

VEHA Bulletin-Spring 2018



Message from the President - David Fridley

Dear VEHA Members,

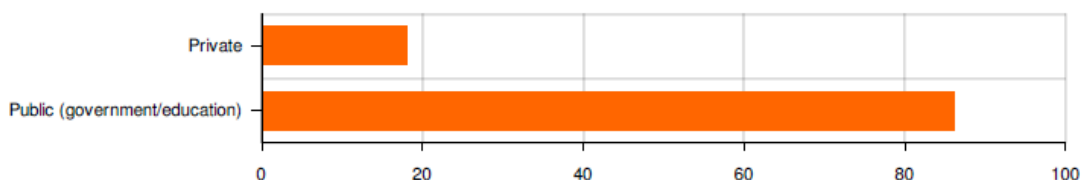
I hope you are enjoying our spring-like weather after a very cold winter. Inside this *Bulletin*, you will find some information about things VEHA has been working on over the cold months, including opportunities for education and professional support for environmental health and science students through our scholarship program.

You have noticed several times over the last few months that we have reached out to you for your knowledge and opinion, and we hope to increase our ability this upcoming year to take your input and put it to use.

VEHA is a stakeholder whose opinion is sought regarding proposed legislation with an impact upon the environmental health profession. With your input, we were able to provide your representative opinion regarding several bills in the 2018 General Assembly session. For example, VEHA did not support changing the definition of “maintenance” in the Code of Virginia regarding onsite sewage systems; supported giving the Department of Health the authority to develop maintenance regulations for conventional onsite systems; and supported (with the proviso of additional consideration of financial implications) a five-year plan to substantially privatize onsite system evaluation and design in Virginia. Each of these changes have sparked considerable dialogue in the environmental health community. Your survey responses were crucial to ensuring that our input reflected the opinion of the majority of our members.

We are also looking to see how we can be of the best practical use to you, and that’s why we polled you on training needs and your access to training. We had heard anecdotally that some VEHA members found it difficult to get a blessing from their employer to attend trainings from independent organizations like VEHA, so we tried to find out; we also wanted to know, frankly, if our educational offerings really mattered to you. The majority of you replied, and here is what you said:

- Are you employed by the private or public sector?



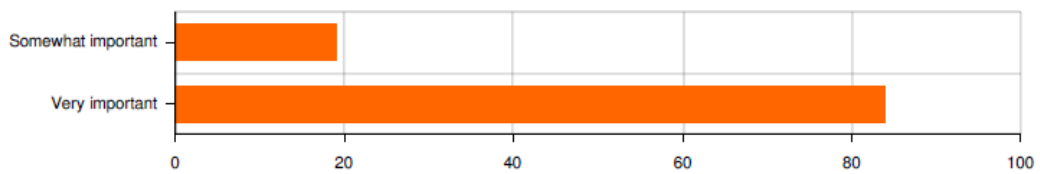
- Does your license or credential require continuing professional education credit?



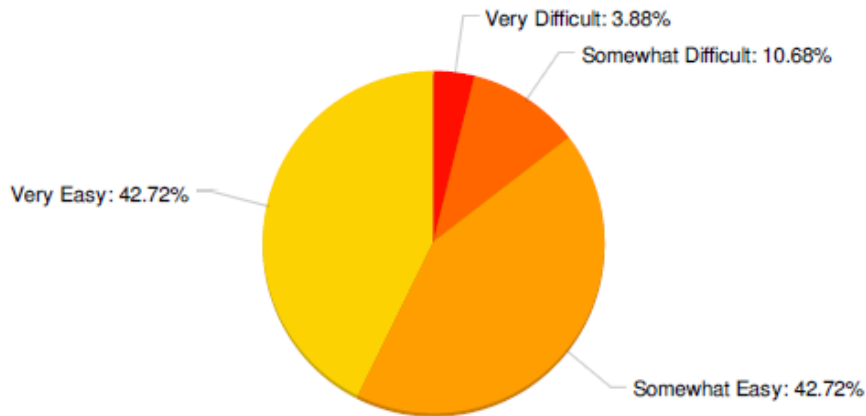
- Does VEHA provide you with education that applies to your specific license or credential?



- Compared to training your employer provides, how important to you is VEHA training?



- Without taking "leave" hours, how easy is it for you to get permission to attend independent training?



- Do you get financial, travel or other support to attend independent training?



So, we can conclude that training is important (and necessary) to you, and that VEHA provides high quality relevant training in addition to what your employer may offer. However, about 1 in 7 of you find it somewhat or very difficult to arrange to attend our trainings, and for less than half of you is it “very easy.” That points our way forward as we work to promote your profession and increase your access to high quality, relevant education.

We also collected over a hundred specific comments, questions and concerns about VEHA and training. They will also help guide our future educational efforts. My very favorite included these sentiments: “Since I’ve become active in VEHA, and attended VEHA sponsored trainings, I’ve achieved several professional certifications [...] I’ve become more recognized and respected in my profession and by my peers; also I’ve grown several inches taller and my skin has cleared up. Thanks VEHA for all you do!” Regarding that last bit, just let me say on behalf of VEHA, we’re pleased to be of service!

And one final thing: we promised a year’s free VEHA membership to a survey responder chosen by random drawing, and the winner is: Julia Goens! Congratulations, Julia!

Thank you,

David Fridley

Membership

VP of Member Services - Sandy Stoneman

Member services has gone wild . . . Wild Apricot, that is! In the last quarter of 2017, the VEHA Board voted to purchase and implement a new website platform and membership software called Wild Apricot. We are happy to announce that this is now up and running. Becoming a VEHA member or renewing your VEHA membership has never been easier and now all conference and event registrations will be done on the VEHA website as well. I encourage you to check out the [new website, update your membership profile, and register for our upcoming Spring 2018 Educational Conference!](#)

Scholarships & Awards

VP of Professional Advancement - Rachel Stradling

VEHA Educational Scholarship: Each spring VEHA solicits undergraduate and graduate students in the Environmental Health field of study to submit their applications for the annual VEHA Educational Scholarship. This scholarship is currently funded at \$500.00 and is awarded to the most qualified applicant(s) at the Spring Educational Conference. Application deadline is March 31, 2018. To apply, visit [VEHA’s Scholarships-Awards page](#).

Certificates of Merit: Every NEHA state affiliate is invited to designate an individual and/or a team of its members to receive a Certificate of Merit, thereby nationally recognizing one of their own for outstanding contributions to the profession of environmental health. Recipients are recognized during NEHA’s Annual Education Conference awards program and in the Journal of Environmental Health. This is an opportunity for special recognition of one of our own members in front of a national audience. **Nominations must be received by June 1, 2018.** To apply, visit [VEHA’s Scholarships-Awards page](#).

Environmental Health Professional of the Year: The nominee for the Environmental Health (EH) Professional of the Year award must be an EH Professional currently engaged in the practice of Environmental Health who has made outstanding contributions to the EH Profession, and the EH Programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Nominees must be current VEHA members and should exemplify the values, quality of work, and ethical integrity held in high regard by the EH profession. Sponsors who make the nomination must also be

current VEHA members. This award is presented each year at VEHA's Fall Educational Conference. To **nominate a deserving EH Professional, submit your nomination form by September 30, 2018.** The nomination form can be found on [VEHA's Scholarships-Awards page](#).

A. Clark Slaymaker Award: A. Clark Slaymaker was a Virginia Department of Health employee from 1943 to 1970. He ended his career as the EH Manager (then called Chief Sanitarian) in Alexandria, Virginia. In 1966 he won NEHA's prestigious Walter S. Mangold award, the **ONLY** VDH employee ever to do so. This award was created to recognize an individual, association, corporation, or organization that is not actively engaged in the field of environmental health but has made outstanding contributions and supported the EH Profession and the EH programs in VA. The individual(s) who wish to submit a nomination for this award must be a current member of VEHA however, it is not necessary for the nominee to be a member. **The deadline for nomination is September 30, 2018.** The nomination form can be found on [VEHA's Scholarships-Awards page](#).

Capitol Area Update

Delegate - Amy Pemberton

In Memory of James English, Jr.

Many of you in the Environmental Health profession knew, or at least knew of, Professor Jim English of Old Dominion University. It is with a heavy heart that I share the sad news of his passing on November 7, 2017 in Norfolk.

Originally from New Jersey, Jim was an enlisted Navy man for six years, which then brought him to Norfolk. He worked for VDH for many years, ultimately serving as the Director of Environmental Health Services and Deputy Director of Public Health for the city of Norfolk. A long-time member of VEHA, Jim served as President of the organization from 1989 until 1992, helping develop the current structure of the organization, establishing by laws, and developing its Scholarship Program. During Jim's term as VEHA President, we hosted a very successful NEHA mid-year conference in Norfolk, one of the last that NEHA did. In conjunction with that mid-year conference, we hosted our first REHS certification session, with a record number of EH staff sitting for the exam.

Jim received his Master's Degree in Community Health Education from Old Dominion University in 1982, became professor of Environmental Health there, and eventually became the Environmental Health Program Director in August 1988—a position he held until retirement in 2015. During his time at ODU, he taught and mentored hundreds of students, assisting them in finding internships, and jobs upon graduation. Jim regularly brought students to VEHA educational sessions, encouraging continuing education and talking with EH professionals working in the field. Professor English was a champion of the ODU Student Environmental Health Association. He was an "EH icon" for many years in Virginia, and has made a significant impact on our profession in Virginia. Jim will be greatly missed by those that have had the fortunate opportunity to cross paths with him over the years.



Tidewater Area Update

Delegate - Adam Feris

Tidewater has been a busy region, lately! The SWIFT Project, the Hampton Roads Sanitation District's (HRSD) initiative to stem aquifer depletion and land subsidence, has continued to move forward with the first test well currently under construction. This well is projected to inject 1 million gallons of highly treated wastewater

into the Upper Potomac aquifer daily. After extensive testing and monitoring, additional wells are planned for construction.

The Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Advisory Committee, a group convened to discuss groundwater supply in the Eastern Region, published its final report. The report outlines the current state of groundwater supplies and offers recommendations to the General Assembly and the Department of Environmental Quality on how to deal with these challenges. The HRSD SWIFT Project is one aspect of the report, with a discussion on funding for the initiative.

OEHS released 4 new GMP's in the fall and local health departments and stakeholders continue to work to implement these new policies, which for some districts, greatly change how some parts of their onsite programs run. A big change is that construction permits for onsite sewage systems are now transferrable. Also, Safe, Adequate, and Proper evaluations finally have a dedicated policy and application process in GMP 2017-03.

As I'm writing this, it's the first full week of February and the General Assembly has already been incredibly busy. I began following 14 different pieces of legislation. Highlights of these bills include: a defeated proposal to prohibit construction of certain types of private wells within a groundwater management area (Senate Bill 520), a group of bills directly related to the shifting of direct services to the private sector (House Bills 885, 887, 888), and a bill that would allow food establishments to operate without a Certified Food Protection Manager provided they haven't been found in violation of the regulations for 5 years (HB 1220).

Not all of the bills I'm following have been discussed in committee, yet. Given the nature of some of them, outcomes are a little hard to predict. I am expecting a busy spring and early summer for the SHADAC and other stakeholder groups. Happy 2018, everyone!

Northern Area Update

Delegate - Bryant Wooden

For the past year, it has continued to be a great opportunity to serve as the Northern Area Regional Delegate for VEHA. I have been able to take part in the monthly VEHA conference call meetings with fellow board members to discuss matters and business of the organization. I attended the 2017 Spring and 2017 Fall VEHA Educational Conferences and aided with morning registration, along with assisting speakers and attendees during the afternoon food safety sessions.

I routinely encourage colleagues from the Northern Virginia Region to attend the VEHA Educational Conferences to network and obtain educational credits for professional credentials. As for the Northern Virginia region, this winter has been pretty consistently frigid with temperatures and wind chills dipping way below freezing on many days. For example, the freezing weather sometimes can cause major water main breaks, which often temporarily interrupt water service to many restaurants, hotels, and other permitted establishments. As environmental professionals in situations like this, it is always important to be able to educate and have an open line of communication with the facilities to protect public health.

It is a great opportunity to work with the VEHA organization as we continue to protect the environment and communities through further understanding of public health. I encourage anyone interested in making the VEHA organization a continued success, to visit our website at virginiaeha.org or reach out to your area delegates.

Southwest Area Update

Jessica Stewart - Delegate

VEHA is officially a member of the regional Interstate Environmental Health Seminar giving our state members more opportunities for educational and professional growth.

I had the opportunity to reach out to the Chairman of the Interstate Environmental Health Seminar (IEHS). She corresponded with all of the member states (there are 8 total) and they have enthusiastically invited VEHA to become an active member. She mentioned that historically Virginia was an original member of the IEHS.

This annual, multi-day seminar is sponsored by Environmental Health Associations from the member states of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. It is held in a different state each year as it rotates between the member states. This permits the IEHS to draw speakers in the environmental health field from a wide area including several levels of government and from industry. In addition to the speakers, there is an exhibit hall with displays from environmental health related industries. All environmental health personnel are welcome to attend the annual seminar. This year, the Seminar will be held in West Virginia at the Glade Springs Resort, in Daniels, WV on July 11-13, 2018.

The West Virginia Association of Sanitarians will be sending out an agenda/registration soon. VEHA will send our members this information and post about it on our website once it becomes available.

Here's the IEHS website for more information: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvas/iehs/> .

I'm looking forward to VEHA collaborating with the other member states. This annual seminar will be an excellent opportunity for networking and educational growth within environmental health that expands beyond our state to a regional level.

VEHA News & Save the Dates

VEHA Spring Educational Conference – April 27, 2018. Register and get more information by visiting the [VEHA Events page](#).

NEHA Annual Educational Conference (AEC) Conference 2018

Anaheim, CA – June 25-28, 2018

www.neha.org/aec/about-aec

Interstate Environmental Health Seminar (IEHS) – July 11-13, 2018. This year's seminar will be held at the Glade Springs Resort in Daniels, WV. <http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvas/iehs/>

VEHA Fall Educational Conference – Be watching your email and the website for more information.