

# NEHA Environmental Public Health Tracking Program

Presented by: Tom Dickey, REHS  
Project Coordinator  
NEHA Research and  
Development



“Many lives can be saved with improved tracking and access to environmental public health data, along with a better understanding of the cause and severity of how different environmental hazards and exposures impact human health.”

Nelson Fabian, Executive Director  
National Environmental Health Association

# National Environmental Health Association

## About NEHA

- ❑ Incorporated in 1937 with mission “to advance the environmental health and protection professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all”
- ❑ Membership of 5,000 + encompasses the public and private environmental health sectors, academia, and uniformed services
- ❑ Offers seven nationally recognized environmental health credential programs
- ❑ Publishes peer reviewed *Journal of Environmental Health* with circulation up to 20,000 readers
- ❑ Offers training to membership through Annual Educational Conference (AEC) and Exhibition, and a number of technical workshops offered each year

# About NEHA - Infrastructure

- ❑ Executive Director
- ❑ 15 Member Board of Directors
- ❑ 50 State Affiliates
- ❑ 12 Technical Sections
- ❑ 30 FTE's

# Program Accomplishments

- ❑ Coordinated EPHT abstract submissions for NEHA AEC
- ❑ Organized NEHA/EPHT Workgroup
- ❑ Continues to hold partner relationships with ASTHO & CDC
- ❑ Scheduled to present EPHT session at NEHA AEC
- ❑ Continues to be involved in Program Marketing and Outreach (PMO) conference calls
- ❑ Continues to be involved in target audience team conference calls (Professional Associations Target Audience Team – PATAT)

## **Program Goals/Objectives:**

- Provide EPHT communication and outreach activities with NEHA membership in unfunded states
- Provide facilitated EPHT discussion at 2005 Providence (RI) Annual Educational Conference (AEC) and Exhibition
- Provide support of CDC sponsored Program Marketing and Outreach Workgroup, and collaboration with partners
- Create NEHA EPHT Advisory Committee
- Creating greater EPHT capacity among EH professionals

# NEHA EPHT Program Outcomes

## **Targeted outreach activities to raise awareness and knowledge base:**

- ❑ EPHT Web posting on [www.neha.org](http://www.neha.org)
- ❑ EPHT cover story in June 2004 *Journal of Environmental Health*
- ❑ EPHT presentation to NALBOH (National Association of Local Boards of Health) in September 2004
- ❑ Developed Fact Sheet for dissemination to NEHA membership

# NEHA Environmental Public Health Tracking Program

## EPHT Awareness Questionnaire Results:

- 409 responses from academia, private sector, and health officials from city, county, state, and federal health jurisdictions located within 42 continental states.
  
- Nation-wide survey of membership conducted in March 2004.
  
- Majority of respondents serve communities with population of 25,000 to 100,000.

## **EPHT Awareness Questionnaire Results:**

- ❑ 68% of respondents DID NOT analyze both public health and environmental health data together to make environmental public health decisions.
- ❑ 25% of respondents DID analyze health and environmental data together (e.g. drinking water data and health advisories, groundwater data and a cancer cluster issue, blood lead levels for abatement programs, asthma/IAQ data, and emergency room data).

## EPHT Awareness Questionnaire Results:

- ❑ 95% of respondents NOT aware of the 3 Academic Centers for Excellence.
- ❑ 77% of respondents NOT SURE whether their state was one of 21 CDC funded states.
- ❑ 87% of respondents admit little to no knowledge of EPHT
- ❑ 37% response rate from CDC funded states

## **EPHT Awareness Questionnaire Results:**

- ❑ The need (value) for environmental public health training is obvious.
- ❑ 48% of respondents ranked receiving epidemiology training as extremely valuable.
- ❑ 35% of respondents ranked receiving environmental public health surveillance/tracking training as extremely valuable.
- ❑ 35% of respondents ranked receiving risk communication as extremely valuable.

## **Future direction includes working with partners to:**

- ❑ Conduct specific training on epidemiology, public health surveillance/tracking, risk communication, and overall workforce development.
- ❑ Identify environmental public health professionals' needs related to environmental public health tracking.
- ❑ Identify possible changes in data collection, reporting and quality control practices.
- ❑ Identify and develop strategies to communicate with and engage communities on these issues.

## **Future direction includes working with partners to:**

- ❑ Provide educational materials and updates on what has been accomplished to date in developing a national environmental public health tracking network and activities of the partners and integrating bio-terrorism efforts.
- ❑ Share challenges/successes of implemented tracking systems and early results.
- ❑ Provide examples of surveillance systems now linking health and environmental data.

# Staff Contact Information

Larry Marcum  
Manager of Governmental Affairs  
Research and Development  
303-756-9090 Ext. 303  
[lmarcum@neha.org](mailto:lmarcum@neha.org)

Susan Jerles  
Governmental Affairs  
Research and Development Assistant  
303-756-9090 Ext. 310  
[sjerles@neha.org](mailto:sjerles@neha.org)

Thomas Dickey  
Project Coordinator  
Research and Development  
563-285-7870  
[tdickey@neha.org](mailto:tdickey@neha.org)

