



---

# NEWSLETTER

*International Federation of Environmental Health*

---

January 2013 Edition

---

## JANUARY EDITION OF THE IFEH NEWSLETTER

*Happy New Year/ Godt Nytår / GELUKKIG NIEUWJAAR! /Feliz Año Nuevo/ Sretna Nova godina to all Members of the IFEH*

Welcome to the January 2013 IFEH Newsletter. On behalf of the Council and the Board of the Federation may I take this opportunity to wish all IFEH members around the World a Happy and Prosperous New Year? The highlight last year was the very successful World Congress organised by our friends in Lithuania, the Lithuanian Union of Hygienists and Epidemiologists. So it is fitting that the first article in the Newsletter is from Andrius Kavaliūnas, the Union's international contact. The next meeting of the IFEH Council will take place in the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Scotland on Saturday 18 May 2013. The Annual General Meeting will take place in the same venue on Sunday 19 May 2013.

The second World Environmental Health Day (WEHD) celebrations, which took place in September 2012, enjoyed greatly increased support from across the globe with numerous events being held. In particular, in the African and Asian regions of the International Federation of Environmental Health. Unfortunately only three Member Associations from Europe celebrated WEHD but the Board plan to announce the topic for 2013 early in the New Year which, it is hoped, will lead to improved participation.

### News from Lithuanian Union of Hygienists and Epidemiologists (LUHE)

After organizing the successful World Congress and ensuing summer vacations, Lithuanian Union of Hygienists and Epidemiologists gathered once more for the members' jamboree and the conference "Priorities of Public Health Care" this September in Resort Park near Trakai, surrounded by beautiful nature.

Members of LUHE, public health professionals from regional public health centres and National Public Health Surveillance Laboratory once more had the opportunity to listen for the keynote speakers of the Vilnius World Congress, this time in Lithuanian, and to discuss the relevant issues with the colleagues from various Lithuania's regions.

The Conference was followed by the interactive sport and orientation games "Health Olympics", where members had possibilities to test their skills in tree climbing, swamp wading, target practice and other funny tasks. In the evening presentation of awards and a concert took place.

The recently held World Congress and the national conference conclude the main works of the LUHE Board. Now the time comes for the reports and analysis and preparations for the LUHE's all members' congress to be held in spring, 2013, for the elections of new president and the board.



Members of LUHE at their recent Jamboree

### National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)

Nelson Fabian, executive director of NEHA, dedicated his column in the September 2012 issue of the Journal of Environmental Health to his experience at the 2012 IFEH Congress in Vilnius, Lithuania. The column talks about IFEH's important role in providing a forum for the leadership of the worldwide environmental health community to come together. Fabian also mentions the positive interactions he had while in attendance. Finally, the column highlights the fact that NEHA will host the 2014 IFEH Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada, and how excited NEHA is to be a host for the event.



## **New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health**

The New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health is having its annual conference from 27th February to 1st March 2013. February is a great time to visit New Zealand and this time our Conference is being held, for the first time, in subtropical Whangarei, just north of Auckland. Conferences are friendly and informal, with usually around 100 delegates.

Fees are modest at \$NZ500 for members (approximately \$US400, 322 Euros or £257) for full registration, including the conference dinner and field trip. The provisional programme covers water quality, changes to New Zealand's food legislation, contaminated land management, noise mapping and infectious diseases. The field trip goes to New Zealand's only oil refinery, Marsden Point, and visits a fish farm.

More details should be posted on the NZIEH Website soon. <http://www.nzieh.org.nz/> The committee has also arranged a post conference day trip to the Poor Knights Islands for kayaking and diving on 2nd March. [http://diving.co.nz/poor\\_knights\\_islands](http://diving.co.nz/poor_knights_islands)

Preferred accommodation is at: Discovery Settlers Hotel <http://www.discoverysettlers.co.nz/>, Kingsgate Hotel Whangarei <http://www.millenniumhotels.co.nz/kingsgatewhangarei/>

Venue for the conference is the Northland Events Centre - Toll Stadium <http://www.venuesandeventshangarei.co.nz/Toll-Stadium/Pages/default.aspx>

For those members of IFEH keen to escape a northern winter registrations will be accepted throughout January and most of February.

## **Spanish Society of Environmental Health (SESA)**

The 12th Spanish Congress of Environmental Health will be held in Granada on the 12-14 June, 2013

The Spanish Society of Environmental Health Publications have recently published the following articles:-

- Health in the assessment of environmental impacts. Methodological Guide
- Health and territory. Practical applications of Geographic Information Systems to Environmental health.

Both articles are available in pdf (in Spanish) on their website: [www.sanidadambiental.com](http://www.sanidadambiental.com)

## **Environmental Health Officers Association Ireland (EHOA)**

The Annual General Meeting of the EHOA took place on 20 October 2012 in Harvey's Point, Donegal. The following appointments were made to the Officer Board - Chairperson: Caitriona Stack, Deputy Chairperson: Peter Gaffey, Treasurer: Noel Donnelly, Honorary Secretary: Martin Fitzpatrick and Public Relations Officer: Lisa Fitzpatrick.

The outgoing Chairperson - Shane Keane, and the outgoing Honorary Secretary - Jennifer Shorten were warmly congratulated for their sterling service to the Association over many years. Happily, they both will continue to contribute their time and skills to the efforts of the Association on a number of ongoing projects and initiatives.

## **Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)**

The Annual General Meeting of REHIS took place on Friday 16 November 2012 in Edinburgh. The new President is Bernard Forteath, Senior Vice President is Colin Wallace and Junior Vice President is Martin Keeley.

## **IFEH Europe Federation meeting — Zagreb**

The autumn meeting of the European Federation was hosted by the Croatian Chamber of Health Professionals and was held in Zagreb in November 2012. The meeting was attended by 14 delegates from 9 Countries.

Bruno Cvetkovic informed the meeting that he is a member of the Chamber of Health Professionals which was founded by merging three other associations including sanitary engineers. Public Health in Croatia is split between health and sanitary engineering, including environmental health. Croatia is working towards EU entry and are bringing their food safety regulations up to standard.

As is normal at IFEH meetings delegates presented an update from their respective countries and Professional Associations.

The recurring theme throughout all the presentations were the challenges faced by officers caused by the continued reduction in resources and increased responsibility and duties which don't appear to be abating. Another recurring theme was charging for food inspections which varies greatly across Europe. Finland has had a fee for food inspections in place for 5 years and this is payable by the food premises directly to the local council.



Some members were also reporting an increased interest within their Governments to raise the profile and importance of public health and several are now requiring other public services such as local planning, roads, leisure etc to measure the public health impact and improvement of their proposals and actions.

In addition to this general theme the meeting also received a report from Steve Cooper, a CIEH representative from Northern Ireland, who was a volunteer inspector at the Olympic Games. Steve informed the meeting of the CIEH involvement in the volunteer force at the Olympics in relation to Environmental Health. This contribution came from practicing EHOs, retired EHOs and Student EHOs. A fuller report on Steve's activities appeared in the October Newsletter.

## Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI)

The Environmental Health Foundation of Canada (EHFC) is the charitable wing of CIPHI and the following article is about the work they are supporting through Clinica Verde.

### *Why Clínica Verde?*

Clínica Verde is a new model of care for families in need — a global prototype of an environmentally sustainable health clinic in Nicaragua for women and children living in poverty.

Their work is twofold: to respond to the health needs of the community while designing an environment for clinical care that incorporates the highest possible standard in sustainable building practices and responsible design. Clinica Verde takes a whole health approach to the families they serve.

*"We are guided by the belief that everything we do and produce as a response to poverty and human suffering should acknowledge the dignity and potential of all life while demonstrating respect for the shared resources of our world."*

### *Where is the money going?*

The EHFC has agreed to donate 100% of the proceeds from this silent auction to the Clínica Verde organization. The EHFC has also agreed to donate \$2,000 on top of the silent auction funds raised to Clínica Verde.

### *What does this have to do with Environmental Public Health?*

Although Clínica Verde is a primary care clinic servicing women and children living in poverty, they are also doing some very important community Public Health activities. Some of the Public Health activities include educating women on food safety, nutrition, and infection control. They are also working with various other local and external agencies to help the community with safe water supplies. The funds donated through this project will help keep the organization continue to operate the clinic and expand their Community Public Health Initiatives.

### *What is the goal?*

The goal of this initiative is to raise \$5000 dollars to donate to the Clínica Verde organization. This includes the silent auction and other fundraising activities in order to ensure we reach our goal for this very inspirational non-profit organization.

For more information please speak to Michael Sidra Michael. [sidra@gmail.com](mailto:sidra@gmail.com) or Sharon Regimbald [Sharon.regimbald@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Sharon.regimbald@albertahealthservices.ca)

## Inaugural Environmental Health and Disaster Management Training Course

On 27 and 28 October the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) delivered the inaugural Environmental Health and Disaster Management training course in Brisbane, Australia. The course attracted 30 public health and disaster management students and professionals from Indonesia, China, Japan, Korea and Australia. It was a unique opportunity for IFEH to test a modified version of the successful Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER) Course, run by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention across the USA, in the Asia-Pacific region.

The environmental health risks and mitigation strategies in a disaster setting were identified and discussed during the course. This included discussion around the key risks such as those relating to drinking water, shelters, overcrowding, food safety, wastewater, disease-causing vectors, solid waste and hazardous materials. Case studies from recent disasters in Australia and a cholera outbreak in Papua New Guinea were also presented and discussed.



The course included a tour of the Queensland (State) Disaster Coordination Centre. This was a unique opportunity for an insight into how the disaster management system in Queensland and Australia operates and supports responses locally, across the state, nationally and internationally. The tour included an overview of the impact of, and response to, recent flooding in southern Queensland and Cyclone Yasi (a category 5 system) in northern Queensland.

The course concluded with a group exercise, which focused on what actions public health and disaster management professionals need to take when preparing for, and responding to, a cyclone. This included an overview and discussion of possible disaster response strategies and tools that can mitigate environmental health risks in the disaster setting.

Feedback from participants found the course to be very successful with 97% indicating it met expectations. Also, the participants awareness level of the environmental health risks associated with a disaster increased on average by 25% for each participant. A very good outcome considering the content is designed to be delivered over four days.

The course was designed and delivered in a partnership between IFEH, CDC, the Alliance for Health Cities — Australian Chapter, Griffith University, Aspen Medical, AECOM, Emergency Management Queensland and the National Environmental Health Association (USA). The course could not have been successful without this support and the interaction of the participants.

As part of continuing to build environmental health capacity globally, IFEH is now working with its partners to deliver four-day courses in Bali, Indonesia, and Glasgow, Scotland, during May 2013. IFEH and its partners would welcome any further opportunities to work with member organisations, partners and individual members to deliver future courses.

For further information please visit [www.ifeh.org](http://www.ifeh.org) or contact Ben Ryan, Director Disaster Training, Asia-Pacific, IFEH, via e-mail [benjamin.ryan@my.jcu.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.ryan@my.jcu.edu.au)

**Finally** the next edition of the Newsletter is due be published in April 2013. If you have any news for the Newsletter from your organisation please send this to me by the last week in February. Please note the earlier deadline. My thanks go to Andrew Forteath and Henning Hansen who have assisted in the production of this issue.

**If you wish to feature any news from your organisation in the next IFEH Newsletter, please contact: Bernard Forteath, Honorary Public Relations Officer, Email:[bernard@forteath.com](mailto:bernard@forteath.com)**

