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MEd

Kick Off 2013 With Exciting Workforce Development Opportunities

Editor's Note: NEHA strives to provide up-to-date and relevant information on environmental health and to build partnerships in the profession. In pursuit of these goals, we feature a column from the Environmental Health Services Branch (EHSB) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in every issue of the *Journal*.

In this column, EHSB and guest authors from across CDC will highlight a variety of concerns, opportunities, challenges, and successes that we all share in environmental public health. EHSB's objective is to strengthen the role of state, local, and national environmental health programs and professionals to anticipate, identify, and respond to adverse environmental exposures and the consequences of these exposures for human health. The services being developed through EHSB include access to topical, relevant, and scientific information; consultation; and assistance to environmental health specialists, sanitarians, and environmental health professionals and practitioners.

The conclusions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the CDC.

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On behalf of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Environmental Health Services Branch (EHSB), Happy New Year! January marks a new beginning—prompting people all over the world to make resolutions to improve their health, get organized, or learn a skill they've always wanted to master. Many professionals also start their progression by earning advanced educational degrees, working

toward promotions, or improving or updating workplace systems. As an environmental public health professional, you already know that learning and developing do not end once you accept your diploma. Therefore, EHSB has developed several excellent learning opportunities—both online and in traditional classroom settings—to help you enhance your effect on environmental health and make 2013 the best year yet!

Environmental Public Health Online Courses

Whether you are a student preparing for certification/registration or a public health veteran needing continuing education credit, our environmental public health online courses are an excellent way to strengthen your practical environmental public health knowledge. This online, on-demand package of e-learning modules is a comprehensive and affordable workforce development resource for all environmental public health professionals. *Better yet, NEHA will award Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian continuing education credit for each successfully completed module.* Module topics run the gamut from general environmental health and food protection to vector control, drinking water, wastewater, and radiation exposures—certainly something for every environmental public health professional.

Environmental Assessments for Foodborne-Illness Outbreaks

Foodborne-illness outbreaks happen way too often, which means environmental public health professionals must be prepared. Therefore, knowledge and skills needed for outbreak investigations must be acquired. EHSB, through its Environmental Health Specialists Network (EHS-Net), is collaborating with its grantees, the Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture, to improve this knowledge and skill set. These partners are developing another free e-learning course to allow users to conduct virtual foodborne-illness outbreak environmental assessments (FIOEAs). This self-paced, interactive course—presented in the context

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of a simulated virtual classroom—will teach foundational skills required to conduct a FIOEA. This course will include an overview of FIOEAs, introduce techniques to ensure effective interviewing, critical thinking skills, and demonstrate the importance of consulting with colleagues in epidemiology and in laboratory sciences. In essence, this training will model the collaboration and teamwork that characterizes a cohesive outbreak-investigation team. When implemented, this virtual training can help environmental public health professionals hone their abilities to conduct FIOEAs and prevent future outbreaks. Stay tuned for the release of this exciting and innovative new training expected early this year.

Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response

One thing none of us hopes will happen this year is a natural disaster or other public health emergency; however, as recent history has shown, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and other disasters continue to happen. Since we cannot prevent such disasters, we must be prepared for them in the most innovative and comprehensive way possible. That is why EHSB's Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER) course was developed. This popular four-day basic-awareness-level course provides environmental public health professionals with basic knowledge, skills, and resources to prepare for environmental health problems caused by emergency situations and disasters—including food safety, water/wastewater issues, shelter assessment/sanitation, vector control/pest management, responder safety, solid

waste/hazardous materials, and radiation. Hundreds of environmental public health professionals throughout the U.S. are better prepared for emergencies because they have been trained through this EHSB course.

Integrated Pest Management

Along with natural disasters and public health emergencies, nobody wants to think about disease-carrying insects and rodents. If left unchecked, these pests can become far more than a nuisance; they can quickly cause illness and an outbreak. EHSB's "Biology and Control of Vectors and Public Health Pests: The Importance of Integrated Pest Management" (IPM) course presents a comprehensive, systems-based approach to pest management. IPM advocates the use of the safest and most effective, economical, and sustainable methods to control these pests. Available both online and as in-person training, this course teaches IPM methods that will help reduce the risk not only from the pests but also from the overuse or inappropriate use of hazardous chemical products to control them. This course teaches users how to routinely inspect and monitor indoor and outdoor areas to identify the presence of vectors and pests and whether conditions are conducive to infestations. This course will also help the environmental public health professional to identify the type or species of pest and establish effective control methods. In addition, this course will show how to monitor and evaluate applied measures to determine their success and the next course of action.

EHSB is dedicated to serving you, the environmental public health professional, and we

For more information about the training opportunities discussed here, see

- Environmental Public Health Online Courses: www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/eLearn/EPHOC.htm
- Foodborne Illness Outbreak Environmental Assessment Training: www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/eLearn/EA_FIO/index.htm
- Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response: cdp.dhs.gov/schedules/program/s.html
- Integrated Pest Management: www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/eLearn/IPM.htm

For additional information on other training opportunities from EHSB, see

- www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/eLearn
- www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Workforce_Development/training.htm

hope that you will take advantage of the learning opportunities provided. We appreciate your hard work and dedication to protect our nation's communities by continuing to learn and develop as environmental public health professionals. So, here's to YOU and your growth, success, and health! Happy 2013! 🐾

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