *in their own words*, and highlights milestones and accomplishments noted along the way. I invite you to review our report and seek out board members for additional information should you have any questions.

President—Chris Gordon

Over the last year, VEHA has solidified its administrative overhaul of the association with the capstone submission of a 100+ page application, IRS Form 1023, for recognition as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization on December 31, 2013. After nearly nine months, I am pleased to report that on September 8, 2014, VEHA received a determination letter from the IRS that the association is exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Provided that VEHA's annual revenues remain below \$50,000.00 and the association continues to file annual tax returns, it will maintain this status for the foreseeable future. Having this status will enable VEHA to be in compliance with relevant tax law and allow VEHA to make application for public funding opportunities in furtherance of its objective to promote public awareness of environmental factors that affect the well-being of Virginia's populace. With this announcement, the next elected board will be able to stand on a strong foundation that will carry them forward, as well as future boards, because of the resilience and strength of this board. I am honored to have been a part of this piece of VEHA's history, and look forward to the bright future our organization continues to move towards.

Vice-President for Member Services—David Wachsmann

Over the past year I have been able to participate in the monthly VEHA board meeting conference calls. In addition I reviewed membership applications submitted online and through U.S. mail. After reviewing, I forward the information to the VEHA Secretary to be recorded on the membership roster. Part of my role is to work with the Treasurer to oversee the financial aspects of the association as well as assisting the Treasurer when needed. I also kept up to date on the status of the Association's two Certificate of Deposits. In July of this year I filed the Association's 2014 Annual Report with the Commonwealth of Virginia State Corporation Commission. I assisted with event registration and purchased registration supplies when needed.

Vice-President for Programs—Amy Pemberton

One of the primary missions of the VEHA board is to conduct training for members and other professionals to encourage and support professional development in the field of environmental health in Virginia. VEHA typically hosts two educational workshops each year, in a variety of locations around the Commonwealth; this expands the opportunity for members from all corners of our large state to participate, and takes advantage of location-specific field trip sites to exhibit the range of environmental health related activities ongoing in Virginia. In the past few years, VEHA also recognized a strong need for our members in the onsite field: to receive high-quality, reasonably-priced continuing education credits to maintain their Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) licensure. This past year, VEHA hosted two onsite field trainings and a course in conducting a thorough inspection of an AOSS, in addition to our spring and fall educational workshops. We also continue to offer educational credit hours for our food

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safety trainings, as we have for years. In 2013 and 2014 so far, we have received over 300 registrations for our educational events. This speaks volumes for the enthusiasm our members have for our wide-ranging, professionally-relevant educational offerings.

Vice-President for Professional Advancement—Catherine Cummins

In 2014, VEHA scheduled, coordinated and proctored two separate REHS/RS testing opportunities: April 10 (Hanover) and October 16 (Henrico). Two separate \$500 educational scholarships were awarded to Old Dominion University students during the spring educational session: Undergraduate scholarship to Genette Stump and Graduate scholarship to Bryant Wooden. During the Annual Meeting on October 17 we will present the Environmental Health Professional of the Year and the A. Clarke Slaymaker awards. The EH Professional of the Year award is presented to an environmental health professional selected from a pool of nominee's who is an active practitioner in the field of environmental health and is deemed by colleagues to have performed duties above and beyond the usual employment requirements so as to elevate the professional status of the EH professional. The A. Clarke Slaymaker award is presented to a nominated individual who is not actively engaged in the field of environmental health but has provided outstanding support to the profession and EH programs in the Commonwealth.

Secretary—David Fridley

It has been my distinct pleasure over the last year to see the active membership in VEHA rise to approximately 180 environmental health professionals and students. Our continued growth is recognition of several important elements in Virginia's environmental health field. We see that VEHA is valued as a provider of frequent, relevant, and interesting training; that the Association provides for professional advancement through offering continuing education credit for professionals in the food safety and onsite areas of work; that public and private practitioners alike see their interaction as a mutual benefit; that educators, researchers, regulators and other professionals view the Association as a meaningful avenue to share their knowledge, experience and perspectives with an appropriate audience; that our scholarship and certification-reimbursement programs are an important service; and that in Virginia, the field of environmental health is appreciated as a diverse but interconnected network of professionals with the common goal of understanding the complex interactions between the environment and human health. Our membership has been steadily increasing over a number of years, and I look forward to seeing that trend continue. Thanks to all of you.

Delegate-at-Large—Reed Cranford

Over the past year I have been able to participate in VEHA monthly board meetings. I have also served on the committee to review the nominations for selecting the Environmental Health Specialist of the Year. Another project I have been able to work on along with Brock Malcolm and the board is developing and editing an informational brochure about VEHA.

Delegate-at-Large—Brock Malcolm

During the last year, I participated in monthly conference calls addressing new and old VEHA business. I assisted in the creation and adoption of the VEHA Articles of Incorporation, assisted the VP of Programs with the registration, collection of dues and training setup for the

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Geology/Soils Field Day on May 23, 2014. Also, I coordinated and met with staff from Greenfield Education and Training Center/Virginia Western Community College to review prospective accommodations for the VEHA Spring 2015 VEHA Meeting/Conference. Lastly, I assisted Reed Cranford in the creation of the VEHA organizational tri-fold brochure.

Blue Ridge Regional Delegate—Eric Myers

As a Blue Ridge Delegate for VEHA, I have encouraged VDH staff to attend VEHA Professional Workshops and to pursue becoming a Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) through the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). I have a continuing interest in the health of the environment (river and stream impairments, emerging pathogens, concerns regarding fracking for natural gas and water quality / natural habitat protection). I see a growing role for VEHA to not only be involved in environmental health focused on human health but also sustainable environmental protection that will ultimately benefit our society. I see being a member of VEHA as an important way for myself (and others) to remain professionally up-to-date.

Capitol Area Regional Delegate—Tammy Faulkner

One significant environmental health change in the last year in the Capital Area, as well as all areas of the Commonwealth designated as a Chesapeake Bay watershed, has been ensuring since that since December 7, 2013, all alternative onsite sewage treatment designs are meeting the new VDH requirement for nitrogen reduction (12 VAC5-613-90 D). For proposed sewage disposal sites in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the soils discipline staff must ensure that the overall sewage treatment system reduces nitrogen disposed of into the ground by 50% from that of a conventional design. The reduction can be achieved in the treatment unit itself (National Sanitation Standard 245), or by using a combination of a treatment unit and a health department approved “best management practice” soil dispersal method for combined 50% total reduction. VDH reviews plans while being aware of which regulations under which the request has been made. Permit/Certification letter request can be made under the department’s prescriptive regulation (the *Sewage Handling and Disposal Regulations-2000*), or under the performance based regulation (*Regulations for Alternative Onsite Sewage systems-2011*), or under §32.1-163.6 of the *Code of Virginia*, which allows professional engineers to design a system outside of the prescriptive or performance regulations.

Individually, over the past year, I have supported the Vice President of Programs by providing assistance such as purchasing coffee and setting up the refreshment table for our programs, as well as assisting the treasurer with registration and handing out attendance certifications at the end of the program. I have enjoyed arriving early to events so the VP of Programs would be free to greet speakers as they arrived. An individual doesn’t really know what they can volunteer for until they become a participant in a group who works together for a common goal. *If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together* – African Proverb. Under the leadership of Chris Gordon, the board has gone far because we have worked together. The slate of new officers is looking forward to continuing to work together for the advancement of the organization and establishment of its place as a professional resource for meeting the training needs of environmental staff.

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Northern Virginia Regional Delegate—Kevin Crisler

One of my "additional job duties" is to represent the Fairfax County Health Department on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Clean Air Partners (CAP) program. Northern Virginia residents are lucky to have the MWCOG working on their behalf to solve some of the regions more complex environmental health issues. One of the ways this group furthers the mission of its programs is through Public-Private partnerships. CAP is a great example of one of these partnerships. The CAP program is a nonprofit partnership chartered by the MWCOG whose mission is to improve public health and the environment by working with the community to raise awareness and reduce air pollution through non regulatory approaches. During 2014, one of the CAP initiatives was the Clean Air Teleworking program. This program encourages employees or managers to implement or expand telework programs within their organizations. The Clean Air Teleworking program provides organizations with information that enables them to justify telework programs by providing statistics on enhanced recruitment and retention, reduced overhead costs, increased productivity, and reduced absenteeism. The program also provides assessment tools that help an organization determine if teleworking is an appropriate alternative. The tool helps organizations assess positions, employees, and alternative work sites for inclusion in the telework program.

The end game is to facilitate teleworking at organizations throughout the DC region so that fewer automobiles are on the road during the morning and evening commutes. Because vehicles contribute a significant amount of the total pollutants in the DC region we hope to see improved air quality through this initiative without creating additional regulations that might otherwise burden individual organizations.

Southern Area Regional Delegate—Ed Dunn

During 2014, I participated in monthly Board conference calls addressing new and old VEHA business. I assisted the VP of Programs by facilitating and organizing the Geology Onsite Field Day held on May 23, 2014 in Cumberland County. I also arranged for a classroom site and made provisions for the excavation of pits for the Onsite Field Days to be held on October 30th and 31st.

Southwest Area Regional Delegate—Sandra Stoneman

It has been a pleasure to serve another year as the Southwest Area Regional Delegate on the board of such an active organization like VEHA. The board meets monthly, usually by conference call, to plan and work on the promotion and support of environmental health in Virginia. Over the past year I have made it a priority to represent SWVA and be a part of these meetings. The Southwest was honored in last fall's VEHA annual awards when Mount Rogers District Environmental Health Manager, Scott Honaker, won the EH Professional of the Year award. Several of his staff nominated him for his knowledge and leadership skills, not to mention enthusiastically representing environmental health for over 30 years! I also enjoyed the opportunity to attend and present at VEHA's Fall Education Session last year on the "Big Deal" with Food Allergens. This is a topic of growing concern and it was encouraging to have questions from, and conversations with, other EHS's who are dealing with this in their food establishments. I appreciate the opportunity to represent SWVA and look forward to continuing to be an active member of VEHA.

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Tidewater Regional Delegate & Treasurer—Lauren Grimmer

This year, I've represented VEHA as both the Tidewater regional delegate and the Treasurer. My role in compiling the documentation needed for IRS allowed our organization to receive 501(c)(3) status. I also assist with event registration, maintain the budget, and pay for operating costs. As your Tidewater delegate, I partner with local government entities to ensure public health is considered throughout the region.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Gordon, President
Virginia Environmental Health Association