



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our members, sponsors and partners for their ongoing support during 2017 and we look forward to sharing a bigger and better 2018 with you all.

The EHA National Board wishes you and your families a happy festive season and a safe and successful New Year.

All the best, Vince, Phil, Joe, Helen, Kirsten, David, Melissa, Mark and Kelli

[In This Issue](#)

[Message from the National President](#)

[2017 National Conference](#)

[Natrum Update – Return of unwanted medicines](#)

[Food industry updates](#)

[EHA Twinning Program](#)

[EHA National Activities](#)

[Queensland Update](#)

[New South Wales Update](#)

[Tasmania Update](#)

[Western Australia Update](#)

[South Australia Update](#)

[Victoria Update](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

Message from the National President

Greetings Fellow Member,

'You better not shout, you better not cry, you better not pout, I'm telling you why – Santa Claus is coming to town.'

As the year comes to an end, we are frantically working to get everything done before Christmas. With so many things on our minds - work, presents, what are we going to eat, where will we go, who's coming – it is difficult to stop looking ahead and sit back to reflect on the year that has passed.

I have never really been a person who sets New Year's Resolutions. However, I do spend this time over Christmas to contemplate the person I was throughout the year and look at how I could be better next year. These are not resolutions; but, challenges. During this year my challenges were to read a self-development book every month and meet five (5) new people every day. I can say I have read my books, yet, there were days when I could not find five (5) new people to meet (small populations in the West) and other days when I exceeded my quota (conferences are a great place to meet people). These challenges are not ground breaking and I chose them to take me out of my comfort zone – finding 20 minutes a day to read and going out of your way to introduce myself to people I do not know. I believe I am a better person as a result of these challenges. This year I am going all out – taking up Latin Dancing and Spanish.

At EHA National we are doing similar challenges – stepping out of our comfort zones, taking on new actions that we have not done before, all with the intention of making things better. The employment of Kelli Robertson as our National Communication Officer has been a brave but productive move. A review of the Service Agreement that leaves more money in the State Associations, the actioning of the Audit Review team to reduce and minimise the ongoing costs of maintaining the Association and the increased focus on the International level through IFEH, the Twinning Program and continued relationships with the Presidents of New Zealand, USA, Canada, Jamaica and United Kingdom.

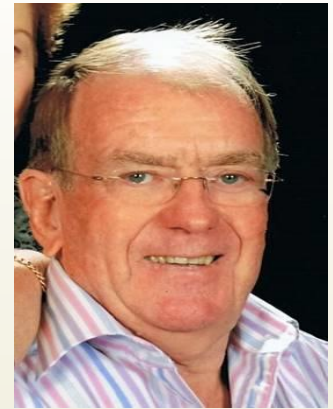
These challenges have enabled our Association to think and be bigger than our own backyard and we look forward to the challenges of the New Year. The IFEH Conference in Auckland in March 2018 will be the launch of another International Year for EHA National and I look forward to seeing you there. Remember our National Conference in Fremantle in October 2018.

May your Christmas be filled with love and laughter, may you remain safe and may the year ahead be overflowing with hope and joy.

Merry Christmas,

Vince Stephens
President
EHA National

Vale Ron Spratt, OAM,
Life Fellow EHA



It was with great sadness that this year we said farewell to Ron Spratt OAM, LFEHA.

Ron was an icon in the Environmental Health profession over his 30 plus year career.

He was a founder and President of the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH), the President of EHA (NSW) INC (formerly known as the Australian Institute of Health Surveyors - AIHS) and received an OAM for his services to Environmental Health. He remained an advocate for environmental health in retirement, through various community groups and council committees.

Ron sadly passed away in September 2017. Ron will be fondly remembered as the:

- President AIHS (NSW Div.) 1983 – 1988;
- National President AIHS – 1988; and
- President IFEH 1988 – 1991.

Rest in Peace Ron

2017 National Conference, 16-19 October 2017, Brisbane

The 42nd EHA National Conference was officially opened with a Welcome to Country and the Right Hon. Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Graham Quirk. The National Conference theme, Environmental Health – A Bridge to a New World attracted a fantastic variety of key note speakers and presenters from various areas of government and across the broad fields of Environmental Health and sustainability.



The conference provided delegates with opportunities to expand their practice across topic such as food safety, waste generation reuse and disposal, environmental management, disaster management, water quality, pest management, vector control and public health.



How do you make a room full of EHO's quiet down and meditate... get Nicola Lipscombe from Powerful Listening into the room! Nicola's session 'The surprising secrets to thriving in tough times' was inspirational and motivating with a simple message. Listen.

Nicola took our delegates through a series of simple tools and that will assist in transforming relationships and connecting through the power of listening.



Keynote Speaker Professor Ian Lowe AO, Emeritus professor of science, technology and society at Griffith University and one of Australia's most respected environmental scientists, delivered the closing address.

EHA 2017 Award Winners

EHA were proud to celebrate and reward the achievements of our members at the 42nd EHA National Conference held at South Bank Brisbane. The Environmental Health Excellence Awards showcase the achievements, success and innovation within Environmental Health and recognised the hard work and passion that winners have for their profession.

The winners were...

Early Career Environmental Health Professional 2016 -
Danielle Fleming

EHA Environmental Health Professional of the Year - Peter Boland

Highly commended EHA Environmental Health Professional of the Year - Megan Nilon

EHA Fellowship - Amanda Hutchings

Presidents Award 2016 – Donna Thompson



2017 National Conference, 16-19 October 2017, Brisbane

The 42nd National EHA Conference would not have been the success it was without the ongoing support of our sponsors and exhibitors. A huge thanks to our host city sponsor Brisbane City, Award Sponsors Coles, Aspen Medical, Silver sponsors IDEXX and riams aus, Ergon, Energex, Poolwerx and Sims Metal Management.

Our exhibitors provided delegates with demonstrations of new products and services and gave our exhibitors an invaluable opportunity to gain industry insight for future product development. Exhibitors this year were Brisbane City Council, Open Office, Taylex Tanks, riams aus, Smart Burn, IDEXX, FSANZ, Poolwerx, Osborne Richardson, On Solution, Key Diagnostics, SIMS Metal Management.



43rd EHA National Conference, 30 October to 2 November 2018, Fremantle, Western Australia Call for papers open!

Individuals or organisations interested in submitting a paper or presenting a workshop can submit their proposal online by the deadline, 30 April 2018.

All proposals will be reviewed by the conference committee. If selected, speakers will be offered complimentary registration for the day of their presentation.

Further information is available on the Conference webpage.

<https://www.ehawa.org.au/events-info/conference-pages/2018-conference>



Margaret Hind Memorial Award

The Margaret Hind Memorial Award is a special award category of which EHA holds in the highest prestige. Margaret Hind passed away in January 2015 during her employment with EHA as Executive Officer of NSW, QLD and TAS associations.

Margaret had an incredible impact on the industry during her 10 years service to EHA.

EHA were proud to present Steve Holroyd with this honour for 2017. Steve became a member of the Institute of Health Surveyors in 1959.

Steve's involvement in EHA (NSW) INC was recognised at the 33rd EHA National Conference in Sydney in 2006 where he was appointed as Fellow.

Congratulations Steve!

Steve was unable to attend our Gala event, David Basso, EHA NSW President accepted the award on Steve's behalf.



Natrum Update – Return of Unwanted Medicines

What is Return of Unwanted Medicines?

Established in 1998 and funded by the Commonwealth Government, Return Unwanted Medicines (or The RUM Project) is a national, not-for-profit company that provides consumers with a free and convenient way to safely dispose of expired and unwanted medicines. Anyone can return their household medicines to any community pharmacy. The returned medicines are put in a secure bin and then collected and disposed of by high temperature incineration in accordance with regulatory and EPA requirements.

What types of medicines can be returned to pharmacy?

Prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, herbal or complementary supplements, gels, liquids, creams and veterinary medicines can be returned to community pharmacy to be disposed of in the RUM bin.

Empty inhalers are safely disposed of in your normal rubbish collection but any inhaler that still contains some of the active ingredient, should be taken to the pharmacy to be put in the RUM bin.

Sharps or needles cannot be put in RUM bins. Talk to your pharmacist about the appropriate way to dispose of these items.

What are ‘unwanted medicines’?

Unwanted medicines are medicines purchased and no longer needed, or medicines the doctor prescribed for a health condition that is no longer present. It is dangerous to assume that previously used medicines are suitable for new ailments. You should always consult a pharmacist or doctor before taking medicines prescribed for another condition. Medicines that are no longer of immediate use should be returned to pharmacy for safe disposal.

Unwanted medicines also include out-of-date medicines which can also be potentially dangerous. Chemical changes to some medicines after their use-by-date can cause them to lose effectiveness or can even be harmful to take. Medicines with expired dates should be returned to pharmacy for safe disposal.

What is the disposal process?

Returned medicines are disposed of by high temperature incineration. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has approved this process. Last year, RUM collected and safely disposed of over 700 tonnes of medicines, potentially preventing them ending up in waterways and landfill.

Why can't expired or unwanted medicines be used for overseas aid?

Medicine donations to developing countries or in disaster situations is often viewed by communities in developed countries - such as Australia - as a useful way to provide much needed pharmaceutical supplies. Unfortunately, not all medicine donations are helpful and inappropriate medicine donations can be dangerous or useless, and a source of problems for the recipient countries.

The ‘Australian Guidelines for drug donations to developing countries’ - which are based on the World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines for medicine donations – states that donations should be based on an expressed need and should not be sent without written request from a competent authority in the recipient country.

For more information, review the ‘Australian Guidelines for drug donations to developing countries’.

Natrum Update – Return of Unwanted Medicines

Why is it necessary to collect and safely dispose of expired and unwanted medicines?

Evidence over many years confirms that medicines stored in the home can be the source of accidental poisonings of children or pets, and the source of confusion with elderly people. The National Poisons Information Centres report that over 5,000 children end up in hospital due to accidental medicine poisonings each year.

Elderly people who take multiple medicines for multiple conditions can sometimes become confused as to what to take, and the risk of mix-ups increases if medicines that are no longer needed or expired are not discarded.

Additionally, medicines and chemicals in general can contaminate the environment when discarded via landfill sites and sewerage facilities. The collection and disposal of unwanted medicines is consistent with the “Quality use of Medicines” philosophy included in Australia’s National Medicinal Drug Policy.

Why can expired medicines be harmful?

The expiry date is the last day that the manufacturer guarantees the full potency and safety of a medicine. Expired medicines may be less effective or hazardous due to a change in chemical composition or a decrease in strength. Stick to the rule that if your medicine has expired, don’t use it – it’s not worth the risk – and return it to pharmacy for safe disposal.

How do you find the expiry date on medicines?

Expiry dates exist on most medicine packaging, including prescription, over-the-counter and herbal / complementary supplements. Sometimes expiry dates may be located underneath labels, on the lid of bottles, or at the end of cream tubes. If you can’t find the expiry date, ask your pharmacist to help.

Where is the best place to keep medicines in the home?

Contrary to popular belief, the bathroom medicine cabinet is not ideal placed to store medications due to heat and humidity. Nor is the kitchen cupboard, above or next to the cooktop. Medicines are best stored in dry, cool spaces away from light, and of course out of reach of children and pets.

For more information, visit returnmed.com.au



Food Industry Updates

Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code Amendments Quarter 4 2017

Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code Amendments for Quarter 4 2017 include amendments to the following Australian and New Zealand Food Standards Code standards:

- FSANZ Code Amendment No. 172 Published 7 September 2017
 - Standard 1.1.1 – Structure of the Code and general provisions
- Standard 1.1.2 – Definitions used throughout the Code
- Standard 1.2.1 – Requirements to have labels or otherwise provide information
- Standard 1.2.7 – Nutrition, health & related claims
- Standard 2.6.2 – Non-alcoholic beverages and brewed soft drinks
- Standard 4.5.1 – Wine production requirements
- Schedule 3 – Identity and purity
- Schedule 4 – Nutrition, health and related claims
- Schedule 5 – Nutrient profile scoring method
- Schedule 18 – Processing aids
- Schedule 29 – Special purpose foods

FSANZ Code Amendment No. 174 Published 26 October 2017

- Standard 4.5.1 – Wine Production Requirements (Australia only)
- Schedule 18 – Processing aids

FSANZ Code Amendment No. 175 Published 7 December 2017

- Schedule 20 – Maximum Residue Limits
- Schedule 26 – Food produced using gene technology subsection S26—3(4) item 5
- Schedule 26 – Food produced using gene technology subsection S26—3(4) item 1

Amendments to the code can be viewed at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/changes/gazette/Pages/default.aspx>

Country of origin food labelling

Mandatory reforms for country of origin food labelling come into effect on 1 July 2018 following on from the transition period that commenced on 1 July 2016. Guidance on the new origin labelling rules can be obtained from ACCC publication - Country of Origin food labelling. This guide will help assist businesses to comply with the mandatory reforms and assist them in identifying what they need to do to comply with the Standards.

To assist in the creation of new labels, the ACCC has released an interactive online tool which is available at the Country of Origin Labelling online tool (CoOL tool) webpage on the business.gov.au website. The tool will assist manufacturers to determine if they need a label and how to customise and download the appropriate label for their food product.



EHA Twinning Program

Nancy Bird of Logan City Council provided our 42nd EHA National Conference delegates with an update on the EHA Twinning Program with Zambia in July 2017.

Our amazing team of EHA delegates spent two and a half weeks in Zambia as part of this international exchange in partnership with ZIEH delivering workshops and exchanging knowledge across a broad range of Environmental Health topics including food safety, noise, leadership, FBI investigations, legal enforcement, vector control and options for delivering positive outcomes.

The twinning program is an incredible professional development initiative by EHA and provides our participating members with a rare opportunity to evolve their practice in environments outside Australia.

EHA are proud of our amazing team who participated this year and we look forward to hosting our Zambian colleagues in Australia in March 2018. If you would like to participate in future international exchanges, contact EHA or go to <https://www.ehaqld.org.au/about-us/eha-qld-inc-news> for an overview of the program.



EHA National Activities

11th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference

Environmental Health Australia were proud partners of enHealth's Working Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health for the 11th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference on 5-7 September 2017 in Cairns.

This conference provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander environmental health practitioners a unique opportunity to meeting in one place, network and share information. The delivered an amazing array of presentations by predominately Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health practitioners following the theme of **Connecting environmental health through partnerships – a grassroots approach.**



World Environmental Health Day – September 26th 2017

As part of a worldwide IFEH initiative, Environmental Health Australia recognised World Environmental Health Day on 26 September 2017 and the of theme of Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality. With Australia being a land of geographical and climatic extremes, Australian EHO's challenges with indoor and outdoor air pollution is vast. EHA honoured the theme by providing snapshot information to our members and the public on some of the common issues we face such as exposure to tobacco smoke and home heating emissions along with those that cannot be regulated such as bushfires and

CPD Update

EHA believes that the ongoing professional development of its members is vital to ensure that they are well positioned to effectively address the current and future environmental health challenges we face. Continuing professional development (CPD) is viewed as being an acknowledgement of, and a commitment to professionalism.

The CPD program is based on a 2 year cycle. CPD activities can be logged and maintained by the member with the current CPD cycle closing on 30 June 2018. Speak to your states executive officer or go to your states website for more information.

Certified Practicing Environmental Health Officer Project Update

Environmental Health Australia are progressing the proposed Certified Environmental Health Officer program.

The project which aims to develop a certification program through EHA has gathered support from national agencies and international aid agency recruiters. Talks to develop a strong and relevant certification program are currently underway.

We'll keep our EHA members updated on the progress of this exciting program!

EHA National Activities

Australian Food Safety Week 11-18 November 2017 - 'Is it done yet? Use a thermometer for great food, cooked safely every time'

The Food Safety Information Council drove this national wide promotion with the purpose of reducing the estimated 4.1 million cases of food poisoning in Australian annually. The FSIC prepared promotional resources, available for free, for download from their website and are encouraged participation from government and community groups nationwide.

EHA nationally provided positive press messages surrounding food safety and maintaining correct temperature controls for perishable items across all steps of food preparation, food receiving and handling, 2 hour 4 hour, cook chill, danger zones and storage.

Global Fire, Cyclone & Flood Disaster Management Forum

EHA partnered with Clariden Global for the Fire, Cyclone & Flood Disaster Management Forum which was held at Novatel Brisbane 29-30 November 2017.

The forum presented sessions with a focus on preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. The major topics covered were using technology and data to predict changes in outcomes, use of drones in disaster response, emergency management communications, response leadership, psycho-social implications of a disaster, risk assessment systems and recovery.

EHA were represented by EHA National Board Director and EHA SA co-president Helen Psarras.



Queensland Update

Swimming and Spa Pool Operations and Water Quality School

Following on from a successful Swimming and Spa Pool Operations and Water Quality School in Brisbane last year, this school will be facilitated again in 2018. Keep a watch on the website www.ehaqld.org.au for dates and location

Environmental Health Disaster Management Course – Townsville

EHA together with Townsville City Council and Griffith University are extending an invitation to all Environmental Health and Disaster Management Professionals to attend our Environmental Health in Disaster Management Course (EHDM).

This course is designed for environmental health specialists, professionals and students who plan to broaden their understanding of the role environmental health has during the preparedness and response phases of disaster management. Participants can be from local, state, federal, international or private sectors.

This course will be held late July to early August 2018. To secure your place you can submit an expression of interest to qld@eh.org.au

EHA (QLD) INC 77th Annual State Conference, Gold Coast, September 2018

The 77th EHA (QLD) INC Annual State Conference will be held on the Gold Coast in September 2018. With the aftermath of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the Gold Coast will have a wealth of experience and stories to share of mastering a mass gathering. If you would like to present at the conference, the Call for Papers will open early next year. Opportunities for sponsorship are available. Save the date! More details to come soon.



Upcoming Regional Conferences:

- Darling Downs / South West Regional Group Meeting
March 2018
- Central Queensland Regional Group Conference
April 2018, Bundaberg
- North Queensland Regional Group Conference
May 2018, Burdekin

Queensland CPD Update

Queensland members who achieved their CPD for 2015-2017 were:

- Belinda Davies
- Claire Moffat
- David Taplin
- Rohan O'Driscoll
- John Duffield
- Michael Sheridan

CPD certificates were presented at the EHA 42nd National Conference Dinner and Awards ceremony on 18 October 2017.



Presidents Award 2017 – Donna Thompson

The 2017 Presidents Award was awarded to Donna Thompson, the executive officer of Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmanian EHA chapters.

Donna works tirelessly to support her state members and boards and also provides support and direction for National activities.



New South Wales Update

EHA (NSW) Advocacy

EHA (NSW) Inc. represents members and our industry on a number of permanent and short-term committees and groups. Most recently, EHA NSW was represented by Dr Andrew Mathieson and Lisa Hughes at the NSW Food Authority's Retail & Food Service Information Session and the Food Regulation Forum, held on 9 November 2017.

Thank you to all who have volunteered their time and thank you to the supporting employers and organisations who have also supported this extremely important role of EHA to ensure our members and industry have a voice.

Details of current representation on behalf of members is available on at:

<https://www.ehansw.org.au/about-us/eha-nsw-inc-news>

Submissions

As part of our advocacy work for our profession, EHA (NSW) Inc provide submissions on behalf of members to legislative review. Submissions made on behalf of members are available to view at <https://www.ehansw.org.au/about-us/eha-nsw-inc-news/submissions>

Reappointment of councils under Food Act 2003

In September 2016, the NSW Audit Office published a report recommending improvements to the Food Regulation Partnership, including better clarification of roles and responsibilities between the Food Authority, councils and other enforcement agencies. Councils' role in regulating retail food businesses has been refreshed and will take effect in 1 July 2018.

Many of the issues we have addressed are important to EHOs, for example the need to maintain competencies and certainty around regulating emerging trends such as home based businesses and market stalls.

Food Authority consulted extensively and met with over half of councils and highly values the feedback received. Environmental Health Australia was also consulted through the Food Regulation Forum: a statutory committee that guides and advises the Food Regulation Partnership between NSW Food Authority and councils. EHA members and representatives participating in committee meetings in 2016/17 include:

- Stuart Nunn
- Jody Houston
- David Basso
- Andrew Mathieson
- Lisa Hughes
-

Throughout late 2017 and early 2018, Food Authority will be supporting EHOs through training and other workshops so please look out for opportunities in your area.

I'm Alert - Update

I'M ALERT Food Safety is currently being redeveloped with a fresh new look and new functionality. This includes the ability for users to log in, save their progress along the way and log back in to continue any incomplete sections.

The food safety message remains the same, but the videos are being upgraded to better suit modern day browsers and user expectations - did you know the current version was developed over 10 years ago?

A link to the new version will be available soon!



Special Interest Groups

While Board members were speaking with delegates at Conference in Penrith, the resounding message we received was for EHA (NSW) Inc to re-introduce the Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Topics suggested for these groups included:

- Legionella
- Food; and
- Environmental Health Managers forum

SIGs are open to our members only. If you would like to enquire about membership, please visit our website or contact our EO, Donna Thompson on 02 9181 3320.

Tasmania Update

State Conference

The 2017 State Conference was held from 27-29 September at White Sands Resort on the East Coast of Tasmania. The theme was 'Survivor EHO – Breathe, Drink, Eat, Live – Environmental Health'. There were many 'Survivor' activities to break up the conference which encouraged networking, team work and some extreme competitiveness! Thank you to those who assisted with the organising of the conference, those who presented and our sponsors. The diverse presentations and stunning location provided a relaxing environment for essential professional development. At the state conference in our annual award winners were announced and four (4) CPD certificates were awarded for the 2015-2017 period.

Professional Development Seminars

Two professional development seminars were held in March and June 2017 at Campbell Town, with good attendance and interesting topics. The next professional development seminar will be held on 7 February 2017 in Campbell Town.

Changes to the Board

Scott Edwards was welcomed back to the board as a Director and Anthony Komives as a board observer. Mark Dwyer has stepped down from the National Board as a Tasmanian representative, however remains as a representative of Victoria. Glenys Nichols has accepted the position on the National Board representing Tasmania with myself. On behalf of the board, we would like to thank Mark for his work and commitment in the role as National Board Director for Tasmania, including representing the profession as National Vice President and National President. We are very appreciative of his ongoing support for the environmental health profession, even after his retirement Mark has decided to remain on the TAS EHA Board of Directors.

Strategic Plan

The board have been busy completing items identified in our strategic plan including providing opportunities for professional development and networking as well as advocating on behalf of our members to continuously improve the profession.

An important issue has been the University of Tasmania Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health) degree which is currently in teach- out mode with the last student graduating in December 2018. EHA (Tas) has been in regular contact with the University and Department of Health and Human Services regarding this matter. We hope to have an update regarding a course early in the New Year.

Promotion

EHA (Tas) Board members continue to attend student taster days to promote the profession.

Collection of Equipment

Board Observer Anthony Komives recently travelled to Zambia as part of the EHA Twinning Program where they provided noise meters, digital, meat and probe thermometers. The equipment was greatly appreciated. The EHA (Tas) Board are collecting equipment/items Council's no longer require, but is still in good working order (eg: thermometer, noise readers, alcohol swabs). The equipment will be sent to EHO's in developing countries to assist them with their daily work.

Annual Award Winners

Tasmanian Environmental Health Professional of the Year – Dearne Morrison

Nominees for this award must have made an outstanding contribution to the environmental health field and/or profession; and go beyond what is standard within their course or work field.



Gold Medal Winner – Elizabeth Philips

This is awarded to the graduate of the University of Tasmania's Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health) who has the highest academic achievement of 2016.

Fellowship – Mrs Georgina Crantock

In September 2017 EHA (Tas) inducted a new fellow.



Western Australia Update

Upcoming Workshops

WA State Administrative Tribunal workshop - Date: 14/03/2017. Workshop will include:

- The SAT – its jurisdiction and way of operating (i.e. SAT legislation, procedures);
- Preparing your case for the SAT;
- Evidence in the SAT (including the role of experts);
- Appearing at the SAT (the difference between being a witness and being an agent/representative).

Emergency Management workshop (participants rescheduled from 2017 Conference Masterclass) - Date: TBC April/May 2018. Workshop will include:

- Gain an understanding of the emergency management arrangements and structures within Western Australia.
- Outline the legislative responsibilities of local governments before during and after an emergency
- Consider the emergency risk management process in planning for emergencies
- Guest speakers

Asbestos research using new mobile app

Matthew Govorko is a PhD student at the School of Public Health, Curtin University. With funding from the WA Environmental Health Directorate and the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency, they have developed and tested a mobile phone app called ACM Check (Asbestos-Containing Material Check).

The app aims to 1) raise awareness amongst the community about asbestos in the home, and 2) collect data from consenting users that can inform us about the amount and condition of *in situ* asbestos in the WA residential environment. ACM Check was released earlier this year and is available for free from the App Store and Google Play.

Essentially, ACM Check guides users through a visual inspection of the inside and outside of their home and identifies potential asbestos-containing materials. Areas such as the walls, ceilings, eaves, electrical metre box, fence and outbuildings are inspected. ACM Check shows plenty of photos to help users complete the inspection, which can take anywhere from a few minutes up to 15 minutes (depending on the property). At the completion of each inspection the app generates a summary report for your home (**example attached**) and provides a series of recommendations about how to manage these materials.

Additionally, users can participate in the research by anonymously sharing their inspection results, which will help to map the type, amount, and condition of asbestos-containing materials currently found in or around the home. Matt needs as many Western Australians to complete the app as possible. It would be great if you could share the app and research with all EHOs who could use it in the field or share it with their local community. For more information on the study, contact Matthew Govorko, BSc (Exercise & Health), MPH, PhD Student | School of Public Health Curtin University Mobile | 0417 646 323 Email | matthew.govorko@curtin.edu.au

Foodsafe Training Pack

If you are looking at training a few people or have a regular turnover of staff then this is the FoodSafe training pack you have been looking for! The pack contains the following items:

- Training video – FoodSafe – Your Future is in Your Hands (on USB)
- Training workbook – Food Handler Training Program Handbook
- Proprietors workbook – Food Handler Training Program Guide for Proprietors (on USB)

Proprietors can monitor their progress using a FoodSafe® Hygiene Audit. This is the same checklist used by EHO's when assessing the business for FoodSafe® recognition. If standards fall, the stickers and certificate are removed.

The FoodSafe® program was developed by Environmental Health Australia in consultation with representatives from local and state governments, academia, industry and consumers.

For more information go to: <https://www.ehawa.org.au/products/foodsafe-products/new-foodsafe-pack>



South Australia Update

The Unusual Pink Creek

Beginning in 2009, Adelaide Hills Council EHO's began receiving complaints about a creek within the water catchment periodically turning pink and smelling foul. Investigations; which involved following the creek for its length, investigating all stormwater drains and even a public appeal involving a letterbox drop to hundreds of surrounding residents proved fruitless. No doubt, in part due to the extensive stormwater system in the area.

These periodic episodes continued on an off for a number of years with samples showing a high organic matter content but nothing toxic or alarming. This was until 2016 when the Mount Lofty Ranges Project Officer, while on a routine inspection of wastewater systems, discovered a non-compliant non-approved system connected to a food business.

The septic tank was uncovered and the lid was found to be in a state of disrepair with oil and grease oozing out of a hole in the lid. There appeared to be nowhere on the site to dispose of any effluent as the site had been overdeveloped.

Interestingly, there was a large shed next to the septic tank containing a cool room with several boxes of beetroot. Also located inside the shed was a soakage pit, which when examined was full of a pink substance. The soakage pit contained a pump and a hose leading to the stormwater drain.

The stormwater drains were checked and were full of pink effluent. The soakage pit was installed illegally by the owner when the shed was built over an already failing soakage trench. When the soakage trench was full the overflow was connected to the soakage pit which subsequently pumped into the stormwater drain. Council is now assessing an application to install a new holding tank system for this premises.

Needless to say, it has been rewarding to finally solve the case of the unusual Pink Creek.

Thankyou to Jane Hendry and the Adelaide Hills Council for providing this article.



EHA SA Flinders University – Host Organisation Work Experience Register

EHA SA are looking to better manage South Australian environmental health students work experience.

This will allow councils to take students when it best suits them, and also allow students to be informed when councils no longer have space for work experience students.

To do this we will ask a few questions about hosting work experience students, including when suits you best, whether you have specialist experience, and whether you would like to suggest short projects that might be of value for both the council and the student.

We would also like to be aware if there are time when you would prefer that students do not contact you. We will then collate information and make it available to students on Flinders Learning Online (FLO) which can only be seen by enrolled students.

If you wish to participate in this survey please go to the SA EHA website news page and follow the links.

Students need experiences and councils are best placed to offer these.

Victoria Update

Ban on smoking in outdoor dining areas and regulation of e-cigarettes and shisha tobacco

Reforms commencing on 1 August 2017 to the *Tobacco Amendment Act 2016* amended the *Tobacco Act 1987* to ban smoking in outdoor dining areas and regulate e-cigarettes and shisha tobacco in the same way as other tobacco products.

Legislation governing tobacco products and smoking continues to contribute to the decline of smoking rates in Victoria, and to a growing awareness of the harm associated with smoking and second-hand smoke.

These new reforms have strong community support and will contribute to reducing smoking rates and tobacco-related harm.

Epidemic thunderstorm asthma forecasting system

Grass pollen season (1 October to 31 December) brings a seasonal increase in asthma and hay fever. It also brings the chance of epidemic thunderstorm asthma.

An epidemic thunderstorm asthma (ETSA) event is an uncommon phenomenon where a large number of people experience asthma over a short period of time. The department has been working with the Bureau of Meteorology and a number of partner organisations to develop the Victorian epidemic thunderstorm asthma forecasting system.

The forecasting system has been designed to forecast the risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma events. It is not designed to forecast the seasonal increase in asthma and hay fever symptoms which occur every year during the grass pollen season, which can be triggered by pollen and changes in weather generally.

The forecasting system serves two purposes:

- to enable health and emergency service systems to be suitably prepared on days of increased risk
- to raise community awareness of possible events so, where possible, those at increased risk can
 - avoid exposure to the storm, especially the wind gusts that precede them (ie go indoors with windows and doors closed and air conditioner on recirculate if in use)
 - have their reliever medications appropriately available and
 - have a chance to revise their asthma management plan or asthma first aid

For more information on the Epic Thunderstorm program how the forecasting system works and what the forecasts mean go to the www.2health.vic.gov.au website.

Environmental Health Australia (Victoria) Limited AGM

Environmental Health Australia (Victoria) Limited AGM will be held at 10.00am AEDST on Wednesday 14 February 2018 via teleconference.

We would like to invite EHA Victoria members to nominate as directors of the board.

Being a director represents an opportunity to become involved in the implementation of state and national programs within EHA (Vic) Ltd as well as participating in a team committed to advancing the needs of your fellow professionals. Directors typically are required to attend professional meetings on behalf of the organisation, assist with the development and conduct of the many skill workshops that are held and attend the Board meetings that are held monthly by teleconference with two face to face meetings annually for the term of the board.

Participation on the Board is an opportunity to obtain experience in matters such as budget development, presentation and meeting protocols and professional liaison that may not be available to you in your present work circumstances. It is also an excellent opportunity to network with a broad range of your fellow professionals.

For more information, details on how to nominate and teleconference dial in details go to the EHA Victoria [website](#)



43rd National Conference

30 October – 2 November 2018 | Esplanade Hotel Fremantle WA
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AUSTRALIA

This conference aims to enhance knowledge in the diverse range of issues that are dealt with by Environmental Health Practitioners and allow delegates networking opportunities during the break and social functions..

Upcoming Events

NSW Advanced Food School 2018 7th February 2018, Castle Hill, NSW

The Advanced Food School is designed to take the Food School to the next level, incorporating the trends driven by consumers and industry including identifying hazardous processes and risk based inspections.

The course will:

Increase skills and knowledge in specialist areas, including identifying critical control points; and
Include DA assessments and hazard based inspections of retail food premises. Registrations Close: 5th February 2018

Tasmania Professional Development Seminar 7th February 2018, Campbell Town, TAS

The Tasmanian Professional Development Seminar is designed to provide Tasmanian EHO's with an indepth insight into what's happening in Tasmania and will provide attendees with an update on TasPlan, legislative changes and will include student presentations and a presentation on the Zambian Twinning program. This event offers both educational and networking opportunities and is a great forum to discuss issues both relevant to Tasmania and Nationally. Registrations Close 5th February 2018.

EHO to Supervisor Program, 28 February, 1 & 28 March 2018, Brisbane, Qld

EHA (QLD) INC cooperatively with Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA), has scheduled a training program for environmental health officers who want to progress to supervisory and management positions.

The course will include:

- developing a leadership vision
- communicating effectively;
- developing a team culture and
- delegation and expectations.

This is a three day course which will be held in Brisbane. The first two days are an intensive which will be held on Wednesday 28 February and Thursday 1 March. The third day will be held on Wednesday 28 March in Brisbane.

IFEH 15th World Congress on Environmental Health, 20-23 March 2018, Auckland, New Zealand

An interesting and varied programme is promised with a focus on Environmental Health in the South Pacific. So come to Auckland, where we are providing a host destination that combines first-rate accommodation and infrastructure with world-class shopping; superb food and wine; and lively waterfront precincts.