President’s Message

With the short legislation session coming to an end, there have been several environmental bills being proposed. The first bill is HB 5212: An Act Concerning the Licensing of Food Vendors. The concept of this bill is a “one license fits all.” It would allow food vendors to have just one license that would be used throughout the state. CEHA does not support this bill and provided written testimony as to why this bill would not be effective and beneficial for the state.

The next bill is HB 5131: An Act Establishing a Taskforce on Nail Salons and Nail Technicians. This bill is proposing to create a taskforce to study nail salons and the provisions of services by nail technicians. CEHA believes that this bill will be helpful for protecting the health of individuals that go to nail salons.

The last bill is Senate Bill 119: An Act to Establishing a Taskforce to Study Hoarding. This bill is proposing to create a taskforce on hoarding to review current methods used by various public agencies to address hoarding, identify barriers faced by public agencies to intervene and assist people who compulsively hoard, and to create a framework to coordinate the efforts among state and local public agencies to address the public safety and health issues associated with hoarding. CEHA also supports this bill and just last week the senate voted in favor of this bill and will be passed onto the House in the weeks to come. Thank you to Liz Kavanah and Luigi Sartori for providing written testimony for these bills.

Also, for the first time in many years, we held an election for the Vice President position. I am happy to announce that Phyllis Amodio (Nominations/Elections) won the election and is currently serving as Vice President. Congratulations Phyllis!

Sincerely,

Stacey Herbette
CEHA President
BETTER CALL THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT
By John R. Deckert, Chief Sanitarian, Glastonbury Health Department

As most of you already know, every day is an adventure in the world of public health. You never know what you may encounter or what situation may arise that ends up in your hands to deal with. It seems that when a crisis arises and someone doesn’t know who to call, they call the health department. Over the years, our department has received enough bizarre calls that we have a separate file marked “The X Files”. I think I actually heard Agent Mulder and Agent Scully rummaging through those files recently, or maybe I just need to retire.

Our department received a call one time from a very upset citizen regarding a dead cow lying in a field for several days. She was not happy that her children had to witness the poor beast rotting away in the field as they rode the bus back and forth to school. She felt it was a public health hazard and traumatic for her children. She said they were moping around the house, sometimes fighting back tears. She said that they have trouble sleeping. She has stopped reading “Goodnight Moon” to her daughter because whenever she starts to say the word moon she can’t get past “moo” without her little girl bursting into tears.

I decided to investigate and drove out to the site. I pulled over to the side of the road and lo and behold there was a white and black cow lying on its side out in the field about 100 feet from the road. I couldn’t see its head but the bloated body and four stretched out legs facing the road didn’t look good. Even through the trees along the edge of the road, you couldn’t miss this. And riding inside a school bus the view must be ghastly. Aha, I thought, I can actually write a letter to the property owner citing St. of Ct. Public Health Code regulation 19-13-B23 (b). That regulation actually addresses disposal of a dead animal within 24 hours. I was so excited I had to take Don Kendrick, R.S. from our office to show him that the complaint was in fact legitimate. (Not that we have turned cynical over the years, but many of the complaints that we have received are bogus or exaggerated by the complainant.) With glee we drove back to the office and I drafted my letter.

Rather than mail the letter, I decided it would be worth hand delivering the citation to the property owner. Pulling up to the property, the owner was busy working on the side of his barn. To approach him, I had to cross the field, which brought me closer to the poor dead bovine. Boy, I thought to myself, the decay is really taking its toll, because now it doesn’t even look like it has much of a cow form left. I decided to discuss the complaint with the owner before handing him the citation.

“How are you doing?” I introduced myself, “Our department received a complaint of a dead cow in your field.”

He glanced over in the direction I pointed to.
“You mean that pile of manure I covered up with that sheet of plastic?”

And sure enough, the dead cow was actually a pile of manure covered with a white sheet of poly plastic. The plastic had weathered and was torn in a distinct pattern that from the road, well, you get the picture.

“Yeah,” I laughed, “It’s crazy the complaints we get. Have a great day”.

I definitely need to retire.
Outstanding Achievement Awards

Each year CEHA Board seeks nominations from membership for 2 achievement awards. Do you work with someone who is truly dedicated to the profession? Do you know another CEHA member and who is an advocate for CEHA or the profession? Please consider nominating this person for either the Perriello Award or the Brunelle Award. The CEHA Executive Board needs your input and help in identifying potential award recipients. The criteria for each Award are listed below:

**Perriello Award: Nominations due Aug 1st**
This award, established in 1970 by the Yankee Conference Board of Directors is presented in tribute to Robert C. Perriello for his many years in public health and academic service in Rhode Island and New England. This award recognizes the professional achievements made by a registered sanitarian and local affiliate (CEHA) member. This most prestigious award is given by the Yankee Conference Board of Directors to an individual who first must be chosen by their own affiliate’s Board of Directors. This is a highly respected honor and is presented to a most outstanding member for their contributions to CEHA, the Yankee Conference, and environmental health.

**Brunelle Award: Nominations due Oct 1st**
This award, established in 1971 by the CEHA Board, is presented to a deserving member in recognition for outstanding service. This high honor is also referred to as the "Connecticut Sanitarian of the Year" award. Raymond Brunelle was a dedicated sanitarian, the first president of CEHA, and did a great deal to promote environmental health throughout Connecticut.

Download the applications today from the CEHA website: cteha.org.

PLEASE RETURN ALL APPLICATIONS by the Due Date Listed:
Eloise Hazelwood, Chair
CEHA Scholarship Committee
C/o Wallingford Health Department
45 South Main St., rm. 215
Wallingford, CT 06492
Scholarship Opportunities

Every day’s a learning day! If you’re headed back to the classroom to further your education or if you’re in the process of earning your undergrad or completing an environmental certification program, CEHA has scholarship opportunities. We could all use a little help with finances, and the Yankee Scholarship and Marvin L. Smith Scholarship offer just that, $1,500 and $1,000 to off-set the cost of learning.

So what do you need to do? Go to the website, cteha.org, download the application and submit NLT June 30th. The scholarships will be reviewed and scored based solely on the information you provided in the scholarship essay. So now is the time to “blow your own horn”. Tell us about your involvement in CEHA activities or other related organizations. Convince us that you should be selected as the 2016 Scholarship recipient.

Don’t wait until the last minute, start working on your application today. Good Luck and we hope to see you at both the Yankee Conference in Mystic CT and the Annual Meeting in Nov, check the website for more information.

Eloise Hazelwood, RS, MPH
CEHA Chair, Scholarship and Awards Committee
Adjunct, SCSU
The 54th Annual Yankee Conference on Environmental Health
“Expanding the Focus between Health and the Environment”
By: Scott Cook

It has been almost four years since CEHA last hosted the Yankee Conference. I was chairman of the planning committee in 2012. This time around, I am also chairman of the Yankee Conference Board of Directors, the group that oversees the conference as it moves from host to host among the four New England affiliates of the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). This year CEHA has returned to the newly renovated Mystic Hilton to hold the Yankee Conference. This will be a two-day conference with three concurrent educational tracks focusing on food protection, drinking water, subsurface sewage disposal and public health preparedness. There will be a sprinkling of other subjects relevant to the profession as well. As in past conferences, there will be exhibitors, networking opportunities and fun events. The Planning Committee is working hard to bring in subject matter that will provide fresh perspectives to what you practice daily in Environmental Public Health. At the same time, this will be an event that traditionally honors the practitioners of Environmental Health for outstanding contributions to the profession.

Since this is a regional event, there will be registrants from all the New England states with a large representation from our Massachusetts colleagues. One of the key aspects of the conference is to provide training contact hours (TCH) and continuing education units (CEUs) to those that attend the conference. With that mission in mind, one key feature of this Yankee Conference is that the Drinking Water Track will provide TCH to Connecticut Water Operators and Well Drillers. In addition, all training sessions will provide CEUs towards maintaining the NEHA REHS credential. The conference also provides CEUs towards Massachusetts credentials for Registered Sanitarians and Title V Soil Evaluators. And, of course, the Food Protection Track will provide contact hours for Connecticut Food Inspector recertification.

A new wrinkle to this year’s conference is that registration will be performed online at the CEHA Wild Apricot site familiar to our members. There will be the opportunity to register for the conference and pay immediately by credit card, a first for this conference. There will also be the option to mail a check for payment through an invoice generated by the registration site. Right now, exhibitors, sponsors and advertisers can register for the conference. We expect to have registration open to the public by June 2016. You can always check for updates on the conference at www.cteha.org. Registration will be available at www.ceha.wildapricot.org/events.

Another important mission of the Yankee Conference is to provide funding to the host affiliate’s Yankee Conference Scholarship account. This is one of two educational scholarships that CEHA awards to association members and their children to promote the current and the next generation of Environmental Health Specialists. A minimum of forty percent of the net proceeds of the conference must go to the Yankee Conference Scholarship Account, which is held by the Yankee Conference Board of Directors. CEHA’s account
needs to be replenished. It has been increasingly difficult since 2008 for any of the conferences to provide funding to the host affiliate’s account. There is a litany of reasons why this has happened. The bottom line: the conference is competing for the limited and diminishing resources available - both personal, employer and philanthropic - that other entities are competing for. It is the Planning Committee’s goal to have this conference provide the eligibility, value, affordability and return of investment for allocating those limited resources to attend this conference the best choice. We are looking forward to your support, and I look forward to seeing you at the Hilton Mystic, 20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, CT on September 21 and 22, 2016 for the 54th Annual Yankee Conference on Environmental Health!

Hotel reservations must be made by August 21, 2016 and are available now by calling the Hilton Mystic Reservation Office at 860-572-0731. Use code CTEHA to reserve a room in the room block for $169 a night (plus taxes and fees). If you have any comments, suggestions, presentations, or other ideas for the Yankee Conference, contact me at scottcook153@gmail.com.

The 54th Annual Yankee Conference on Environmental Health
September 21st and 22nd, 2016

Mystic Hilton
20 Coogan Boulevard
Mystic, Connecticut

Mystic Hilton  Mystic Aquarium  Mystic Seaport
Dear Marco

CT’s NEED FOR A HOARDING RESPONSE AND TREATMENT PLAN

By Marco Palmeri

Hoarding Disorder is a complex, debilitating mental illness that exists in every culture, income and education level and is estimated to affect approximately 5% of the U.S. population, or about 180,000 Connecticut residents. Hoarding Disorder has two distinct characteristics, the first is the acquisition and accumulation of excessive amounts of things that have little or no value (or animals) that clutter the living spaces and severely limit the use of the home, creating extremely unsafe and unhealthy conditions; the second being the hoarder’s inability to part with those useless items (or animals) that they accumulated. Hoarding conditions typically worsen over time and eventually reach a level where the home becomes virtually uninhabitable. In extreme cases, there may not be any access or use of the bathroom(s), kitchens or bedrooms. Since the prevalence of recidivism is extremely high with hoarding, simply clearing out the clutter will not solve the problem, as the creation of a new hazardous condition is inevitable.

Currently, when these conditions are brought to the attention of the code enforcement community, officials often struggle with their responses as there are no state guidelines or recommendations to follow. These uncertainties increase when the hoarding situation exists in single family homes where the conditions only affect the occupants, leaving the code officials trying to balance their obligation to ensure the home is habitable, while respecting the occupant’s mental illness and their right to live as they choose. Without support and treatment from mental health professionals, achieving compliance is rare, leading the code enforcement officials to either seek legal remedies to force the home to be remediated or to condemn it.

Municipalities are also fearful, and rightfully so, of being liable or incurring some financial responsibility to clean-up or relocate those who have been displaced. This fear can sometimes influence the actions of the code enforcement official, potentially leaving the resident(s) in the unsafe and/or unhealthy home.

Therefore, it is time the State of Connecticut and its various agencies recognize the prevalence of Hoarding Disorder and the crippling effects it has on our residents, our communities, and our economy, and support Senate Bill No. 119, An Act Establishing a Taskforce to Study Hoarding that was spearheaded by CT’s Hoarding Working Group. If the Bill passes, the members of the Taskforce should work with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), and CT’s Hoarding Working Group to develop a Hoarding Response and Treatment Plan that can be implemented statewide. This Plan should be adopted by DMHAS and contracted out by those interested mental health organizations, as some treatments can now be billed. Fortunately, in 2013, Hoarding, as an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder was added to the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition (ICD-10) Code F42.

The Hoarding Response and Treatment Plan should consist of three separate disciplines: code enforcement, mental health, and social services. The role of the code enforcement community (Building Dept., Fire Marshal, Health Dept., and/or Animal Control), is to assess the condition of the home and prepare a corrective action plan, as well as contact the other two disciplines. The role of the Mental Health Professional is to assure the person suffering from Hoarding Disorder receives the necessary therapies outlined in the Plan, as well as to provide long term therapies to avoid recidivism. The role of the Social Service agency is to identify the health insurance status and financial stability of the person(s) affected by the conditions. This latter role is especially important as it serves to prevent municipalities from incurring unexpected costs as well as identifying how the Mental Health providers will be reimbursed. All three disciplines need not respond together, but must communicate and collaborate with each other to ultimately assure those affected by Hoarding Disorder are receiving proper therapies, living in a safe and healthy home without any drain on the community’s resources.

2 https://icd.codes/icd10cm/F42
Having just returned from a week in Boise I want to share with you some of what occurred at the Biennial Meeting. In case you are not familiar with the Conference for Food Protection it is essentially the “Congress of Food Safety” where stakeholders in the realm of our retail food system are equally represented in a forum to discuss emerging food safety problems and to formulate recommendations and solutions. This is the mechanism by which the FDA Model Food Code and the Annex are developed and amended. Food safety-related issues are submitted by regulators, the food industry, academia or consumers, sorted into three categories and deliberated one at a time by a balanced council of regional representatives from local and state regulators, industry, academia, USDA, CDC, FDA and consumers. I was privileged to represent local inspectors from the Northeast Region on Council I. The debate is orderly and civil and everyone with an opinion is allowed to speak and is respectfully heard. After two and a half days of deliberations the issues are either accepted as submitted, accepted with amendments, or deemed “no action” (which means the issue is rejected). On the last day of the conference state delegates assemble to make the final decision on the council recommendations by voting “I” or “nay”.

Last week in Boise there were 477 registered attendees representing 47 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Mariana Islands. Preceding the opening of the general session, nine speakers made presentations on “Trends and Innovation in Food Protection” including Dr. Arthur Liang from CDC and researchers from George Washington University, Purdue, and others discussing topics such as, “Biofilms in the Retail Environment”, “Antimicrobial Resistance”, and “Emerging Opportunistic Organisms”. After two and a half days of council deliberations some of the proposed changes to the 2017 edition of the Food Code include requiring the Person in Charge be a certified food protection manager (issue II-025) and extending the exclusion period from 24 to 48 hours for food employees symptomatic with vomiting or diarrhea (issue III-016). On the final day of the conference the Assembly of Delegates extracted an issue from Council III that had been accepted as submitted. It was regarding the approval of pre-mixed sanitizers and was voted down (“killed”) unanimously by the state delegates because the manufacturer does not provide a test kit for these products. This was pretty exciting because it demonstrated how the states can have the final word on proposed solutions.

It was disappointing to be the only local regulator in attendance from the Northeast Region and sad also that neither Consumer Protection nor the CT Department of Public Health sent a delegate to represent CT. (CT gets 2 half votes) All of the other states in the Northeast Region were represented and luckily, I could vote for CT by proxy so we were not left out of these proceedings. Now that CT is in the process of adopting the FDA Food Code it is time to get involved in this process because it is the best way to promote regulatory uniformity between states, regions, territories and tribal nations. You and your local health department can have a say in shaping our food safety regulations beginning in April, 2018 at the next CFP Biennial Meeting in Richmond, VA. For the first time the Conference will move to a Monday-Friday format which may make travel and time away from the office easier. The Biennial Meeting offers a full day workshop (CEU’s!) and registration includes a two year CFP membership. In addition, FDA provides travel subsidies for delegates ($50,000 was provided for 54 delegates in Boise). It’s long overdue that CT, along with the Northeast Region, gets more involved in this conference. I urge you to peruse the CFP website (foodprotect.org) and recognize all the great work your colleagues are doing throughout the country. Be sure not to miss the newly updated and soon to be available for use 2016 Restaurant Plan Review Guide!