



Environmental Health Services

● *Healthy Environments = Healthy People* ●

DEHS Directors' Meeting: 07 November 2024

[Meeting recording available](#)

Next conference call 06 February 2025 1:00-2:30PM ET

Forthcoming calls will be scheduled for 1.5 hours

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Representative</u> | <u>Area</u> | <u>Representative</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Alaska: | Hugh Denny | Nashville: | Charles Woodlee |
| Albuquerque: | <i>Not on call</i> | Navajo: | Donna Gilbert |
| Bemidji: | <i>Not on call</i> | Oklahoma: | Danny Walters |
| Billings: | Darcy Merchant | Phoenix: | Dave Cramer |
| California: | Carolyn Garcia | Portland: | <i>Not on call</i> |
| Great Plains: | Tim Wildcat | Tucson: | <i>Not on call</i> |

Environmental Health Support Center: Jeff Dickson; Braden Hickey

DEHS HQ: Matt Albright; Sam Frank; Brian Hroch; Stephen Piontkowski; Mike Reed; Andrea Tsatoke

1. Welcome and Update (Mike Reed)

- a. Appreciate everyone making this busy time of year & amazed at the great quality & quantity of work you do
- b. HQ staff working on climate change initiative, forthcoming TIPCAP NOFO, IEH residency, many administrative items
- c. Letter from DEHS to Office of General Council: request guidance if we can correct establishment errors in WebEHRS, and clarify residual functions, with or without formal tribal consultation
- d. Encouraged Areas to ensure visibility of staff & program (e.g. award nominations, photo contests)

2. Area Highlights

- a. Alaska
 - i. Alaska Tribal EH Managers mtg
 - Occurred last week
 - Focus on climate change work
 - ii. Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management occurred last spring focused on climate change work
 - iii. Staffing challenges ongoing; many vacancies
 - iv. 3 TIPCAP sites; 1 has staffing challenge
 - v. IVP Fellowship: 2 candidates going through application process
 - vi. EHSA Distribution tables recently distributed (i.e. late) & working to try to find methods to distribute funds to tribes sooner
- b. Albuquerque – *Not on call*
- c. Bemidji – *Not on call*

- d. Billings
 - i. Staffing
 - Fully staffed!!!
 - Davis Reardon transferred from Eastern Shooshone Tribe to OKC Area
 - ii. EH
 - Two tribes pursuing lay vaccinator program
 - 20 applicants to become a lay vaccinator (most from Blackfeet Nation)
 - iii. IP
 - IVP Fellowship: 2 candidates going through application process
 - SU EHO to become CPS Instructor
- e. California
 - i. Staffing
 - Aaron Alexander selected as DEHO, Sacramento District Office
 - Selection made for Ukiah vacancy
 - One HR has been good to work with
 - Reclassified all DEHS positions from 688 series to 601 series
 - ii. IP
 - Partnering with OKC Area to host IVP Course 1 this week; ~ 30+ participants
 - iii. Emergency Preparedness
 - Alert HHS being implemented within CA Area (thanks to Charles Woodlee for assisting); DEHS to manage the system
- f. Great Plains
 - i. Staffing
 - Thanks to Brian Hroch for being SME on recent interviews
 - Selection made for GPA Safety and Occupational Health Manager vacancy (will be based in Rapid City)
 - IEHO, GPA, accepted offer in spring but challenges related to transfer
 - Several vacancies remain; announcements forthcoming; considering Pathways option
 - ii. EH
 - Busy powwow season ending
 - iii. IP
 - Severe injury surveillance ongoing
 - iv. WebEHRS Mobile²
 - Field staff have tablets & using them
 - Challenge: unable to update software when connected to IHS network; found work around but wanted to make folks aware

- g. Nashville
 - i. IVP Fellowship: 1 candidate going through application process
 - ii. NA OEHE
 - Director Facilities Management selected
 - Budget management is a focus for new NA OEHE Director
 - DEHS will advocate for a additional position within Division
 - iii. Climate change
 - HQ requested a proposal from Area on how to use for potential hurricane recovery funds; DEHS included climate risk assessments for tribal communities
- h. Navajo
 - i. Staffing
 - Lyle Setwyn, Acting OEHE Director
 - CDR Gilbert, Acting DEHS Director, Navajo Area
 - Theresa Yaziee, Acting Area IP Specialist / Gallup District Injury Prevention Coordinator
 - Selections made for Gallup & Shiprock vacancies
 - ii. BIA & Area pushing an MOU for IHS services at correctional facilities
 - iii. EH
 - ServeSafe training prep
 - iv. IP
 - IVP Fellowship: 3 candidates going through application process
- i. Oklahoma City
 - i. Staffing
 - Fully staffed ... for the moment
 - 1 vacancy pending
 - Davis Reardon reported to Shawnee Service Unit
 - ii. IP
 - Partnering with CA Area to conduct IVP Course 1 this week; ~ 30+ participants
 - TIPCAP: ongoing at three Part 1 sites; one Part 2 site
 - iii. EH
 - CFPM courses ongoing
 - Assessing w staff reasons for fluctuating certifications within establishments
 - FDA Standardization: 2 staff remain to earn certification
 - Rabies vaccination partnership w Fort Sill
 - Well establishment relationship
 - Fort Sill received Congressional inquiry re: who they partner with & this initiative was mentioned

- j. Phoenix
 - i. Staffing
 - Interviews occurring/pending for
 - IP Coordinator, Reno District
 - EH Specialists, Ft. Duchesne SU
 - Andrea Genus graduating OBC next week
 - Saba Wube reported to Reno in September
 - Cassidy Hale reported to Ft. Yuma in October
 - Chelsea Vega reported to Tempe last week
 - ii. EH
 - Rabid bobcat response
 - Human WNV+ case response; not positive mosquito pools identified
 - Havasupai flood response (1 fatality [tourist])
 - AZ RMSF annual meeting went well
 - DEHS presented lay vaccinator program & how White Mountain Apache are utilizing it
 - DEHS presented overview of [Veterinary Services to Improve Public Health in Rural Communities Act](#)
 - iii. IP
 - IP team helped teach IVP Course 2 in Bloomington, MN
 - IVP Fellowship: 2 candidates going through application process
 - 60 firearm storage cabinets shipped to one AZ & one NV tribes
 - 100 medication lock boxes purchased by University of Nevada, Reno & provided to Nevada tribe
 - iv. IEH
 - Conducted OSHA 10-hr course in December
 - Quarterly Education series today: Brian Hroch to present Ch. 9
- k. Portland – *Not on call*
- l. Tucson – *Not on call*
- m. EHSC (Braden Hickey)
 - i. OEHE Orientation course
 - April 2025
 - Send topic ideas to Braden
 - ii. Competency model live on website
 - Braden to share list of competencies & request any updates
 - iii. On-line FHT
 - Should be ready for review this fall
 - iv. Temporary FHT course should be ready in a few months
 - v. Considering to offer 2 courses per week to capitalize on travel
 - Braden will request insight on idea soon

3. HQ Announcements

a. Injury Prevention (Molly Madson)

i. Training

- Injury & Violence Prevention (IVP) Course 1 – Virtual this week
- IVP Course 3 – Virtual 02-06 December

ii. Fellowship

- See details, steps, & deadlines in email from Molly & on [website](#)
- 11 consultations scheduled

iii. Tribal Alcohol Impaired Driving Prevention Program (TAIDPP)

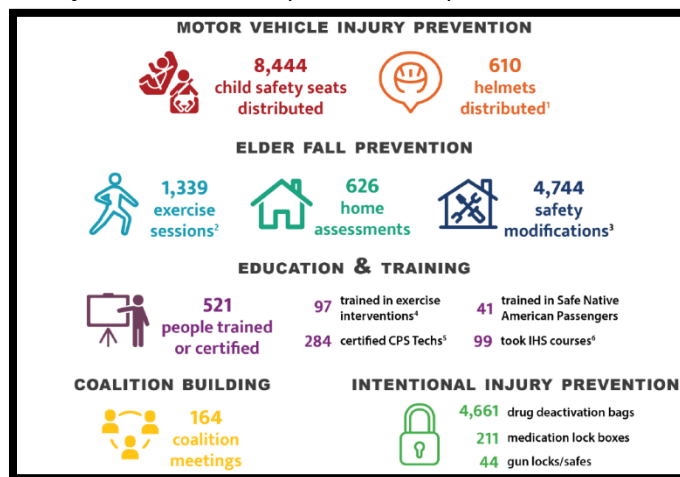
- 3 sites in 2025

iv. 3rd National Conference on AI/AN Injury and Violence Prevention

- CDC secured contractor

v. TIPCAP (Andrea Tsatoke)

- By the numbers (2021-2024)



- Annual conference calls & project office technical reviews completed
- Quarterly calls with Division of Grants Management
- Webinar - *Firearm Injury Prevention in Tribal Communities* conducted w Colorado School of Medicine & went well
- Site visits ongoing (virtually, Portland, Great Plains)
- Annual Workshop will be in summer 2025
- NOFO for next cycle in the works

b. Institutional EH (Brian Hroch)

i. Annual meeting

- 05-06 August, Denver
- Objectives: Program Planning (assess, prioritize, select); update, collaborate, network
- Preceded American Society of Safety Professionals Conference
- Objectives
 - IEH Program Planning: Assess, Prioritize, Select
 - Updates, Collaborations, Networking
- Feedback will be considered for planning the 2025 meeting

ii. IEH Workforce Development

- USUHS IEH Residency
 - Approvals & application announcement forthcoming
- Filed-based Residency
 - Workgroup: Cook, Conner, Hansen, Joplin, Peaches, Hroch
 - Competency assessment & methods to competency
 - Piloting w one employee in Albuquerque Area
 - Will present at EHOPAC Category Day 2025

iii. Professional development

- EHSC courses
- SOFR Office Hours held monthly
- Safety Fundamentals course
 - Great Plains Area, September 2024
 - Alaska Area, October 2024

iv. [IHM Part 1 – Chapter 9 – Occupational Safety And Health Program](#)

- Calvert, Conner, Dickson, Franks, Hroch, Peaches, Wiggins, Williams, Woodlee
- Rollout: materials developed; presenting to various groups
- OSHA HQ & HHS notifications (recent OSHA reportable injuries & complaints from IHS facilities)

v. EC/LS Workgroup

- 16 recommendations
- Presented to
 - IHS Executive Leadership Team monthly meeting (September)
 - Facilities Appropriations Advisory Board (October)

vi. Office of Quality

- Enterprise Risk Management (Facilities & EOC)
 - Conner, Franks, Hroch
 - EOC Dashboard development & pilot (pilot sites now at 2 Service Units)



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- vii. IH Protocols
 - Cook, Hroch, Murga
- viii. Safe Patient Handling & Mobility
 - Hansen, Hiles, Hroch
 - HFAC/OEHE A/E Design Guide update
- ix. Quarterly IEHO call 20 November 2024
- c. Performance Measures FY24 (Matt Albright/Mike Reed)
 - i. Environmental Surveillance
 - FY24 77.5%
 - FY23 80.6%
 - FY22 81.45%
 - FY21 87.5%
 - FY20 86.7%
 - ii. Injury Prevention
 - FY24 543
 - FY23 599
 - FY22 484
 - FY21 473
 - FY20 154
 - iii. Discussion
 - What CFPM trends are we seeing in the field?
 - Increase in CFPM deficiencies last year but this year DEHS staff offering ServSafe training
 - What are barriers to achieving the Performance Measures?
 - A lot of FSS staff certificates expiring
 - Turnover of employees at establishments
 - Low pass rate
 - What novel approaches are being used to increase the number of CFPMs in the Areas?
 - Offering ServSafe training
 - Ensuring DEHS staff have the tools they need to provide training
 - Impress upon food establishments the importance of having certification
 - Low pass rate: DEHS staff work with those individuals as best we can
 - Is online/virtual training an option?
 - Can EHSC provide courses?
 - Partner with tribal *enforcement* partner for them to help “require” the certification
 - Can DEHS or EHSC offer a *scholarship* for those who cannot pay for the course?



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d. Miscellaneous (Stephen Piontkowski)

i. DEHS Awards 2024

- [2024 Environmental Health Specialist of the Year](#); nominations due to [CAPT Stephen R. Piontkowski](#) by 06 January
- [2024 Gary J. Gefroh Health and Safety Award](#); nominations due to [Brian Hroch](#) by 09 February
- [2024 Rick Smith Injury Prevention Award](#); nominations due to [CDR Molly Madson](#) by 09 February

ii. COSTEP & [Civil Service] EH Externs

- 2025 Civil Service Extern vacancy announcements ([DE](#) and [ESEP](#)) 01 November 2024 – 28 March 2025
- Selection & placement ongoing

iii. 31 December

- Staffing report due
- Photo contest pics due

iv. 06 January

- EH Specialist of the Year Award nominations due

v. 31 January

- Project posters due

vi. 09 February

- Gefroh Health & Safety Award nominations due
- Smith Injury Prevention Award nominations due

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