

# EHA News

The newsletter of  
Environmental Health  
Australia (SA) Inc

June 2013



## In this issue....

Conference report and photos

Meet the Environmental Health Team  
from Copper Coast Council

The new Public Health Special Interest  
Group

President's report

Legal news

Latest events for members

## Collaboration for building healthy communities....

The 2013 SA EHA State Conference was a conference with a difference yielding great results. It was the first time a collaboration between Environmental Health Australia (SA), Public Health Association Australia (SA), Planning Institute Australia (SA) and the Local Government Association of South Australia was utilised to produce day 1 – Partnering for Population Health.

The Honourable Jack Snelling, Minister for Health and Ageing opened the Conference with a positive and enthusiastic address about public health, healthy planning and design in SA. This was followed by a Launch by the Heart Foundation: Healthy by Design SA – A guide to planning, designing and developing healthy urban environments in SA. The EHA (SA) Conference committee was honoured to be the platform chosen to launch this great initiative. *Cont...page 2.....*



## Another successful State conference...

....Highly informed and regarded interstate speakers, Associate Professor Susan Thompson, Professor Peter Newman and Patience Harrington lead the Keynote Panel and gave motivating presentations which highlighted that we as environmental health professionals can build a stronger, healthier community by engaging with and partnering with our fellow public health and planning colleagues. Day 1 concluded in workshops on climate change, data collection and the public health planning process.

Day 2 – Environmental Health in Practice was focused on environmental health issues. The Keynote Address was given by Paul Pholeros, Director of Health Habitat. Paul provided an insight to the importance of the basic principles of living and hygiene, with an increase in indigenous health achieved primarily by improving the quality of housing. This lead nicely into Phil Graham and Damien Coulthard's presentation on Indigenous Environmental Health Workers in SA and what is being done to improve the health and lifestyle of the indigenous population at a local level. Dr Kirsten Ross gave us an update on what Flinders University is up to, announcing an exciting opportunity of further study for experienced officers through a Masters in Environmental Health.

Amongst other applied presentations, the afternoon session 'Ask the Experts' provided some insight into how EHO's can improve their practices in conducting food, cooling tower and tattoo/piercing inspections. It was great to share tips and tricks with industry experts. The final presentation of the conference was a very interesting and thought provoking one. Shane Turner, SA Hazard Leader for Earthquakes, had many photos to share from the Christchurch earthquake and whilst explaining the science behind earthquakes, he focused on the environmental health issues resulting from the Christchurch earthquake. The EHO Team of the Christchurch City Council won an Award for Excellence in Service and Supply for their work during the recovery efforts to protect public health. They were congratulated on controlling the possible increase of communicable disease during this time. This highlighted the fact that EHOs have a key role to play if a disaster strikes.

The conference dinner held at the Richmond Hotel was a hit – a time to let our hair down and have a good time!

The conference committee would like to thank the sponsors – SA Health, LGA SA, Norman Waterhouse Lawyers, Kelledy Jones Lawyers, Healthy Environs and Flinders University for supporting the environmental health profession and for making this conference possible. Last but not least, thank-you to all who attended and the Hippos at the Zoo for the entertainment in the breaks. We had a great time and hope you did too!

By Helen Psarras





# Announcing the new Public Health SIG

SIG Convenors: Dane Abbott & Jamie Tann

The Disease Control/Emergency Management SIG has changed its name to the Public Health SIG, the change in name better reflects the change in legislation namely the introduction of the South Australian Public Health Act 2011. The SIG meets every two months to discuss relevant public health issues and also to hear from relevant guest speakers.

2013 has so far been a busy and productive year with two meetings and the topics discussed have been:

- Ian Hawkins from the LGA giving an update on the Public Health Act.
- Discussed the contents of the new publication from enHealth "Risky Business".
- Issues surrounding obtaining compliance of High Risk Manufactured Water Systems at Schools.
- The possible impacts of the proposed EPA Local Environmental Nuisance Bill.
- Discussions around how Councils are progressing in relation to their Regional Public Health Plans.

The SIG also compiled the Environmental Health Australia (SA Inc) submission in regard to the Draft State Public Health Plan.

Our recent meeting in June was really well attended. We had Steven Mudge (EPA) and Adam Gray (LGA) there to discuss the proposed EPA Local Environmental Nuisance Bill. Dale Mazzachi (Norman Waterhouse) and Cimon Burke (Kelledy Jones) answered legal questions in relation to public health issues. SA Health representatives (Danny Broderick, Cath Thomas, Andrew Brown) gave an update on the State Health Plan and Public Health Act implementation.

Thank you to the Cities of Holdfast Bay and Tea Tree Gully for hosting SIGs so far in 2013.

If anyone is interested in joining the SIG mailing list or wants more information on the Public Health SIG please feel free to contact Dane Abbott on [dabbott@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au](mailto:dabbott@mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au) or Jamie Tann on [jtann@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au](mailto:jtann@dcmtbarker.sa.gov.au)

The SIG is seeking expressions of interest to join the team as Secretary. This is a very rewarding role that keeps you up-to-date in the latest issues

regarding public health. If you would like to express your interest for the position please let me or Dane know.

By Jamie Tann

The Disease Control SIG is changing its name to the Public Health SIG



## Meet the Copper Coast Council Environmental Health Team

### Jan Truter

EHO - Copper Coast Council

#### What do you like about environmental health?

Opportunity to make a difference in the community.

#### Amusing and challenging experiences as an EHO -

Answering the phone and then being asked to speak to Mrs Jan...trying to explain that I am not a missus and I am really the person they are looking for.

Planning in advance...every day is different with an array of complaints that needs immediate attention.

**Hobbies:** Fishing, camping, motorbike riding.

**Favourite movie:** Happy feet

**Favourite meal:** Red meat & more red meat for salad....and only a wee bit of red wine on the side....

**Greatest achievement:** Completing my Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer Qualification, signed by Bill Gates himself!!!



### Johan VanZyl

EHO - Copper Coast Council

#### What do you like about environmental health?

You can make a difference in a person's circumstances and you don't have to be in the office all day.

#### Amusing and challenging experiences as an EHO

It seems as if the Aussie public is scared of us ex South Africans, maybe because they don't understand us. I don't know what it is, but it is working, as we get the job done with very little resistance. Maybe it is our size that counts.

Getting to understand how a 'Hoarders head works'

#### Hobbies:

Camping, 4x4 and fishing

#### Favourite movie:

The Fast and the Furious

#### Favourite meal:

Traditional South African Braai (BBQ) on an open fire.

#### Greatest achievement:

Winning a Spots car as a student in 1993.



## Self Assessment for Food Businesses in Holdfast Bay

EHO's at Holdfast Bay Council have developed an online Questionnaire to test the skills and knowledge of food businesses in their area. If the business answers all of the questions correctly they receive a sticker indicating they are a 'Cut Above the Rest'. If the business answers incorrectly to questions EHOs up skill them in key areas.

This initiative builds on an existing similar program using the convenience of the internet. The program encourages businesses to take the test and improve their skills and knowledge and assists to reduce the frequency of inspections. The response from the businesses has been excellent and has made them stop and think about their practices.





EHA is now on Facebook! Look them up and like their page!



### Useful links and resources

For latest information on the Public Health Act implementation, see the LGA website:

<http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=280>

enHealth – check out the latest national guidelines .....

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-publicat-envIRON.htm>



## President's News

### Angela Sorger

As you know EH news is an informal means of keeping you up to date with events training and providing you with news in the field of Environmental Health.

As a practicing EHO I understand the frustrations this profession can bestow on officers and EHA hopes it can provide through SIGs, training and events a forum for its members to obtain information which may help you in your daily tasks.

The first part of the year has gone by very quickly; EHO's have been overwhelmed with legislative changes impacting on workloads in the areas of, drinking water, wastewater and Public Health.

LGA and the Department of Health are endeavoring to facilitate training in these areas to assist the EHO's transition over to the new acts and regulations EHA will also be involved in the training needs of members and will provide training wherever possible in these areas.

The 2013 conference was a success, a lot of planning and effort from conference committee members Helen Psarras, Kate Eichner, Nicole Argent and Nathan Maple who facilitated a conference in conjunction with Danny Broderick from the Department of Health.

The conference was a huge success and was well received across all organisations that participated. Financially it has provided EHA with capital to help fund the national conference which is being held here in Adelaide in 2014.

EHA are keeping members up to date with "EH news" and "Board news" I would encourage members to support EHA SA Inc by attending special interest group forums, training and providing articles or news to EH News.

Angela Sorger

EHA SA Inc. President.

## Legal Update

### Successful Prosecution

In the case of *Rural City of Murray Bridge v Woolworths (South Australia) Pty Ltd*, A Woolworths store in Murray Bridge sold a ready-to-eat meal 13 days after its use-by date. The purchaser only noticed the expired use-by-date after having consumed the meal. She complained to the Rural City of Murray Bridge (**Council**) the next day. An officer of the Council attended the store to inspect the relevant product. The officer found another identical product with the same use-by date as that complained of – making it now 14 days out-of-date.



The matter proceeded in the Adelaide Magistrates Court where the Council (represented by Paul Kelly and Dale Mazzachi of Norman Waterhouse Lawyers) successfully prosecuted the company under the *Food Act 2001*.

Magistrate Wilson found the Company guilty and imposed a fine \$7,500 and awarded considerable legal fees and Court disbursements to the Council. The matter also attracted significant national media attention.

### Current Proceedings

Paul Kelly and Dale Mazzachi of Norman Waterhouse Lawyers are representing the City of Onkaparinga in a prosecution of the operators of Port Noarlunga South's Foodland store.

The Defendants have pleaded guilty, collectively, to 57 breaches of the *Food Act 2001*. These breaches include selling out of date food, failure to adequately mark food for disposal, and the store being left in an unhygienic state. Again, this matter attained prominence in South Australian media and positive publicity for the Council in protecting



Please send us your news articles for future editions of EH News...

It would be great to get input from our members for future editions of EH News. Please send your articles to our editors Tina-Marie ([taghiana@eha.sa.gov.au](mailto:taghiana@eha.sa.gov.au)) and Sally Modystach ([sally@healthyenvirons.com.au](mailto:sally@healthyenvirons.com.au))



## Congratulations

Laura Fearnly – on the birth of her little girl Ava.

Anthony Jennings - on the birth of his daughter Isabella May.

Rebekah Schubert – on the birth of her little girl Chloe.

Our best wishes to you and your family - from all EHA members...