



## PAST EVENTS

### The Fifth World Congress - June 7th to 12th, 1998 - Stockholm, Sweden

Organised by the Environmental Health Officers' Association of Sweden.

The fifth World Congress can certainly be considered an international conference with delegates from 31 different countries. Everyone in attendance was extremely grateful for the hospitality extended to us by the Swedish Environmental Health Officers Association. Once again, we took the opportunity to greet old friends and, just as important, make new friends and new contacts. I am sure that networking between individuals and organisations represented will certainly improve as a result of this conference. The Organising Committee, ably led by the tireless Kia Regner, are to be congratulated for all their hard work and endeavours to ensure such an enjoyable and memorable conference.

Editor

### IFEH Council Meeting - June 6th to 7th, 1998 - Stockholm, Sweden

The following decisions were taken at the meeting:-

1. A postal ballot is to be held to consider the recommendation that subscriptions should remain at £50 per organisation but the per capita fee should be increased to 18p per member.
2. The German Federal Association of Food Control Inspectors and the Association of Public Health Inspectors, Greece, were accepted as full members.

#### German Federal Association of Food Control Inspectors

Contact - J. Hohenleitner, Bismarck Strasse 49, 53721 Siegburg, Germany. Phone: (Home) +49 2241 67608. Fax: (Home) +49 2241 591737. Phone (Office) +49 2241 132581. Fax: (Office) +49 2241 133479.



## To our new President KIA REGNER

It is appropriate for a president of the IFEH to be elected from the Swedish Association and to wear the President's badge of Office. This is a solid silver medallion on which the names of the past Presidents are engraved on the reverse. The pattern on the front is a representation of the Goddess Hygeia who is the Goddess of Health and Hygiene and the etching on the front of our Presidential medallion was taken in 1988 straight from the logo of the Swedish Association.

Eric Foskett

## OBITUARY

It is with considerable regret that I have to advise IFEH colleagues of the death of Haji Sulaiman, advisor to MAEH on the 18th July. Haji was held in high esteem both in the IFEH as well as the MAEH and we will miss his friendly nature and sincere contributions. At this time our thoughts and condolences go to his family, friends and colleagues in MAEH.

**The Association of Public Health Inspectors,**  
Greece, Gladstonos 10, Athens, 10677, Greece.  
Contact - Ms Maria Vargiro Spapou, (Secretary),  
Erasistratou 8, Str, Agios Artemios, Athens, Greece.  
Phone +00301 3302069.  
Fax: +00301 3302079.

3. The City College, Norwich (England) was accepted as an Academic Associate Member.  
Contact Dr. Michael Howard, B.Sc.,  
(Environmental Health), Course Leader,  
Ipswich Road, Norwich, NR2 2IJ. Phone:  
+44(0)1603 773414. Fax: +44 (0)1603  
663017.

Welcome to all our new members - Editor.

4. The Northern Ireland Centre of the CIEH, which sponsors the IFEH membership of CHAMATA (the Tanzanian Health Officers Association), has sent a delegate (Stewart Petrie) to Dar es Salaam to assist in developing a Degree Course at the University.

The Mission is undertaken in memory of Clarence Phenix, a stalwart of the Northern Ireland Centre who is also fondly remembered in Tanzania where he worked to great effect.

It was reported by John McCandless that thanks to the sterling work of Stewart, it is now most likely that the first students will be enrolled in September, 2000.

5. Endorsement of Food Hygiene Training Certificates

The Council supported the endorsement of food hygiene certificates by the IFEH for both member and non-member organisations who were responsible for organising food hygiene courses.

The Public Relations Officer agreed to lead a small working group of persons experienced in organising and validating basic food hygiene courses/examinations with the intention that he would report back on the criteria to be used to secure endorsement.

The Public Relations Officer would be very pleased to hear from anyone who has such experience and/or documentation/criteria used by member organisations to determine approved courses/training centres/tutors. The Public Relations Officer would also be pleased to hear from any organisation that would be interested in receiving the endorsement of the IFEH so that details can be reported back to the IFEH Council (via the Finance Working Group).

6. Birgit Haglund from Umea University, Sweden has taken over the Chair of the International Faculty Forum.

**Congratulations, Birgit - Editor.**

The IFEH has appointed John Stirling as Education Liaison Officer who will be responsible, amongst other things, for dealing with policy and liaison with the Faculty Forum.

7. The IFEH will co-operate with the Dublin Institute of Technology, (a Collaborating Centre for the World Health Organisation's Euro-Region) to produce and disseminate position papers on topics that are germane to the career activities of Environmental Health professionals. Papers to include:



Concept of a profession



Professional development



Operational issues for professional organisations



Codes of professional conduct



Environmental health research



Current and emerging issues in environmental health



Trends in environmental health education



Environmental health in context



Communications in environmental health

8. The IFEH President for 2000 will be Lars Olson (Norway)

The IFEH President for 2002 will be Diane Evans (USA).

**Congratulations to Lars and Diane - Editor.**

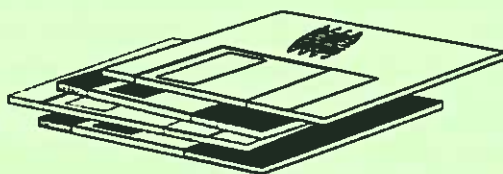
9. A formal bid was made, and accepted, for the South African Institute of Environmental Health to host the Eighth World Congress on Environmental Health in Durban, South Africa. (An excellent presentation was made to the Council by Messrs S. Mudaly, Z. Zincume and J. Chaka).

**Congratulations to the SAIEH - Editor.**

10. IFEH officers appointed:

- President** - Kia Regner(EHOAS)
- Chair** - Bryn Jones, (CIEH)
- Vice-Chair** - Vic Andrich (AIEH)
- Secretary** - Michael Halls (REHIS)
- Treasurer** - Graham Slee (CIEH)
- Public Relations Officer** - Richard Sprenger (IFEH)
- Co-ordinating Officer** - Eric Foskett (IFEH)
- Archivist** - Michael Halls (REHIS)
- Education Liaison Officer** - John Stirling (REHIS)
- Company Secretary** - Michael Cooke (CIEH)

- 11. It was agreed that the Co-ordinating Officer should produce an IFEH yearbook free of charge (i.e. sponsorship required). In future years it is intended, if practicable, to combine the yearbook with the IFEH Annual Report.
- 12. Two new policy statements were agreed, Policy Statement No. 5 confirming the IFEH opposition to smoking; Policy Statement No. 6 confirming the right of access for everyone to a clean, affordable water supply.
- 13. It was agreed to produce the IFEH Directory on disk.



- 14. It was agreed to progress the possibility of producing an IFEH Journal. The journal would initially be published twice a year and may be combined with this newsletter. (Volunteer editors - John Stirling and Kenneth Stewart)
- 15. The Council accepted an offer from Peter Ku to hold the next IFEH Council meeting in Hongkong - probably in April, 1999.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Residential Seminar in Scotland

The IFEH and the British Council are supporting a residential seminar at the Strathclyde University Business School - 21st to 26th March, 1999. The seminar is to have a maximum attendance of 40 persons so as to assist learning outcomes. One of the main themes will be "communications". It is intended for Environmental Health professionals from outwith the U.K. Further details available from Michael Halls.

### Sixth World Congress

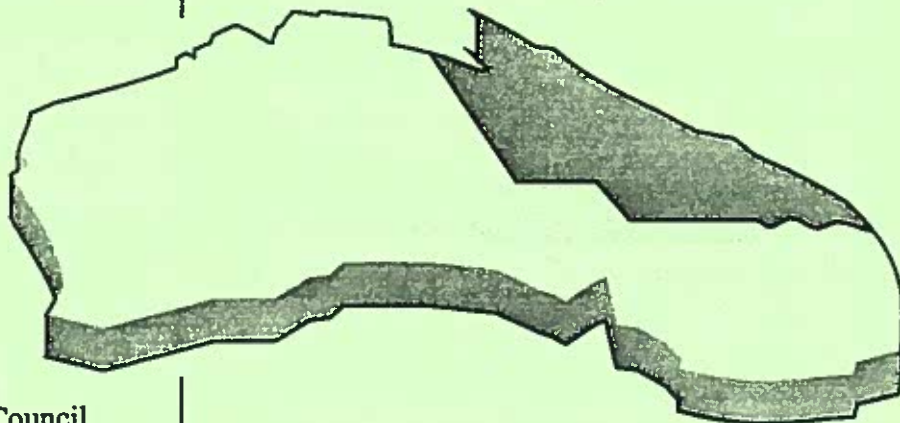
Healthy Environments - "A Local Challenge" 5th to 9th June, 2000. Oslo, Norway.

### Seventh World Congress

Environmental Health - "A Universal Responsibility" 21st to 26th April, 2002. San Diego, California.

### AIEH National Conference

The Australian Institute of Environmental Health's 25th National Conference will be held in Surfers Paradise, Queensland from 25th to 30th October, 1998.



Organiser: AIEH Qld. Div., PO Box 2222, Fortitude Valley, BC Q4006 Australia.

# THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

## Policy Statement No. 5

1. The International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) accepts the medical and scientific evidence that smoking is harmful to human health and that the nicotine contained in tobacco is addictive. Further the IFEH accepts that passive smoking, which is air polluted by the exhalations of other smokers, can be as harmful as smoke inhaled directly by a smoker.
2. The IFEH calls on the Members to:-
  - a) Invite their Governments to endorse the view expressed in 1 above;
  - b) take steps to suggest everyone's right to breathe smoke-free air;
  - c) ensure that their respective organisations endorse the views expressed in 1 above and
  - d) support campaigns designed to provide smoke-free public places.
3. The IFEH supports the abolition of governmental subsidies for tobacco growing. Where this might cause rural poverty, governments must take appropriate mitigating action.
4. The IFEH promotes non-smoking and deplors activities which encourage young people to take up smoking.
5. The IFEH recognises the rights of individuals to smoke in private but not the right to inflict tobacco smoke on others.
6. The IFEH itself hereby adopts a policy of not permitting smoking by members, officers or observers at any of its meetings or official functions.

## Policy Statement No. 6

The International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) believes that water is an essential public service and that access to a clean and affordable supply of drinking water must be regarded as a fundamental human right.

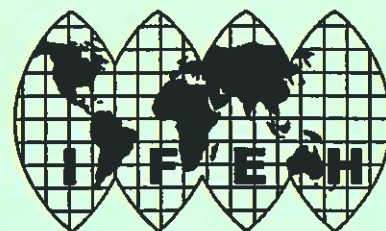
The Federation also believes that there should be actions to ensure that sewage is disposed of in a safe efficient and environmentally friendly manner.

To achieve these aims, the Federation calls upon all Governments to lay down realistic targets for reaching such a situation and encourages all its Member organisations to take such action as each considers appropriate to assist in attaining these goals.

For its part, IFEH will give support in whatever way possible and lend assistance to such countries where such targets need the injection of resources which may be in short supply.

The Federation also calls on International Agencies to do all that they can to help achieve a situation where everyone has access to a safe water supply and an adequate sewage disposal system within the first decade of the new Millennium.

**ADOPTED AT THE FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HELD IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN IN JUNE, 1998.**



## **DOES CURRENT PUBLIC HEALTH LEGISLATION PROTECT THE ALLERGIC CONSUMER?**

(Abstract of a paper presented by Ian Leith at the 5th World Congress of the International Federation of Environmental Health - 7th to 12th June, 1998 Stockholm, Sweden.)

Food allergy has in the past been variously regarded as part of fringe medicine or attracting the attention of the popular press and less academically rigorous medical journals. As the evidence accumulates, however, clinical reactions to food allergenic and non-allergenic are now recognised as being of considerable importance. To date most academic students have concentrated on the clinical methodology of diagnosis and the incidence of allergenic disease, much less attention has been invested in the public health aspects of this form of illness.

While practically all developed countries have enacted legislation to protect consumers from harm associated with the consumption of contaminated food, this legislation was not constructed primarily to deal with food allergies and is ineffective in protecting consumers from allergic reactions to food, however, this is the only legislative framework available and in the absence of more suitable legislation, it provides the only statutory means within which Environmental Health officers may monitor and control the wide range of manufacturing and retailing food industries.

While many allergenic reactions are confined to a range of trivial if uncomfortable symptoms including skin reactions, some consumers exhibit much more severe reactions. One of these anaphylaxis is a life threatening condition the onset of which occurs very rapidly on consumption of the allergen. The symptoms include rapid swelling, nausea, hypertension, shock, collapse and death. Such symptoms can be reversed or suppressed by the rapid administration of adrenaline by intra-muscular injections in a clinical environment. However, several deaths per year can be attributed to this food mediated condition. The onset of the condition is by its nature rapid, severe and unpredictable, timely medical intervention cannot be ensured thus efficient control strategies will require public health measures rather than clinical remedies.

In 1996, 22 people died from E-coli 0157 food poisoning, since 1993 at least 6 people have died each year in the UK from anaphylaxis induced by accidentally eating foods to which they were known to be allergic.

To date my study has involved an investigation of peanut allergy, one of the most potent allergies and one frequently responsible for many food mediated allergic reactions. I have outlined the scale of the problem, the role played by the medical profession in the clinical management of food allergy, the limited role of the environmental health profession in the monitoring and control of food related allergies in the UK and strategies for consumer protection and evidence of peanuts and peanut containing foods. As such this study has been preliminary in nature and formed the basis for a much larger international investigation. The international investigation will require the assistance of members of the International Federation of Environmental Health to gather information and provide data and opinions on allergy monitoring and control in other member countries. This networking will facilitate the comparison of modes of best practice and may allow a consensus of opinions to be derived. From this a concerted and focused methodology may develop which may enable this apparently intractable problem of food mediated allergic reactions to be effectively and efficiently controlled. Ultimately legislation and practice will need to be modified, this study may indicate the best direction in which the control measures should evolve.

## **CALL FOR RESEARCH HELP**

Anyone who is either an Environmental Health Officer or Trading Standards Officer working in the UK in food control (Food Hygiene, Food Standards) or an Environmental Health professional in any country associated with the International Federation of Environmental Health is invited to contact me by any of the methods below to register their interest in receiving a sample questionnaire.

**Ian Leith, Senior EGO, (Food Control), Environmental Health Department, Omagh District Council, The Grange, Mount Joy, Omagh, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland.**

**Tel.: 01662 245321 Fax: 01662 243888  
E-mail 101555.2521@compuserve.com**

## NEW COURSE AT LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY UK

A new MSc in International Environmental Health has been approved at L.M.U. The one year full-time modular course is recruiting and will run (subject to demand) from October 1998. A part-time route is also available. Further details from Zak Mwange, Leeds Metropolitan University. Tel: +44 1132 832600

Stewart Petrie

### International Journal of Environmental Health Research

The *International Journal of Environmental Health Research* is an international quarterly journal devoted to the rapid publication of research in environmental health. Articles on all aspects of the interaction of the environment with human health are published, divided into three broad areas: the natural environment and health, the built environment and health, and communicable diseases.

#### **SPECIAL PRICE FOR MEMBERS OF IFEH AFFILIATED SOCIETIES**

The *Journal* is published with the International Federation of Environmental Health and includes news from the Federation on international meetings, courses and environmental health issues.

It is available to members of affiliated societies at the special reduced rate of £48 / \$78 in 1998.

Please contact the publishers at the address below for further information.

Wendy Fox,  
Carfax Publishing Ltd,  
PO Box 25, Abington,  
Oxfordshire OX14 3UE, UK  
Fax: +44 (0) 1235 401550



CARFAX E-mail: [wendy.fox@carfax.co.uk](mailto:wendy.fox@carfax.co.uk)

## CORRECTION IFEH HOME PAGE ADDRESS



The correct address for the IFEH home page is:-

<http://www.med.ed.ac.uk/hew/ifeh/>

## PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism to me means several things. It's performing our jobs the best way we can and keeping our minds open to opinions which may be contradictory to our own. Professionalism is expressing our opinions and thoughts in a constructive manner - not antagonistically or accusatorily. Professionalism is fulfilling our responsibilities, whether they are work responsibilities or CEHA responsibilities. It's about having integrity. It's about following a code of ethics. It's about taking responsibility for our own actions or inactions. It's learning from our mistakes and moving forward. It's about offering constructive criticism. It's about being civil to each other. It's about not becoming defensive if someone disagrees with you. It's about keeping the big picture in your mind and helping others to understand why we do the things we do. It's keeping level-headed and looking at all the facts and circumstances when making a decision.

Lori Braunesreither President  
California Environmental Health Association



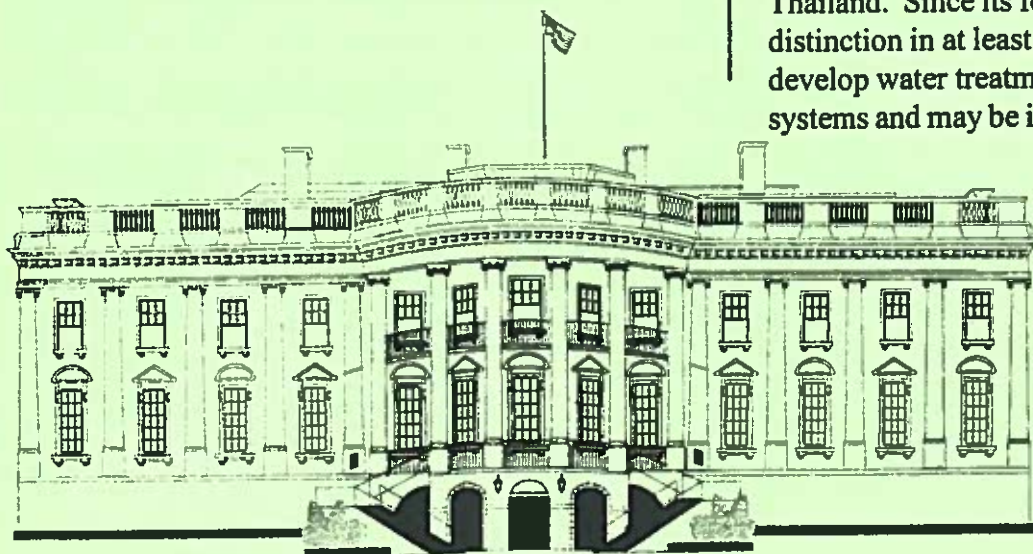
## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### ARE YOU WASHING YOUR HANDS

A company in the USA has produced a gadget which is worn by food handlers to assist in good personal hygiene. Failure to wash the hands properly when required, results in a beep and a message sent to the manager's computer.

### THE WHITE HOUSE AND FOOD POISONING

WHO has advised that the number of food poisoning cases may be 350 times higher than those reported. The White House was so concerned over the high incidence of food poisoning in the USA that the President asked Congress for 60 million dollars to fund a National "early warning system" to fight outbreaks of food contamination which kill about 9,000 people a year.



### DECLARATION OF WESTPORT

Sweden has now been admitted to the work exchange programme. Irene Kempton a Local Agenda 21 Co-ordinator in the Southern Group was the first Northern Ireland Environmental Health Officer to take advantage of the work exchange opportunities offered through the Declaration of Westport. Subsequently Stephen Cooper visited Norway in May to study fish processing.

### PUBLIC HEALTH INTERNATIONAL

PHI is a non-profit agency based in the USA and dedicated to the prevention of death and disease in disaster and refugee settings through the implementation of basic low cost public health programmes. PHI also conducts public health development projects with indigenous populations in developing countries. It operates by recruiting and training public health volunteers who empower refugees to take action by developing basic public health skills. PHI believes that nutritional therapy, medical care and sanitation are interdependent elements of a comprehensive health care programme. PHI was established in 1984 by Roy Baker, Dick Swenson and Terry Rahe, all public health professionals who had served as a volunteers in Thailand. Since its formation, PHI has served with distinction in at least 50 countries. Volunteers develop water treatment and refuse collection systems and may be involved with latrine

construction, oral rehydration, malnutrition identification, immunizations, epidemiology and health education.

PHI Office PO Box No. 116,  
Roseburg Oregon 97470  
USA.

Tel: (541) 6720615 E-mail:  
phi @ wanweb.net

Art Bloom

## ZIMBABWE

Training and development of Environmental Health Practitioners in Zimbabwe

ZEHPA recently completed negotiations for further training of its members who consist of Environmental Health Technicians (EHTs) and Environmental Health Officers.

A bridging course for EHTs to Higher National Diploma (HND) was developed during 1996 and 1997 by the Association and the Ministries of Higher Education and Technology, and Health and Child Welfare. The bridging course covers the following subjects which were identified as deficient in the present EHT Curriculum:

Meat Hygiene  
Environmental Health Practice  
Microbiology  
Physics / Chemistry

The first class of 10 students started the 12 month full-time bridging course at Bulawayo Polytechnic on Monday, 12th January, 1998. The same Polytechnic also runs the conventional HND course.

The second programme which ZEHPA members have benefited from is a 2 year Bachelor of Technology Degree in Environmental Health by Distance Education through Pretoria Technikon in the Republic of South Africa.

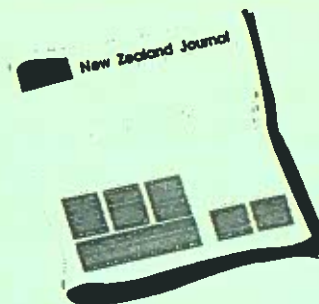
Thirty-six HND holders enrolled for the course which started with the first contact session in Pretoria on 26th and 27th January, 1998. The course is the first step in the implementation of a co-operation agreement signed between the Technikon and ZEHPA in August, 1997. The co-operation agreement also covers exchange of guest lecturers and students, mutual assistance in the development of educational material and special courses, and exchange of research work.

The Association is grateful to the respective institutions of higher learning that have shown a keen interest in these training programmes. We are also

grateful to those IFEH member organisations which responded positively to our appeal for textbooks to support the above initiative.

**Abednego Chigumbu M Med, Ed (Dundee).**  
**President of the Zimbabwe Environmental Health Practitioners (ZEHPA).**

## MAGAZINE ARTICLES



### **Environmental Health, Scotland.**

Editor: Chief Executive John Frater (REHIS), 3 Manor Place, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH3 7DH.

### **February, 1998**

Scombrototoxin Food Poisoning Incident Dumfries  
Paralytic and Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning  
Beef Labelling Scheme  
Treatment and Quality of Paddling Pool Water  
Safeguarding the Future of the Forth Estuary  
Home Safety

### **May, 1998**

Acute Hepatitis B in Edinburgh 1975 - 1992  
Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning: A Biochemical and Toxicological View  
Spirits Substitution in the U.K. Licensed On Trade





## MAGAZINE ARTICLES

### **Journal of the Society of Environmental Health, Singapore.**

Editor: Mr. Chung Keng Meng, Society of Environmental Health, 16 Richards Place, Singapore 546346

#### **Volume 12, March, 1998**

Surveillance of Legionellosis in Singapore 1996  
Littering in Singapore - A moral Dilemma  
Risk Assessment of E-Coli 0157 in Ground Beef  
Overview on the Management and Control of Hazardous Chemicals in Singapore  
Eco labelling and Waste Recycling in Singapore  
Bacterial Retention and Cleanability of Plastic and Wood Cutting Boards (In Summary, wood and plastic kitchen boards are similar in their retention of bacteria when surface moisture is controlled. When examined in the light of current food service operation plastic boards may be more easily cleaned/disinfected with slightly reduced risk of cross-contamination. However, durability and economics are probably more important when deciding the balance of advantages between wood and plastic cutting boards rather than their ability to control cross-contamination.)

### **Environmental Health Review, Australia**

Editor: HER-A, PO Box 77, Deakin West Act 2600.

#### **February, 1998, Volume 27, Issue 1.**

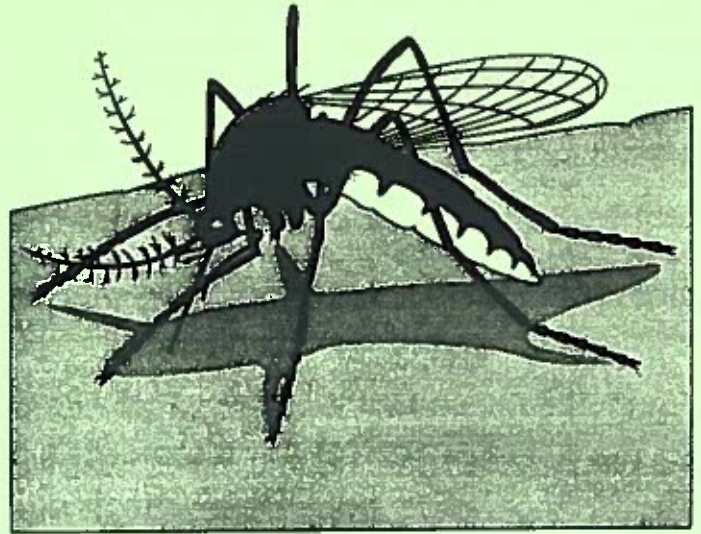
Dengue Fever School Education Project  
Environmental Health Contracting - Reality or Myth  
A Community Approach to Catchment Management  
Food Safety - The Industry Perspective  
The National Arbovirus Strategy  
Rethinking the Role of Local Government

### **Journal of Environmental Health NEHA (USA)**

Editor: Nelson Fabian, 720 S Colorado Boulevard, Suite 970, South Tower, Denver Co 80246-1925

#### **December, 1997.**

Chronology of a Mosquito Control Effort after Hurricane Fran



Rapid Fluorometric Measurement of Trace Amounts of Contaminant DNA in Drinking Water  
Solid Waste Management in Nairobi City  
Hudson beef recall - How the Link was Discovered (25 million pounds of frozen beef patties contaminated with E. coli0157:H7 recalled)

#### **January/February, 1998**

Lead-Leaching Characteristics of Submersible Residential Water Pumps  
Behaviour and Blood Lead Levels of Children in a Lead Mining Area  
National Environmental Health Association Position on Endocrine Disrupters  
Fighting Cholera in Ecuador  
Pfiesteria in Our Waterways

#### **March, 1998,**

Coliform Densities in Urban Waters of West Texas  
Global Warming: Public Health and the Debate About Science and Policy  
International Environmental Health Priorities from Huairou (Between August 30th and 8th September, 1995 38,000 women and several hundred men gathered in Huairou, China to discuss the global status of women and to lobby for specific wording in the Agenda for women that was being finalised in Beijing as part of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.)

## MAGAZINE ARTICLES

**Merging sustainable development**  
Sustainability has emerged as an important new qualification for environmental infrastructure projects, particularly on the fast-growing and environmentally undeserved US/Mexico border. The Border Environment Co-operation Commission and the North American Development Bank respectively charged with approving and financing environmental projects on the border have determined six National areas in which sustainability plays a role: natural resource management; technical efficiency; natural resource preservation; environmental protection; benefits to low income residents; and community participation. The Naco Constructed Wetland/ Microenterprise proposal which would build a demonstration-scale constructed wetland for waste water treatment and train community members in three associated microenterprise projects, creatively demonstrates how principles of sustainable development are expressed in actual project implementation.

### **Environmental Health.**

Editor - Clare Brown, CIEH, Chadwick Court, 15 Hatfields, London, SE1 8DJ

#### **January, 1998, Volume 106/1**

The Sewer Crumbling Beneath Our Feet  
Asthma  
Housing and Environmental Health  
Identifying Allergens Which Present a Risk

#### **February, 1998, Volume 106/2**

Time for New Noise Police



Raising a Roof for Rough Sleepers  
Contaminant Land Regime: To Be or Not to Be

#### **March, 1998 - 106/3**

One Man's Stand Against Racist Neighbours  
Raising Food Safety Standards  
Who Does What in the Water Chain  
Reaping Benefits of Landfill Tax Rebate  
Military Approach to Health and Hygiene  
Basic Grounding in Soil Sampling

#### **April, 1998 - Volume 106/4**

Best Value Pilots Begin  
Making a Home for the Future  
Sounding the Alarm on HMO Fire Safety  
TSOs and Teleworking  
Is Noise Control Legislation Falling on Deaf Ears

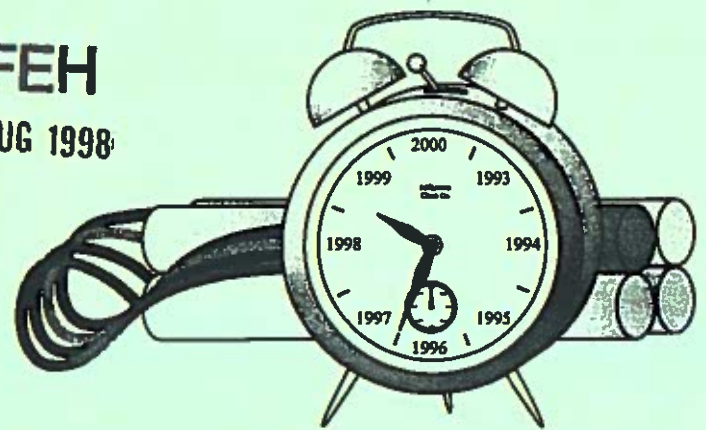
#### **May, 1998 Volume 106/5**

Quest for Best Value  
Relocation Grants  
Education and Training - The Best Recipe for Safe Food  
Where There's a Will, There's a Well (problems with safe water and sanitation for poor and isolated communities in rural Africa)

#### **June, 1998 - Volume 106/6**

Defusing the Millennium Timebomb

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English House Condition Survey: A Fair View of Homes for Health  
Local Agenda 21 - A Prescription for Health  
Control of Flies from Poultry Houses - a New Approach  
Criptosporidium and Giardia lamblia in Private Water Supplies