

# VEHA Bulletin-Spring 2015



## Message from the President - Reed Cranford



At the thought of spring approaching, I find myself day-dreaming of warm days spent in Virginia's National Parks and Forests, in the middle of no-where, with a fly rod in hand and a dry fly on the other end chasing the South's only native trout species, the Southern Brook Trout. This activity has a way of turning me into a 12 year old kid again! As I am writing this on March 3rd, Old Man Winter does not appear to be done just yet as this week may hold ice and 5 inches of snow for my home in the Shenandoah Valley. Yet there is hope in the forecast for the second week of March: mid 50's and sunshine (my fingers are crossed).

Similar to the shifting of seasons, so has the Board of VEHA changed. The following are your current board members and their positions: Sandra Stoneman (VP Professional Advancement), Kevin Crisler (VP of Programs), Tammy Faulkner (VP of Member Services), David Fridley (Secretary), Lauren Grimmer (Treasurer & Tide-water Delegate), Chris Gordon (Past President), Eric Myers (Blue Ridge Delegate), Sarah Price (Southwest Delegate), Bryant Wooden (Capital Delegate), Ed Dunn (Southern Delegate),

Philip Davis (Delegate at Large), Jenique Wilson (Delegate at large). All the board members are volunteers who give their time and talents in service of our organization.

Your Board members have been hard at work moving VEHA into the new year. On Thursday, April 16th we are offering testing for both the CP-FS and the REHS credentials from NEHA at the Greenfield Educational and Training Center in Daleville, VA. The next day, Friday (at the same location), we will be hosting our Spring Educational Workshop. This is a great opportunity to obtain continuing education hours and to network with your peers. More information can be found in the following pages concerning both of these events.

The VEHA Board is excited to serve our members. We strive to support our membership and better our field. Feel free to contact me or any of the board members with suggestions on how we can better serve you. The board members' emails can be found on our website, [www.virginiaeha.org](http://www.virginiaeha.org). To e-mail an individual member, click on the boardroom and select their name. There is also a tab to email the whole board at the top of the page. Additionally, you can renew your membership online on the membership page. The website is a great resource for keeping up with events and opportunities that VEHA offers!

I look forward to seeing everyone on April 17th!

Respectfully,  
*Reed Cranford*, VEHA President

## Certification Opportunities, Scholarships & Awards

### VP of Professional Advancement -Sandy Stoneman

**Certification Opportunities:** VEHA has always strived to encourage professional advancement for anyone in the environmental health field. In 2015 VEHA is sponsoring two exam proctor opportunities for the REHS and CP-FS certifications in conjunction with the Environmental Health Educational Conferences offered in the spring and fall. It is the board's hope that these certification opportunities, along with the new VDH EH Occupational Career Plan that offers both certification and renewal bonuses to qualified EH employees, will encourage and enable more of us to acquire these prestigious, nationally recognized certifications. More information and study resources can be found at VEHA's website, [www.virginiaeha.org](http://www.virginiaeha.org), on the Educational Sessions & Professional Advancement page.

**VEHA Educational Scholarship:** Each spring VEHA solicits undergraduate and graduate students in the Environmental Health field of study to submit their applications for the annual VEHA Educational Scholarship. This scholarship is currently funded at \$500.00 and is awarded to the most qualified applicant(s) at the Spring Educational Conference.

Congratulations to **Genette Stump** and **Bryant Wooden**, VEHA's student scholarship award winners for 2014! Ms. Stump is an undergraduate student in environmental health at Old Dominion University, an accredited environmental health institution in Norfolk, Virginia. Mr. Wooden is an environmental health specialist at the Arlington County Health Department in northern Virginia and was in the process of completing his Masters of Public Health degree in environmental health, also at Old Dominion University.

**Certificates of Merit:** Every NEHA state affiliate is invited to designate an individual and/or a team of its members to receive a Certificate of Merit, thereby nationally recognizing one of their own for outstanding contributions to the profession of environmental health. Recipients are recognized during NEHA's Annual Education Conference awards program and in the Journal of Environmental Health. This is an opportunity for special recognition of one of our own members to a national audience. Congratulations to VEHA's 2014 Certificate of Merit recipients: **Robert Custard** – Awarded the Individual Certificate of Merit and **Preston Smith & Danielle Schools** - Awarded the Team Certificate of Merit.

**Environmental Health Professional of the Year:** Congratulations to VEHA's 2014 Environmental Health Professional of the Year-**Mike Callahan, III** from Henrico Health District! Nominations for this award are accepted throughout the year and presented to the most deserving candidate at the Fall Educational Conference each year. The nominee for the Environmental Health Professional of the Year award must be an EH Professional currently engaged in the practice of Environmental Health who has made outstanding contributions to the EH Profession and the EH Programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Nominees must be current VEHA members and should exemplify the values, quality of work, and ethical integrity held in high regard by the EH profession. Sponsors who make the nomination must also be current VEHA members. Consider nominating a deserving colleague for the upcoming 2015 award!

**A. Clarke Slaymaker Award:** VEHA's 2014 selection for the A. Clarke Slaymaker Award was Captain Marvin Woods. Captain Woods was nominated by Jessica Scott Phillips with the Franklin County Health Department. Jessica stated, "He always goes above and beyond the call of duty in everything." Because of Woods' work, which involved the illegal dumping of sewage at several locations in Franklin County, an owner of a septic service was charged, indicted and sentenced to



two years in prison for the crime. A. Clark Slaymaker was a Virginia Department of Health employee from 1943 to 1970. He ended his career as the EH Manager (then called Chief Sanitarian) in Alexandria, Virginia. In 1966 he won NEHA's prestigious Walter S. Mangold award, the **ONLY** VDH employee ever to do so. This award was created to recognize an individual, association, corporation, or organization that is not actively engaged in the field of environmental health but has made outstanding contributions and supported the EH Profession and the EH programs in VA. The individual(s) who wish to submit a nomination for this award must be a current member of VEHA however, it is not necessary for the nominee to be a member.

## VEHA News & Save the Dates

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**Spring Educational Conference - April 16 & 17, 2015.** See the agenda on the following page for all the details.

**Spring Onsite Day -** Each spring and fall VEHA plans an onsite, hand on training day. Be watching the website for the dates/locations!



**Fall Onsite Day-** Be watching the website for the dates/locations!

## NEHA Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition 2015

Orlando, Florida • 13-15 July 2015

*The NEHA AEC...So Much More Than a Conference!*

It is the nexus for environmental health training, education, networking, and advancement. It is the event environmental health professionals attend to acquire practical and real-world information and expertise. It is the event from which environmental health professionals leave, trained, motivated, inspired, and empowered to further advance their organizations and themselves.

[www.neha2015aec.org](http://www.neha2015aec.org)

**Fall Educational Conference -** Be watching the website for the date/location!

## Spring Educational Conference - Kevin Crisler, VP of Programs

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### **2015 SPRING EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Greenfield Education and Training Center  
Center for Workforce and Education Building  
57 South Center Drive, Daleville, VA 24083  
(540) 966-3984

#### April 16, 2015 (Exam Proctor Session)

11:30AM - 12:00PM REHS & CP-FS Exam Check In (Pre-registration required)  
12:00PM - 4:00PM REHS & CP-FS Exam Proctor Session

#### April 17, 2015 (Educational Session)

8:00 - 8:45AM General Workshop Registration

8:45 - 9:00AM Opening Remarks & Presentation of VEHA Educational Scholarships  
Reed Cranford, VEHA President

9:00 - 9:45AM *The Temporary Town from Nowhere - Zero to Thirty Thousand in Four Days*  
Eric Myers and Tom Eick, Virginia Department of Health

9:45 - 10:30AM *Chikungunya virus in the Americas—a reemerging mosquito-borne pathogen*  
Andrew Lima, Environmental Health Specialist  
Fairfax County Health Department

10:30 - 10:45AM **BREAK**

10:45 - 11:45AM *CDC Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC)*  
Michelle Howard, Alexandria Health Department

11:45AM-1:00PM **LUNCH - On your own**

#### AFTERNOON BREAK OUT SESSIONS

##### Food Protection/General EH

1:00 - 2:00PM *FDA Retail Standards Program*  
Peter Sheehan, Fairfax County HD

2:00 - 3:00PM *Food Standardization from the DSO Perspective*  
Jenny Jeffries, Shenandoah County HD

3:00 - 3:15PM Break

3:15 - 4:30PM *Professionalism in the EH Workplace*  
Catherine Cummins, REHS

##### Onsite Sewage and Water

*Private Water Systems*  
Kelsey Pieper, Virginia Tech

*AOSS Operation and Maintenance*  
Jerry Franklin, Loudoun County HD

Break

*TBD*  
Pam Pruett

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For planning purposes, please RSVP at [kevin.crisler@virginiaeha.org](mailto:kevin.crisler@virginiaeha.org), and designate which afternoon track you prefer to participate in.

**Workshop Fee:** Member Registration=\$20 Non Member Registration (includes membership)=\$40  
Payment is due at sign-in. (please pay by check or bring exact currency)

4.0 Hours CPE for DPOR OSE licensure awarded by VEHA for attendance.

# Environmental Health Legislative Update

David Fridley, Secretary

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## **Elk River Chemical Spill Clean Up**

Freedom Industries and West Virginia regulators have signed an agreement for cleaning up the site of a 2014 chemical spill in the Elk River that prompted a tap water ban for 300,000 people for days. The agreement announced Tuesday by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection will be done through the agency's Voluntary Remediation Program. Freedom filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy eight days after the Jan. 9, 2014, spill. About 7,500 gallons of a coal processing chemical leaked into the river from Freedom's storage site in Charleston, about 1.5 miles from West Virginia American Water Co.'s drinking water intake. Freedom and four former company officials are scheduled to be sentenced in June on federal pollution charges.

## **Proposed Ban of Organohalogen Flame-Retardants**

A group of firefighters, scientists, and health and consumer advocates are petitioning federal authorities to ban children's products, furniture, mattresses and electronic casings if they contain a class of flame-retardants. The petition calls on the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban these products if they contain organohalogen flame-retardants, a class of chemicals that have been linked to cancer, hormone disruption, and reproductive, developmental and immune system problems, according to the petitioners. By targeting an entire class of compounds, rather than a single chemical, the petition is a new approach to tackling the seemingly intractable problem of keeping up with harmful chemicals in our environment. There are more than 80,000 chemicals registered in the United States, most of which haven't been fully studied for potential health impacts. The National Toxicology Program estimates 2,000 new chemicals are introduced every year.

## **USDA Seeks to Collect Data on Antibiotic Use in Livestock**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is waiting for approval of federal funding to add questions about antibiotics to annual surveys of livestock producers as part of a bid to determine the most-complete national usage estimates ever in cattle, hogs and poultry, according to the agency. The data drive comes amid increasing concerns among researchers about the deadly problem of antibiotic resistance in humans. An estimated 80 percent of all antibiotics used in the United States are administered to livestock, not to people, but existing government surveys collect limited information about usage on farms. The enhanced surveys are expected to ask producers which livestock were given antibiotics and why, according to the Animal Health Institute, which represents pharmaceutical companies like Zoetis Inc and Elanco, the animal-health division of Eli Lilly and Co. The responses could then be used as a baseline to set targets for reduced use.

## **Formaldehyde in Flooring Investigation**

The Consumer Product Safety Commission formally announced on Wednesday that it was investigating whether Lumber Liquidators, one of the nation's largest discount flooring retailers, sold products with dangerous levels of formaldehyde. The safety commission will conduct its own testing and evaluate the scientific research on the risks of formaldehyde, a process that could take months. Formaldehyde, a common preservative that is a known carcinogen, is used in everything from clothing to furniture. It is an ingredient in the glues for laminate flooring, a cheaper alternative to hardwood and other higher-end wood products. Laminate flooring is manufactured by gluing together various materials, and then adhering a thin layer of wood or synthetic material on top.

## **Degradation of Eastern Shore Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay**

Eastern Shore rivers and the Chesapeake Bay are being degraded by spreading too much fertilizer and manure on the Delmarva Peninsula's farm fields, a new federal report concludes. The report, released recently by the U.S. Geological Survey, says the rural region's soils get nearly twice as much bay-fouling nitrogen and phosphorus per square mile as other parts of the six-state Chesapeake watershed. And it notes in particular that the majority of phosphorus comes from over fertilizing farm crops with animal manure, mainly from the nearly 600 million chickens raised there annually. Levels of nitrogen in Shore ground water and of both nutrients in the peninsula's surface waters are "among the highest in the nation," said Scott Ator, a USGS hydrologist and co-author of the study.

## Environmental Health War Stories

### Tammy Faulkner, VP of Member Services

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While reviewing records as the newly elected VP of Member Services, I came across a couple of old VEHA Bulletins. In the Fall 2004 Bulletin, there was an introduction for a new column titled: Environmental Health War Stores. Cecil Sink, originator and contributor to the column, has agreed to allow the current board to reprint his 'freshman' year environmental adventure stories as a re-introduction of the column. The "Time to Split" story in the 2005 issue was just almost too embarrassing to read, but the "Heads Will Roll!" story in the Spring 2005 issue made me laugh. Maybe a little "been there, done that". Nevertheless, as Cecil wrote in his 2004 introduction for the column, we are looking for submissions of your front line stories. We seek tales of your adventures that are funny, ironic, silly, inspiring, educational, or just plain cool. All we ask is that the story be based on fact, related to your experiences in the environmental health field, and clean enough to tell in mixed company. E-mail submission for future Bulletins to [tammy.faulkner@virginiaeha.org](mailto:tammy.faulkner@virginiaeha.org). Enjoy Cecil's two stories and be inspired to make a submission about your own adventures!

-Tammy

#### ***"Time to Split"***

*By Cecil Sink*

It had been a trying week. Having just completed the Health Department's on-site training program, I received my first three septic system permit applications and they looked good...at least on paper. There were directions to the properties, a good site sketch, proposed wastewater use, water supply, everything was there.

Then things got interesting.

First, I was sent to the wrong house on a repair application, leading to an impromptu Abbot/Cosettello routine via telephone, with the applicant saying, "why didn't you knock on the door?" . . . me, "I DID knock" . . . "but we were home all day" . . . " but you sent me to the wrong house" . . . "but if you knocked they'd have told you which house" . . . "I DID knock" . . . "But we were home all day" . . . "but you sent me to the wrong house" (you get the idea).

Second stop: I worked a heavily wooded site where apparently many trigger-happy hunters were grateful for my deer-driving skills (Note to self: bring Blaze-Orange attire tomorrow).

So, cursed, abused, shot at, tired, and hungry, I arrived at my last appointment of the day.

The backhoe and the (luckily for me, unarmed) property owner awaited me. The lot was generously sized, cleared, and gently sloping.

Piece of cake!

18 backhoe pits later I wasn't so sure. Limestone boulders, in heavy clay-fill were present with each stroke of the backhoe bucket. Where the soils were not "Fill", it sure wasn't great. Some pits looked marginal, and the proposed usage was low, but I really wanted my supervisor to review the site with me. The owner was losing patience with the dollar signs drifting up in the diesel exhaust of the machine and with my refusal to say "aye, yes, or no" until I had a second opinion. The usual intimidation and coercion phrases I hear so often now were trotted out. They were new to me at the time and somewhat intimidating.

Worse was to come.

As I climbed out of my last pit, disaster struck. My long-suffering khaki slacks, purchased in a prior time when lunches were rare and dinners infrequent, chose that moment to give way in the seat. The late-November breeze informed me of the extent of the damage and a panic just as cold gripped my soul. At once, escape became my top priority but damage-control was necessary. The old adage "never let 'em see you sweat" had suddenly turned into "never let 'em see your . . . well, ummmm, goosebumps", I suppose.

Exiting the pit, I turned to face the client and told him that it was well past my normal work hours, that I had sufficient information, and that the decision would be forthcoming. As I backed towards my truck trying to ignore the icy breeze, he advanced, seeming to feel that he had me on the ropes. I reached the truck and leaned nonchalantly against it attempting to simultaneously block the wind chill from my tender flesh and avoid contact with the icy metal. Giving up all hope of retreat with dignity, I dropped my tools into the truck bed and, without turning my back, slipped the door open and made my hasty get-away. Now, where on Earth can I find a full service gas station.

### ***"Heads Will Roll!"***

*By Cecil Sink*

#### **The Setting:**

It was a nice setup.

An Environmental Health office located away from the main clinic facility, on a quiet back alley, in a nice residential neighborhood.

The parking lot was gravel, and so seldom used, that grass grew there. Our cars were shaded by a large walnut tree, luckily, because the stately 100 year old Norway Maples flanking the alley had recently succumbed to blight, and been felled.

The stump of one of the maples made a convenient block on which the occasional animal head could be removed for rabies testing. Our quiet side street kept such gory goings-on out of public view and circumvented the normal trip to the County Animal Shelter for the gruesome task.

There was one large, comfortable brick home directly across the narrow, sloping alley behind a board fence but the windows on the side facing us were small and the resident was an older and quiet lady who, if she noticed our occasional decapitation, made no mention or complaint.

#### **The Cat:**

A feral tom, orange tabby. A ferocious-looking brute, full twenty pounds of him, with battle-scars, muscled body, and a head the size, color, and shape of a grapefruit.

His offense was showing up at the home of a very pregnant lady, sick, disoriented, and staggering. His would-be savior was exposed to saliva and the cat expired.

#### **The Dauntless Young EHS:**

The cat was dropped at our quiet office by the Animal Control Officer on a lovely quiet spring morning.

The robins sang in the spreading walnut tree as I donned my latex gloves and checked the edge on the axe.

The body was stiff with more than rigor mortis as I removed it from the trash bag and deposited it on the stump. The cat was frozen! Apparently someone had placed it in the freezer overnight rather than in the refrigerator. No worries, it would just make my task easier, although the poor technician at the lab might disagree while waiting for the brain tissue to thaw.

One swift true axe-stroke from a young former farm-boy use to chopping wood for granny's cook stove and the head was off.

**The Problem:**

Off the stump, that is.

And off down the sloping roots, and off down the road bank.

Off across the narrow alley. Off under the fence. Off across the manicured lawn of the quiet, stately home of the quiet, reserved, elderly lady next door. Off, out of reach from the alley.



**The Dilemma:**

Vaulting the fence to retrieve the cat-cranium seemed logical. The fence was sturdy, and fairly low, and in those days I was an active young fellow. I was halfway toward acting on the idea, when the sinking thought occurred to me, "What if this lady looks out her kitchen window, and sees me in her yard?"...

"Wearing bloody gloves?"

"With a furry, severed head no less!" Visions of flashing blue lights, endless explanations to the officers, to my Supervisor, to the Health Director, possibly even to the Judge, ran through my mind.

**The Decision:**

It had to be done and done the honest way. I bagged the body and stowed it for disposal, stripped my gloves, and went inside to wash up.

After nervously checking my appearance...Self, "do I look like a nut-case?" Self replies, "no more than usual." Self is such a Smart-Aleck! I pocketed fresh gloves, got out our cleanest, most presentable, Styrofoam cooler, mentally "girded my loins", and set out down the sidewalk.

**The Neighbor:**

The bell rings. The lady answers the door.

My throat cleared, I asked the dreaded question I had been composing and recomposing the last 30 long minutes: "Ma'am, I am Cecil Sink with the Health Department, may I retrieve my cat head from your side yard?"

Quite a few minutes later, having turned down offers of fresh-baked cookies, explaining in detail the nuances of rabies-prevention work at the hands-on level, and having heard about the usual complaints of impending age-deterioration of the human frame (funny how those never seemed real until more recently), I returned to the office with my prize and none the worse for the experience.

All in a day's work.