



# Connecticut Environmental Health Association

## The Environmentalist

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### Scholarships

Every day is a learning day! If you are headed back to the classroom to further your education or if you are 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 Joe Hock Yankee Conference Scholarship and Marvin L. Smith Scholarship offer just that, \$1,500 and \$1,000 to offset the cost of learning.

So what do you need to do? Go to the website, [www.cteha.org](http://www.cteha.org), download the application and submit no later than June 30th. Please take a moment to view the listing of past recipients on the website. All these folks took advantage of the scholarship as a benefit to members. All applications will be reviewed and scored based solely on the information you provide. So now is the time to “blow your own horn”. Tell us about your involvement in CEHA activities or other related organizations. Do you deserve to be the 2017 Scholarship recipient? Do not wait until the last minute, start working on your application today. Good Luck!

Eloise Hazelwood,  
RS, MPH



### Inside this issue

Merchandise & Social Media .....	2
CEHA Nominations .....	2
Public Testimony.....	3
Save The Dates.....	4
Safety First.....	5
New Britain Health Dept.....	3-4

### Board Members/Committees

- Matthew Payne, President
- Phyllis Amodio, President-Elect
- Jessica Fletcher, Vice President
- Scott A. Cook, Treasurer
- Luigi Sartori, Secretary
- Stacey Herbette, Past President
  
- Debbie Schober, Education
- Elizabeth Kavanah & Diane Collelo, Legislative
- Maryam Hosseini, Membership
- Kevin Elak, Nominations/Elections
- Eloise Hazelwood, Scholarship/Awards
- Brian Falkner, Housing/Lead
- Heather Oatis, Publicity
- Mindy Chambrelli, Food
- Jeff Polhemus, Subsurface Sewage
- Don Kendrick & John Deckert, Water



## CEHA Merchandise, Facebook, and Twitter

Thank you to everyone who placed an order for CEHA merchandise. We received some feedback about other items you'd like to see available. These new items and more will be available over the summer when we open the store again.

Are you active on social media? CEHA is now on Facebook. Be sure to visit: [www.facebook.com/conneha](http://www.facebook.com/conneha)

We are also on Twitter. Find us at: <https://twitter.com/CTSanitarian>

This is where we'll be sharing the most up to date information about our organization and upcoming events for your participation.

We'd also love to share your photos from CEHA events and field work. Send to [heather.oatis@southwindsor.org](mailto:heather.oatis@southwindsor.org) with a description to be shared!

### CEHA Nominations

Please visit: [www.cteha.org](http://www.cteha.org)  
to access the nomination form.

Send Nomination Forms to:  
Kevin Elak, CEHA Nominations  
and Elections Committee

By Mail:  
City of Middletown  
Department of Health  
245 deKoven Drive  
Middletown, CT 06457

By E-Mail:  
[Kevin.Elak@MiddletownCT.Gov](mailto:Kevin.Elak@MiddletownCT.Gov)

By Fax: (860) 638-1960

## The Time to Get Involved is Now!

Election season for the CEHA Executive Board is here and we are looking for the support of our Membership! Elections are a critical part of the democratic process and provide members a voice in running our organization. Whether you are a seasoned Sanitarian or new to the field, joining the CEHA Executive Board will be one of the best decisions of your career. The Public Health landscape is constantly evolving and there is no better way to stay informed and contribute to these changes than by serving on the CEHA Executive Board.

We are now accepting nominations for the positions of Vice President and Treasurer for 2017-2018. The position of Vice President is a 3 year commitment. If this is your first experience serving on the CEHA board, this term would be used to become acquainted with what CEHA does and how it operates. The second year you will serve as President-Elect, and the third year you will serve as President. The Treasurer position is a 2 year term and is responsible for maintaining the financial records of the Association and keeping the Executive Board apprised in regards to the Association's financial status. The deadline for submitting a nomination form for the Office of Vice President and Treasurer is May 4, 2017.

Department of Public Health submitted a legislative proposal to adopt the FDA Model Food Code which became Senate Bill 901.

The public hearing took place on March 13, 2017 at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. CEHA submitted the attached testimony in support of the bill, and I presented the testimony in person.

The members of the Public Health Committee asked questions about the pros and cons of adopting the FDA Food Code. The bill received the favorable report from the legislative commissioner's office.

The bill has moved to the State Senate on 4/06/17. Special thanks to Liz Kavanagh and Diane Collelo of the Legislative Committee in assisting with writing the testimony.

Let's use the power of positive thinking and hope for a favorable vote!

Maryam Hosseini, RS, REHS  
Food Safety Manager  
Regulatory Affairs

TESTIMONY OF CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
IN SUPPORT OF  
*RAISED S.B. NO. 901: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ADOPTION OF A MODEL FOOD CODE*

Public Health Committee – Public Hearing March 13, 2017

Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg and members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Maryam Hosseini. I am a Registered Sanitarian and I have worked as a regulator in Food Safety for the past 24 years. I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut Environmental Health Association (CEHA) Executive Board. More than 95 % of CEHA members are trained Sanitarians. Sanitarians enforce the state public health codes as well as statues, local codes, and ordinances **CEHA supports SB-901** for the following reasons:

The FDA Code creates uniformity in food protection in our regulatory system, when regulatory officials agree on one set of acceptable procedures and practices, industry is more likely to comply. The benefit of uniformity cascades to the food service industry. National chain restaurants, grocery stores and many large institutions set their standards by the FDA Code since it is nationally recognized. However, in CT they must know and follow a separate set of codes which exist only in Connecticut. This can and does become confusing for food service operators. The CT State Food Regulations require the operators to obtain food safety management certification which is based on the FDA Food Code. However, in their food establishments they must demonstrate to the local jurisdiction they can comply with Connecticut standards. Currently the CT Consumer Protection Agency and the two tribal governments in CT have already adopted the FDA Food Code.

The FDA Code reflects the latest advancements in food science, safety, and microbiology. The Food Code is updated every 4 years, and with all the new research and advancements in food safety and food techniques, Connecticut would be up to date with current regulation and emerging technologies. By mandating the federal standard, local and state government agencies do not have the burden of developing and updating their own codes. Instead, they would be focusing their resources on implementing and enforcing the FDA code.

FDA inspections place focus on identifying risk factors that are more likely to create food borne illnesses, while fostering a common understanding of risk control/management and food safety between industry and regulators. In addition, the code creates a standardized language between regulators and industry, which is currently lacking in the CT Food Regulations.

The FDA Food Code Model provides a comprehensive approach to food safety management and provides extensive supporting documents, and training.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryam Hosseini, REHS, RS  
CEHA Executive Board,

# SAVE THE DATE

55th Annual  
Yankee Conference  
on Environmental Health

October 4th and 5th  
2017

Newport Harbor Hotel



# Save the Date



## Soils Training Workshop October 18 and 19, 2017

Presented by the CT Environmental Health Association in  
conjunction with the Department of Public Health

**Time:** 9:00am - 4:00pm (lunch provided both days)

**Location:** DEEP's Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area

**Fee:** \$80.00 for CEHA members and \$125.00 for all others

## Safety First—CT Department of Agriculture works to ensure food safety

When shopping for dairy products, shellfish, or fresh produce, have you ever wondered what happens behind the scenes to ensure the food brought to market is as safe as possible? “Food safety is at the core of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture’s mission,” Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky says. “It’s very important that consumers have confidence in the food products they’re buying – if they have confidence, farms are going to be more viable and sell more products. “We inspect and regulate the products themselves, and we implement animal disease control and prevention programs that also affect human health and safety,” Reviczky adds.

According to Dr. Bruce Sherman, director of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Regulation and Inspection, examples of the agency’s food-safety-related inspections at licensed and regulated dairy entities include dairy farms, milk tanker trucks, milk processing plants, and cheese and yogurt manufacturers. In addition, agency inspectors certify laboratories that conduct dairy product and water testing. “Connecticut is one of many states that participate in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)’s milk safety program,” Sherman says. “This ensures uniformity in inspections across the country.”

Shellfish are another high-risk item and require stringent controls to make sure they’re safe. “The majority of Connecticut shellfish producers demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring the shellfish they produce are safe,” says Kristin DeRosia-Banick, environmental analyst III for the agency’s Bureau of Aquaculture. DeRosia-Banick says that all licensed shellfish producers in the state are Shellstock Shippers, which means they can ship shellfish in interstate commerce. In order to receive and retain a license, the agency inspects harvesters and wholesale dealers at least twice per year. “These inspections allow us to identify any failures in sanitation or handling that may create a food safety hazard. The inspection process includes an evaluation of all aspects of shellfish processing, from the growing area and continuing through the entire chain of distribution,” DeRosia-Banick says. She adds that the Connecticut Department of Agriculture also performs environmental assessments of coastal areas where shellfish are harvested, making sure they are not polluted.

Produce is another major area that receives close attention, especially with changes in regulations ahead due to the passing of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)’s Produce Safety Rule. “This is one of the most significant changes to agriculture in decades,” says Commissioner Reviczky of the Produce Safety Rule. “It’s going to require significant record keeping, investment in infrastructure, and enhancements to procedures on the farm, all geared toward minimizing risk with the goal of ensuring that produce makes it safely to market.”

Though preparing for these changes, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture has already been helping produce farmers minimize risks through education, assistance, and voluntary audits. “Over the past seven years, we’ve been conducting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) audits for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA),” Sherman says. “These are voluntary audits available to producers based on industry-recognized food safety practices and recommendations made by FDA.” Reviczky adds that with all sectors, education is key to keeping food safe. “Our agency – as is the case with ag departments across the country – enforces regulations with the mindset that you educate before and while you regulate,” he says. “Our top priority is to work with the regulated community to gain compliance, first through education, and then through technical and financial assistance.”

All involved agree that food safety is a crucial aspect of keeping Connecticut’s industry successful. **EVERYONE PLAYS A ROLE** Diane Hirsch, senior Extension educator/food safety at the University of Connecticut, says there are several reasons food safety is important to Connecticut agriculture. “First, the competitiveness of the industry. Some markets require that farms have GAP audits addressing safe production, harvest and post-harvest handling. These aren’t regulations, but customer requirements,” she says. “Also, an outbreak tied to your product could mean the end of your business. An outbreak tied to a specific product, say, strawberries, may impact other strawberry growers negatively. And ultimately, no one wants to make a customer sick.” Hirsch adds that consumers should be aware that everyone involved in food production plays a role in food safety, from the farmers to the distributors to the retailers. “If consumers understand that everyone is playing their part, they will gain trust in the food system – that the food they purchase is safe until they get it, then they take over and must handle and prepare it safely as well,” she says. – Rachel Bertone

City Served: New Britain

Population: 72,808

Annual # FSE Insp: 955

Class 1= 16; Class 2=106

Class 3=69; Class 4=130

Annual Temp Events: 46

Annual Itinerant Vendors: 20

Annual # Lead Cases: 37

Annual # Complaints: 1200

\*Including Housing & Blight

Annual # Daycare Insp: 11

Annual # Pool Insp: 14

\*7 Public Pools

Annual # Barbershop/Salon

Insp: 57

Annual # Tattoo Shop Insp: 16

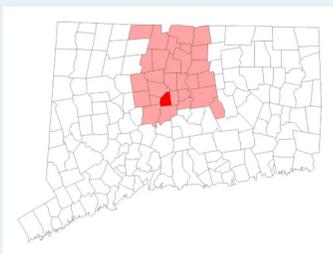
\*4 Tattoo Shops

Annual # Nail Salon Insp: 12

Annual # Rooming House Insp: 5

New Britain has received a \$3.4 million grant for lead abatement. Through this grant and the primary prevention grant from DPH they conduct risk assessments on all properties with children who's blood lead level is >5 µg/dL.

[www.newbritainct.gov](http://www.newbritainct.gov)



## Get to Know the New Britain Health Department Environmental Health Division

Sergio Lupo, Director of Health



### Brian Falkner, CEHA Housing/Lead Chair

Brian has a BS in Biology and Minor in Science from CCSU (2002). He worked as a Hazardous Materials Consultant from 2002-2008. He started his career in local health with the Torrington Area Health District part time for 7 years before starting in New Britain full time in 2008. Brian's credentials include being a Registered Sanitarian, certified food inspector, lead inspector/risk assessor, and subsurface sewage phases 1 and 2 certified. Brian enjoys running, hiking, skateboarding, snow boarding and carpentry. He enjoys a work-life balance of serving several terms as President for the Working Professionals Union 1303-332, committee chair for CEHA, and raising two beautiful daughters, Ryleigh (6) and Quinn (3). Did you know Brian has no left thumb print after a table saw accident?



### Caleb Cowles

Caleb has a BS from CCSU (2002) and is an MPH Candidate (Spring 2017). Caleb started his career at Eagle Environmental from 2002-2007 and then began working for New Britain in 2007. Caleb's credentials include being a Registered Sanitarian, certified food inspector, lead inspector/risk assessor, and subsurface sewage phases 1 and 2 certified. Before starting his MPH course work, Caleb used to enjoy golfing, fishing, running, cooking, and spending time with his friends and family. Caleb serves as the President of CAHCEO and is currently co-chairing the Property Maintenance Code working group. Caleb's other notable accomplishments include having spoken about Lead Awareness with US Senators and US Representatives. He has been married for 8 years to Erin and they have a son, Jonah (6).



### Ed Malik

Ed has a BS from University of New Haven in Hotel Management. He has been working in public health for 17 years and has been with New Britain for 4 years. Ed's credentials include being a Registered Sanitarian, certified food inspector, pool operator, lead inspector/risk assessor, and subsurface sewage phases 1 and 2 certified. Ed enjoys fishing, working out, cooking, the beach, and hiking. He has two awesome daughters, Nicole and Meghan, and was born February 29th! He celebrates in a huge way every four years.

## Get to Know the New Britain Health Department Environmental Health Division (Cont.)



### Tina Bard

Tina started her career working at the First City Bank from 1995-2004 and part time with Plainville Animal Control. She has been working in New Britain for the past seven years. She enjoys reading, adventures with her son Tyler (13) and watching him race, DIY home projects, wine tastings, movies, quality time with friends, cooking and gardening. Tina is the handy woman for her friends and family, which probably keeps her very busy because she has 27 cousins in addition to her 2 older brothers!



### Michelle Bouffard

Michele has a BS from CCSU in Elementary Education, majoring in history. She is certified to teach elementary education, grades K-6. She has worked in New Britain for the past two and a half years, as well as working at J. Timothy's Tavern since 1998. She enjoys reading, going to the beach, yoga, music concerts, being an auntie, walking outdoors, laughing with friends and family, wine tastings, movies, and cooking. Michelle's parents have been married 45 years and she has an older sister, a niece and two nephews. In addition to being under five feet tall, having a cat named Oscar, and having a tutu collection, Michelle spent 5 weeks backpacking through 12 countries across Europe.

Would your department like to be featured in an upcoming Environmentalist in our "Local Health Spotlight"?

Email Heather Oatis, [heather.oatis@southwindsor.org](mailto:heather.oatis@southwindsor.org)!