

# Montana Environmental Health Association



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## SAVE THE DATE!

### MEHA SPRING CONFERENCE

The MEHA Spring Conference is scheduled for **April 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 2010 in Helena. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar, see you there!

### MEHA FALL CONFERENCE

MEHA Fall Conference 2010 planning is currently in full swing. MEHA is collaborating with the Wyoming Environmental Health Association for a joint conference in Yellowstone Park. Tentative dates are **October 18th – 21st, 2010.**

The two association Boards met in Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming

to look at a proposed venue location. As of the immediate time a joint conference is looking favorable. A few more details are in the works to determine absolute feasibility.

Stay tuned for further updates and coming details!



## MEHA FALL CONFERENCE 2009 SURVEY RESULTS/WRAP UP

The 2009 Fall Conference was enjoyable and successful. Missoula County did a fabulous job of organizing and pulling together a great conference, thanks again Missoula!

Results of the conference survey showed the top five presentations as the Keynote presentation on Sanitation in the Backcountry, Clean Indoor Air Act, Trespassing information, Awards Banquet and Communication Skills for Sanitarians.

Other highly rated presentations were topics such as Enforcement, Floodplain Law and Local Wastewater Variances.

Thank you to all who participated in the evaluation of the conference. The current MEHA conference Planning Committee will be taking your comments into account for reference at the 2010 Fall Conference.

If you are interested in looking at the unapproved general membership meeting minutes from the Fall Conference please find them on the MEHA website.

MEHA

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EDITOR, *Christlne Hughes, R.S.*

## MEHA OFFICERS

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 Tom Moore- Director  
 Jeanna McPherson- Director  
 Terry Murphy- Past President

## Update on Lewis and Clark County's Proposed Septic System Maintenance Program

Greetings! So you may have heard rumor that Lewis and Clark County is going to implement some form of a septic system maintenance program. Well, it's definitely not a rumor and we are moving full steam ahead on the project.

So what exactly is the proposed Septic System Maintenance Program? This is a program that will be written into the current onsite wastewater treatment regulations and adopted by the Board of Health. The program is intended to identify failed or malfunctioning septic systems through regular inspection, operation and maintenance.

Currently it is being proposed that standard gravity fed systems will be required to have an operation and maintenance inspection every three years and systems equipped with a pump will be on an annual

inspection frequency. A certified operation and maintenance service provider will perform the inspection and enter the results into a web-based tracking tool. You can look at a demo of the tool at [www.onlineRME.com](http://www.onlineRME.com)

From the website, the regulatory authority may view the inspection report with any noted deficiencies. They type of deficiency determines the correction time. The inspection report will also indicate if the septic tank requires pumping. The web based tracking tool can also be used as a public records search so that anyone may obtain the operation and maintenance inspection from a computer

with an internet connection.

So how is this program going to be administered? The Health Department collects a fee from the homeowner via the operation and maintenance provider. As the O and M provider enters the report into the online database, it automatically deposits the fee into the regulatory account.

An education and outreach campaign is expected to start on January 1, 2010 with proposed adoption in July 2010. The Septic System Maintenance Program website is a great place to obtain regular updates about the program and is currently up and running.

If you would like more information, visit <http://www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us/departments/health/environmental-health-services/septic-maintenance-program.html> or call Beth Norberg at (406) 447-8385

*Kathy Moore, R.S., EH Director*

## Pool Rule Revision

As of December 16<sup>th</sup>, the Pool Rules have been revised and the responses written regarding comments received. The final draft must be approved by Jane Smilie, Public Health and Safety Division Administrator and then submitted to the

Governor for signature. There will be an iLinc seminar on the changes for the Pool Rules on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. The iLinc seminar will discuss the changes and organization of the

inspection books for easier use by Sanitarians. Also, the inspection forms will be revised. Input from County sanitarians about the layout of the form and ease of use will be greatly appreciated.

*Kacie Noonan,  
MDPHHS, FCSS*

## MSU Dining Halls Receive Food Star Award

Representatives of Auxiliary Services and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Food and Consumer Safety Section (MT DPHHS/FCSS) recognized the first recipients in Bozeman of the Montana Food Star Award at 2:15 p.m. Friday, December 11, in the North Hedges conference room of the Hedges Complex.

Each year in the United States, 76 million people get sick because of food borne illnesses, according to event organizers. Of those, 320,000 are hospitalized and 5,000 will die.

The U.S. CDC and Prevention has identified five major risk factors that contribute to food borne illness that are repeatedly identified in food service establishments – improper holding temperatures, inadequate cooking, cross contamination, food from unsafe sources and poor personal hygiene. These

risk factors are reduced through active managerial control as practiced by these recipients: **Hannon Café (Dining Hall)** -

management team Mitch Crane, Manager, Rose Cain, Assistant Manager.

**Miller Dining Hall** –

management team Marilyn Cox, Manager, Kevin Ball, Assistant Manager, Barb Parks, Assistant Manager

**Harrison Dining Hall** –

management team Mike Kosevich, Manager, Terry Cox, Assistant Manager

MSU was the first university in the United States to enroll in the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards in 2006.

Participation in the FDA Program Standards provides a foundation for building an educational and regulatory program through continuous improvement, with the goal of managerial and food staff employees working together to

implement a food safety program to protect the public health of MSU students, faculty and visitors.

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Food and Consumer Safety Section acknowledges the MSU Food Star Team for their dedication and hard work in Food Safety; Toots Taszut, M.S., R.S., MSU Auxiliary Services, Josie Hill, General Manager of Auxiliary Food Services, Todd Jutila, Director of University Food Services, and Tom Stump, Director of Auxiliary Services.

*Christine Cox, R.S.,  
MDPHHS/FCSS*

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## MEHA to Offer NEHA Testing at Fall Conference 2010

MEHA will again offer Sanitarians the opportunity to test for NEHA credentials at the Fall Conference this year. Stay tuned for testing times. If you currently know you will need to test for a NEHA exam or would like more

information regarding testing, please contact Crystal Nuno at [crystal.nun@riverstonehealth.org](mailto:crystal.nun@riverstonehealth.org)

## Lake County Food Safety Advisory Group

Lake County Environmental Health Department recently started a Food Safety Advisory Group. The purpose of this group is to open lines of communication between the food service industry, the public and governing bodies in order to improve food safety. The group was initiated as part of the FDA Voluntary Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. These are standards which focus on the improvement of good retail practices. They encourage regulatory agencies and industry to focus on factors that

contribute to food borne illness. The program standards encourage regulators to continually assess and improve food safety programs.

The Lake County Food Safety Advisory Group held its first meeting on November 18, 2009 and discussed ways that the Lake County Environmental Health Department can better benefit industry, primary food safety concerns of industry and brainstormed for future discussion topics.

If you are interested in learning more about the Lake County Food

Safety Advisory Group, the minutes from our meetings are posted at [www.lakecountymt.org/envhealth/foodservice.html](http://www.lakecountymt.org/envhealth/foodservice.html)

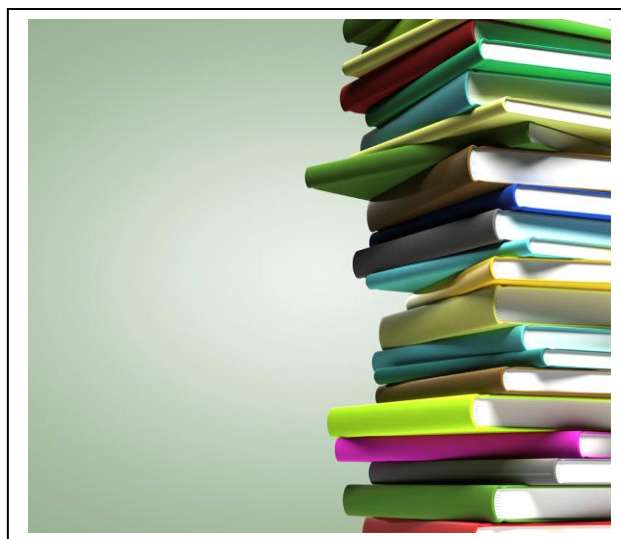
*Christine Hughes, R.S.*

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## NEHA Book Distributorship Program

Are you ordering professional books? If so, remember that MEHA is part of the NEHA book distributorship program. When using this program to order books through NEHA, ten percent of sales will go to MEHA. An added bonus is that books will be offered at NEHA member rates.

There are instructions for using this service on the MEHA website under the "news" link.



## MEHA Fall Conference 2009 Awards

### Winners

Congratulations to the newest MEHA Awards winners! The winners at the 2009 Fall Conference were:

**William G. Walter Outstanding Sanitarian of the Year** – Lea Jordan R.S., Ravalli County

**Donald E. Pizzini Outstanding Achievement Award**- Kenneth Hull, Fort Peck

**Distinguished Service Award**- Jim Murphy, R.S., DPHHS

**Rookie of the Year** – John Palacio, SIT, Ravalli County; Adam Harris, R.S., Yellowstone County

**Excellence Award**- Doris Morgan R.S, Park County

### Certificates of Recognition went to:

Steve Jensen, Lake County

Chefs and Cooks of MT

Donny Saisbury, R.S., Lake County

Rod Daniel, R.S., Ravalli County

Jay Plant, SIT, Lewis and Clark County

### DEQ Subdivision, Big Winner and Workhorse Awards:

Glen Gray, R.S., and  
Wendee Jacobs, R.S.,  
Flathead County



2009 MEHA Awards Winners



## Your Ideas Needed!

The Montana Public Health Association plans to hold their Fall conference in Helena on September 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The theme of the conference is *Montana Mosaic* and it is the goal of the association to incorporate all aspects of Public Health into the conference. If you have a good idea or topic that might be of interest related to Environmental Health that you wish to share at the upcoming conference, please contact Crystal Nuno at [crystal.nun@riverstonehealth.org](mailto:crystal.nun@riverstonehealth.org)



## MEHA Foundation Board Re-Activates

The MEHA Board has recently held discussions regarding re-activation of the MEHA Foundation Board.

Per the Articles of Incorporation for the MEHA Foundation, the Board of Directors for the Foundation is the MEHA Immediate Past-President, the Past Past President, the current MEHA Treasurer and the MEHA Secretary plus two Directors. Theresa Blazevich and Jeanna McPherson have volunteered as Directors.

The desire to house a standing committee for

Professional Development prompted the MEHA Foundation re-activation. A Professional Development standing sub-committee of the MEHA Foundation Board will be formed.

Housing a Professional Development Subcommittee under the Foundation will allow for increased success, sustainability and financial resources for this group.

A Chairman for the MEHA Foundation Board must still be selected.

This is exciting news which will allow for active progress and the continued development of the

Environmental Health profession.

Please bring your thoughts regarding this topic to the MEHA general membership meeting at the Spring Conference.

## Sanitarian Library Available

There is a library of study materials available for anyone who may be studying to take the Registered Sanitarian exam. This library is currently housed with Doris Morgan, R.S., of Park County. There is a variety of study materials available.

There is no charge for use of the materials. A check out form and plan for return of the materials must be completed prior to checking out books.

The library will likely be moved to Helena after Doris retires.

If you need more information or for a **complete** listing of books please contact Doris Morgan at (406)388-3397 or e-mail [dmorgan@parkcounty.org](mailto:dmorgan@parkcounty.org)

submit your information to Christine Hughes at [chughes@lakemt.gov](mailto:chughes@lakemt.gov)

### MEHA NEWSLETTER INFORMATION OR ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Your ideas for the MEHA newsletter are needed! If you have an article of interest, please

## More Fall Conference Photos-2010



Terry Murphy, Crystal Nuno



Adam Harris, Jennifer Pinnow



Doris Morgan receiving the Excellence Award