

NEHA NEWS

Call for Nominations

By Katherine Sheppard (ksheppard@neha.org)

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is governed by a Board of Directors who oversee the affairs of the association. There will be four board positions up for election in 2024:

- Region 2 vice-president (represents Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada; 3-year term)
- Region 3 vice-president (represents Colorado, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, and members residing outside of the U.S. [except members of the U.S. armed services]; 3-year term)
- Region 8 vice-president (represents Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, DC, West Virginia, and all NEHA members of the U.S. armed services residing outside of the U.S.; 3-year term)
- Second vice-president (national officer; 5-year term that progresses through the national offices and will serve as NEHA president in 2027–2028)

We seek diversity on the board in terms of gender, race and ethnicity, and a balance between regulatory officials, academia, and industry. Most importantly, we want people who will help us develop new strategic visions; have experience managing diverse organizations; and can open doors for our organization in building relationships with industry, academia, federal and state agencies, foundations, and other associations.

Requirements to serve on the board include:

- Membership with NEHA (individual or life) for 3 consecutive years prior to assuming office on July 18, 2024, at our 2024 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition.
- Not simultaneously holding a voting position on the board of a NEHA affiliate.
- Endorsement by at least five voting members of NEHA (from members residing in the region for regional vice-president candidates and from members residing in at least three different regions for second vice-president candidates).
- Willingness to commit the time necessary to actively serve on the board.

If you are interested in serving on our Board of Directors, please visit www.neha.org/election-process for information on the nomination and election process. You can also contact Immediate Past-President Dr. D. Gary Brown, chairperson of our Nominations Committee, at gary.brown@eku.edu. The deadline to submit a nomination is December 1, 2023.

New Concurrent Disaster and Recovery Resources

Now more than ever, environmental public health professionals are part of each stage of the emergency response cycle and also face concurrent disasters. To help you access the most useful resources quickly and easily, we have created a Preparedness Resource Library filled with forms, templates, exercises, reports,

and guides for environmental public health professionals that are ready to download. Topics include:

- Assessment
- Concurrent disasters
- Continuity of operations
- Equity
- Evacuation
- Mental health
- Partnerships
- Policy
- Risk communication
- Sampling
- Special populations
- Specific hazards, such as hurricanes, wildfires, floods, power loss events, and more

The library also includes:

- Must Reads: Recommended resources from our Preparedness Program Committee
- Reviews: Resources can be rated up to 5 stars and visitors can leave reviews
- Filters: Topics can be further expanded or filtered to find what you need

The library is organized into two sections:

- **Concurrent Disasters Resources:** This collection of resources is for environmental health professionals to use to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from disasters such as hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, and infectious diseases that occur at the same time or consecutively. The repository includes resources to facilitate knowledge sharing across jurisdictions on concurrent



Credit: Image @ Adobe Stock: sakhorn38.

disasters that were developed by state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments; academic institutions; nongovernmental organizations; and governmental agencies. We highlight a few must-read resources, including:

- » Federal Emergency Management Agency Hurricane Pandemic Plan
- » Natural Hazards Center: Lessons on Concurrent Disasters
- » Dual Disaster Handbook—Flooding

• **Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Resources:**

This collection of resources is for environmental health professionals to use to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from natural and human-made emergencies and disasters. The repository includes resources to facilitate knowledge sharing across jurisdictions that were developed by state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments; academic institutions; nongovernmental organizations; and governmental agencies. We highlight a few must-read resources, including:

- » Wells—What to Do After a Flood
- » Disaster Guide for Retail Food Facilities
- » Wildfire Response Guide

Explore all these resources at www.neha.org/preparedness.

Membership Hits Record Number

We are delighted to announce that we surpassed 7,000 active members in September—the largest membership in our history! The more members we have, the louder our voice. Let's keep it going and spread the word about the value of membership.

Membership provides environmental health professionals with connection, education, and advancement in their careers. Our nationally recognized credentials, extensive learning opportunities, and community of dedicated leaders position our members for greater professional success. We believe that the success of our members elevates the entire environmental health profession.

We offer several membership options:

- **Professional:** Individuals active in the field of environmental health employed in government, uniformed services, academic, or industry sectors.
- **Emerging Professional:** Students or individuals within the first 5 years of their environmental health career, or individuals who are active-duty military.
- **Retired Professional:** Individuals retired from the field of environmental health.
- **International:** Environmental health professionals who reside outside of the U.S.
- **Life:** Life membership with no renewals and a one-time fee.

You can benefit from membership at any stage of your career—from student to retiree. You can also take advantage of these valuable benefits:

- **Community:** We offer an online platform called Community that allows our members to gather insight, ask questions, and build connections. Our Annual Educational Conference &

Exhibition provides high-quality environmental health training, education, networking, and advancement. You can also learn and network through the webinars and training we offer.

- **Credibility:** Our credentials demonstrate a level of expertise and competence, based on education and experience, that is nationally recognized. Members receive discounts on exams and renewal fees. Members can download a customized certificate signifying a commitment to their career. Professional members have the opportunity to vote in our elections and hold leadership positions such as members of our board, technical advisors, and committee members. We also offer an online Job Board where members can post job announcements at no cost or at a reduced cost for organizations that employ our professional members.
- **Learning:** Our *Journal of Environmental Health* provides innovative and practical ideas to carry into the field and office. Our bimonthly newsletter highlights the most recent and relevant environmental health news and is delivered to members by e-mail 20 times a year. Members can also maintain and track their continuing education contact hours for free via our E-Learning.
- **Influence:** Our Government Affairs program is the liaison between environmental health professionals and government officials to gather and present the data needed to inform policymakers on the importance of a well-supported and well-funded workforce. We collaborate with members to raise the voice of the environmental health profession through policy and position statements. Members can also contribute their time and expertise to help develop resources on the topics that matter most to our members. We also offer a discount to professional members when they place advertisements on our platforms.

Learn more about the benefits of membership with us at www.neha.org/membership.

New Blogs From Government Affairs

One of the ways we keep you updated on our government affairs activities is through the blogs written by Government Affairs Director Doug Farquhar. As of press time, two new blogs were posted in October.

The first blog provides an update on 2023 state legislation regarding food safety. We provide a table of food safety topics and the number of bills introduced to state legislatures in 2023. Retail food, food freedom, and food safety had the highest number of bills introduced. Overall, a total of 233 bills related to food safety legislation were introduced during the 2023 legislative sessions, with 63 bills enacted, adopted, or passed by state legislation that were sent to state governors for signing.

The second blog explores the story we have to tell related to how the work we do saves lives. From food safety and water safety to disease prevention, our profession has tackled seemingly impossible challenges to ensure the health and safety of our communi-

NEHA NEWS

ties. As Farquhar states at the end of the blog, “We have a story to tell—A positive story that every elected official, appointed board member, and public health leader in this country must hear.”

Visit www.neha.org/government-affairs-blog to view all the blogs and get caught up on what we are doing to advocate for the environmental health profession.

Spark! Webinar Series

Spark! is an ongoing series of skill-building webinars just for our members. The webinars are provided in short 30-minute segments to fit into your busy schedules. Each webinar provides 0.5 continuing education contact hours toward maintaining your NEHA credential. These webinars are available only on our Community platform at <https://community.neha.org/community>.

Recordings of past Spark! webinars are available for members to watch any time:

- September 2023: Enhancing Environmental Public Health With Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning—Part 2
- August 2023: Enhancing Environmental Public Health With Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning—Part 1
- June 2023: Leveraging Social Media for Success
- May 2023: Effective Communication for the Environmental Health Professional
- March 2023: Caring Leadership
- February 2023: Thought Leadership
- January 2023: Conversational Leadership
- November 2022: Leadership Matters

Learn more about Spark! at www.neha.org/spark.

Support the Future of Environmental Health

We will be participating again in GivingTuesday on November 28 to raise money to replenish and expand our scholarship fund. The more support we receive, the more support we can give to environmental public health students to help them join the workforce.

Even a little can go a long way. A lot can be life-changing!

- \$100 can cover the cost of a textbook.
- \$200 can cover 1 month of student groceries.
- \$1,000 covers the average cost of 1 month for student room and board.

Consider donating on November 28 to support the future of environmental health at www.neha.org/donate. And of course, donations are welcome any time.

NEHA Staff Profile

As part of tradition, we feature new staff members in the *Journal* around the time of their 1-year anniversary. These profiles give you an opportunity to get to know our staff better and to learn more about the great programs and activities going on in your association. This month we are pleased to introduce you to one staff member. Contact information for all our staff can be found on pages 48 and 49.



Amy Chang

I joined NEHA in November 2022 as a senior program analyst on the Program and Partnership Development team. I work on several different projects, including climate and health, emergency preparedness, and food safety. During this brief time, I have been fortunate enough to work in diverse and engaging experiences. These experiences range from learning and engaging with Alaska Natives about climate change impacts in Alaska to having hands-on environmental public health training in emergency environmental response in Alabama.

Before working at NEHA, I worked at the National Association of County and City Health Officials as the lead on food safety and climate and health projects for the environmental health team. Additionally, I have interned at the District of Columbia Department of Health on the communicable disease team, served as an epidemiologist and environmental health specialist at private consulting companies, and taught English in Japan. I received my undergraduate degree in environmental science from the University of Virginia and a master's degree in global health from George Mason University.

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I currently reside in Irvine, California, with my partner and two children, but have spent most of my life in the mid-Atlantic region. While not working, I enjoy attending concerts, reading, watching movies, and exploring new activities and developing new skills with my children. My favorite things to do are going to the beach, pool, or a water park. Basically, anything with water! I am excited about working at NEHA and look forward to meeting and working with you all. 🌸

Did You Know?

Check out our new online store of NEHA-branded items at <https://neha.checkoutstores.com>. Show off your pride in your association and support students as a portion of the sales will go to the NEHA/AAS Scholarship Fund.