



Environmental Health Services

● *Healthy Environments = Healthy People* ●

DEHS Directors' Meeting: 01 June 2023

[Meeting recording available](#)

Next conference call 03 August 2023 1:00-2:00PM ET

Alaska: *Not on call*

Albuquerque: Carrie Oyster

Bemidji: Tim Duffy

Billings: Darcy Merchant

California: Carolyn Garcia

Great Plains: Tim Wildcat

Nashville: *Not on call*

Navajo: Donna Gilbert

Oklahoma: David Bales

Phoenix: Dave Cramer

Portland: Chris Fish

Tucson: Travis Bowser

Environmental Health Support Center: Jeff Dickson

DEHS HQ: Matt Albright; Brian Hroch; Molly Madson; Stephen Piontkowski; Mike Reed; Andrea Tsatoke

1. Welcome and Update (Mike Reed)

a. Staffing

- i. Brian Hroch, IEH Program Manager, reported February 2023
- ii. CDR Timothy Albright, Deputy Director, reported March 2023
- iii. LCDR Andrea Tsatoke, IP Specialist (TIPCAP Coordinator), reported May 2023
- iv. LCDR Sam Frank selected as Senior Environmental Health Specialist (Data Analyst), report date TBD

b. Travel

- i. OEHE Orientation
- ii. Great Plains Area OEHE Workshop
- iii. Bemidji Area OEHE Workshop
- iv. IEH National meeting
- v. Open to invitations for HQ staff to participate in your Area events

2. Area Highlights

a. Alaska – *Not on call*

b. Albuquerque

i. Staffing

- Antoinette Toya selected as Area IP Specialist; thanks to OKC Area for supporting the IP program

ii. Developing ROP Decision Tree

- Thanks OKC Area for assisting

iii. BIE school inspections

iv. Collaborated w BIE partners & agreed to conduct joint surveys of the schools at the same time

v. FDA Retail Food Safety Standardization of staff ongoing

- c. Bemidji
 - i. Staffing
 - Hosting 3 externs this summer
 - GS-12 Environmental Health Consultant: if an Area has a position description to share please do; Phoenix Area has one in classification now
 - ii. Meetings
 - Area OEHE Workshop was successful
 - Casey participated in Annual IPS Meeting
 - Tim participated in Annual IEH Meeting
 - iii. Injury Prevention
 - Partnering w IHS IP Academic Advisor (University of North Carolina) to host IP Fellowship field-course w Fond Du Lac in October
 - iv. Routine seasonal workload ramping-up
 - v. Has anyone used Electronic Health Record or RPMS for referrals from health care facilities?
 - PII & IT challenges exist
 - One Navajo Service Unit uses HER for referrals to be sent to EH staff
- d. Billings
 - i. Staffing
 - Blackfeet Service Unit Sanitarian vacancy announcement closed & awaiting certificate
 - Wind River Service Unit Sanitarian vacancy announcement closed & awaiting certificate
 - ii. General EH
 - Routine seasonal workload ramping-up
 - Rabies Lay Vaccinator Program
 - Montana Board of Veterinary Medicine approved program
 - Next steps: develop coalition; expand into Wyoming
 - iii. IP
 - Supporting 5-6 elder fall prevention projects
- e. California
 - i. Area OEHE Workshop will be next week in Sacramento
 - Will present Area OEHE Emergency Operation Guideline & brochure that highlights OEHE emergency management-related services available to tribes
 - DEHS agenda will include strategic planning
 - ii. Injury Prevention
 - Area mini-projects: 4 funded (personal flotation devices (2 projects), fall prevention, CPS Tech training)
 - iii. Routine seasonal workload ramping-up



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- f. Great Plains
 - i. Staffing
 - [Area IP Specialist vacancy announcement](#) closes 30 September
 - Pine Ridge & Belcourt vacancy announcements forthcoming
 - Civil Service Extern: pending security clearance
 - ii. Routine seasonal workload ramping-up
- g. Nashville – *Not on call* (updates submitted via email)
 - i. Thank you to Brian Hroch & Jeff Conner for arranging a very helpful IEH meeting
 - ii. Plan to reach out to a couple Areas to help prepare for discussion with OEHE Director on EHSA fund allocation
 - iii. Nashville Area is starting tribal consultation this month about scope & role of its emergency management services
 - iv. Collecting information from IHS SU staff for response to HQ workplace safety/violence request
 - v. TransAM has several items of potential interest to EHS programs in inventory (sprayers, PPE, fit test kits, etc.)
- h. Navajo
 - i. Staffing
 - Selections made for Service Unit Sanitarian Fort Defiance & Crownpoint
 - Civil Service Extern: 1 reporting this month
 - Three vacancies in Shiprock, one in Fort Defiance, one at Area Office
 - ii. Hantavirus
 - 8 cases in CY23 (2 were fatal)
 - DEHS staff heavily involved in response & prevention efforts
 - iii. Four Corners without Borders – IP conference occurred in March
 - CPS Techs were able to earn CEUs & conduct seat checks
 - iv. Rabies Vaccination Clinic prep occurring
 - Partner: Colorado State University veterinarians; Best Friends; Navajo Nation Animal Control
 - v. Routine seasonal workload ramping-up
- i. Oklahoma City
 - i. Staffing
 - Selections made for Lawton & Clinton SU EH Specialists & reporting this month
 - Pawnee vacancy announcement still open ([DE](#), [MP](#))
 - Holton SU Sanitarian announcement still open ([DE](#), [MP](#))
 - ii. FDA Retail Food Safety Standardization of staff ongoing

- j. Phoenix
 - i. Staffing
 - COSTEP reported to Reno District Office last week
 - Civil Service Extern reporting to Western Arizona District Office next week
 - John Hansen reported as Area IEH Program Manager
 - Frank Robinson selected as Area EMPOC
 - Selected IEHO (Vice Hansen)
 - Selected IP Coordinator, Eastern Arizona District
 - GS-12 Environmental Health Consultant position description in classification
 - GS-13 DEHO position description in classification
 - DEHO, Reno District Office, vacancy forthcoming
 - Two vacancies forthcoming: Reno & Ft. Duchesne
 - ii. General EH
 - Sarah Snyder presenting at FDA Retail Food Protection Seminar in September 2023
 - Rabies exposure case
 - 11 yo bit by dog who was rabies +
 - DEHS staff heavily involved in response & prevention efforts (e.g. additional specimen testing, 483 rabies vaccinations; 163 tick collars on dogs)
 - Hopi Animal Control Program
 - Awarded \$79K of IHS emergency funds for animal holding facility
 - iii. IP
 - Gun Safes distributed in Hualapai & Whiteriver
- k. Portland
 - i. Workplace Violence Prevention & Security Risk Assessments
 - ii. Area COOP being revised
 - iii. Supporting SU Governing Boards
 - iv. FDA Retail Food Safety Standardization of staff being considered
- l. Tucson
 - i. Staffing
 - One vacancy announcement forthcoming
 - ii. Partnering w county to conduct mosquito trapping for arbovirus surveillance
 - iii. Supporting Pascua Yaqui Tribe vehicle removal project
 - iv. Emergency Operations annual review in June

m. EHSC

i. Staffing

- General EH Consultant (vice Angela) certificate received
 - HR may have one additional applicant that may require review from SMEs
 - Jeff may ask a couple Area DEHS Directors to serve as SME

ii. Train-the-Trainer pilot course

- 13-16 June in Albuquerque
- Register on EHSC website
- NEHA 2023: will present course development process

iii. Social Determinants of Health

- Joint Commission released patient safety goals to screen for SDOH
- Anticipate IHS looking at our community-based programs to gather SDOH-related data
- Jeff attended an institute on community-based participatory research from the University of New Mexico
- Jeff to work Darcy on new strategies & tools DEHS can use to support tribes

3. HQ Announcements

a. Injury prevention (Molly Madson & Andrea Tsatoke)

i. Fellowship

- 7 Fellows from 7 IHS Areas in current cohort
- In-person course in Atlanta last week alongside Annual IPS Meeting

ii. Annual IPS Meeting

- 10 IP Specialists met in Atlanta last week

iii. Short courses

- Course 1 [virtual] in July 2023
- Course 2 [in-person pilot] in August 2023 in Albuquerque

iv. TIPCAP

- Routine conference calls w sites ongoing
- Preparing for site visits
- Initial preparation for next funding cycle
- Annual Workshop will be in September 2023 in Denver

- b. Institutional EH (Brian Hroch)
 - i. First routine IEH conference call was 04 May
 - ii. National IEH Meeting was 25-26 May in Phoenix
 - Develop IEH Program Plan
 - Identified & prioritized opportunities
 - Safe patient handling & movement
 - HFAC/OEHE Tech HB Chapter
 - Workgroup & materials
 - Professional development
 - Survey (thank you to Jeff Dickson)
 - Field-based & USUHS Residencies
 - IH Protocols: finalize
 - Trainings
 - EHSC Safety Officer Courses
 - Radiation Protection Program
 - Templates & training opportunities
 - Recruitment
 - Individual IEH check-ins
 - Tucson remains & will be completed next week
 - Summary of topics
 - IEHO Teams Channel
 - Review IHM Chapters, Circulars
 - IHM Chap 9-Occ Health & Safety Management Program
 - Office of Quality
 - Total System Safety & Quality Workgroup
 - IHS Root Cause Analysis Workgroup initiation
 - Continued collaboration w Kenith Franks
 - Workplace Violence Workgroup
- c. Performance Measures FY23 (Matt Albright)
 - i. Environmental Surveillance
 - FY22: 82.5% CFPM
 - FY23 target: maintain baseline
 - FY23 mid-year (Oct-Mar): 80.5%
 - ii. Injury Prevention
 - DEHS HQ amended *Guidance on the 2021-2025 Injury Prevention Performance Measure* to include clarity on how to record in WebEHRS IP trainings that involve multiple Areas & their staff
 - FY22: 484 trained
 - FY23 target: maintain baseline
 - FY23 mid-year (Oct-Mar): 203 trained

- iii. Next Performance Measure cycle is FY2026-2030
 - These usually need to be included in the Report to Congress a couple years before implementation
 - Areas should begin to consider if we would like to keep the existing measures or adopt new ones for the next cycle
 - We should determine this fall [2023] if we wish to adopt new ones as this could be an agenda item at our next Annual DEHS Directors' meeting (April 2024)
- d. Miscellaneous (Stephen Piontkowski)
 - i. 2022 FDA Food Code in WebEHRS February 2023
 - ii. 2023 MAHC in WebEHRS spring 2023
 - iii. COSTEP & [Civil Service] EH Extern update
 - 2 COSTEPs
 - 3 Civil Service Externs (+1 pending security clearance)
 - 1 Scholarship Extern
 - 1 tribal hire
 - Virtual Symposium 09 August, 1300-1530ET
 - iv. 2024 COSTEP applications due by 31 July 2023
 - v. DEHS Climate Change Workgroup
 - Workgroup's Charter finalized
 - Workgroup's work plan drafted
 - vi. RRM Freeze: October 2023
 - vii. LPD cohort applications open (Andrea Tsatoke)
 - "Leading Self" 27-29 June & 08-10 Aug in Albuquerque, NM
 - "Leading Others" 07-09 Nov 2024 & 30 Jan-01 Feb 2024 in Albuquerque, NM
 - Register at [EHSC](#)
 - LPD program open to all OEHE employees

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