



74th CIPHI Annual Educational Conference

Delta St. John's Hotel

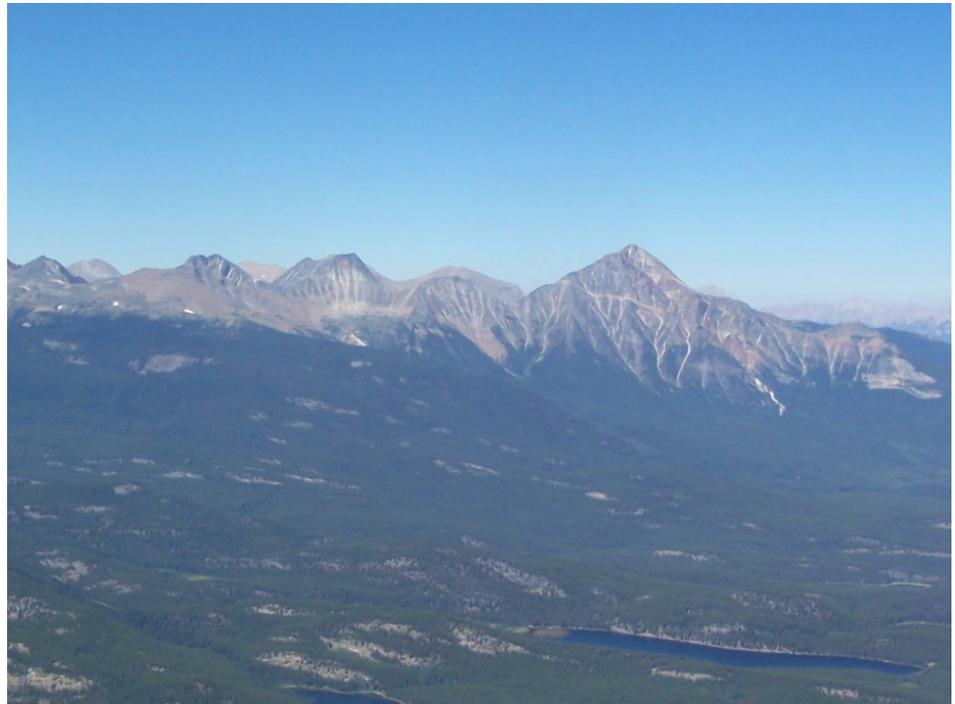
And Conference Centre

St. John's, NL

July 20-23, 2008

Visit <http://www.ciphi.nl.ca>

for more information



The Rockies near Jasper—Lance Honish

Message from the President

The snow is finally melting slowly here in most of Alberta and we expect that Spring is nearing, barring repeats of previous years when early melting was replaced with an icy layer of sleet. Regardless of snow or snow, CIPHI Alberta's work never ceases.

Over the last while within the Branch, several changes have occurred in the personnel of various portfolios, one of which is the administration and operation of the ABN, the official newsletter of the Branch.

I would like to welcome on board Lance Honish as the new Editor of the ABN and wish him all the best in his new role. Conversely I would like to

thank Adam Stokowski, the out-going editor for his hard work over the past two years.

As well, we are in search of another Arctic Zone Councillor as Rob Bartlett has decided to move on from his post in Hay River and join the happy Environmental Health family in Alberta. Thanks to Rob for his contributions and a warm welcome to Alberta as well!

On the National front, CIPHI is continuing its various projects related to continuing professional competencies and development of discipline-specific competencies. This is an important initiative for CIPHI, but I know there are many

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Message from the (New) Editor

I'm pleased as punch to serve as the newest Editor of your Alberta Branch News. While I'm a rookie at developing publications like this, I look forward to putting together all of the news of the Alberta Branch that's fit to publish. On behalf of the Branch, I'd like to thank the outgoing Editor, Adam Stokowski, for his 2 years of hard work and dedication to the newsletter. I'd also like to thank the ABN Committee, including Phi "El Presidente" Phan for his ongoing assistance in the publication of ABN, as well as Wojciech Drobina, Karen Emde, Nadine Newman and Tony Thepsouvanh.

The new guy/gal always wants to make changes, and I'm no exception. Previous Editors took on the challenging task of attempting to meet the Branch Executive's target of four ABN editions each year. Because of the significant time commitment involved in finding and publishing newsletter content, this has often not achieved in recent years. I will be proposing that the Branch Executive revise the target from four

to two ABN issues each year—Spring and Fall issues. I'm hopeful that semi-annual publication will allow for timely communication of Branch news and events, while at the same time ensuring a realistic time commitment from all of the volunteers involved in publishing ABN.

To close, I'd like to get down on bended knee and BEG all Branch members to send me ANYTHING they think might be appropriate for publication in ABN. For those of you so inclined, I'd be happy to consider Letters to the Editor or guest columns—it's your chance to spout off without another EHO interrupting you. Also, send me any news clippings, cartoons, pictures (publishable, please!) and I'd be happy to include them. Lastly, and most importantly, any feedback you provide will help us publish the best ABN possible.

Drop me an e-line:
Lance.Honish@capitalhealth.ca

- Lance Honish, Editor

Editorial Policy

In the pursuit of the Association's objectives, the Editor and the Newsletter Committee is authorized to publish this Newsletter on a periodic basis, as deemed appropriate. The objectives of the Association are:

- The development and advancement of environmental health, and
- To support the advancement of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors.

The Association Executive Board has the authority to provide general direction respecting the content of the Newsletter and, in consultation with the Editor, to set policies regarding administrative matters of each issue.

The Editor shall have the general authority to select material for publication in the Newsletter provided all material meets the criteria of being within the objectives of the Association.

Views, comments or positions within the contents of the Newsletter are those of the Editor, Editorial Staff and/or the author, respectively, and does not necessarily reflect those of the Association Executive or its membership.

Message from the President con't ...

(Continued from page 1)

members with questions and concerns. If you do, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss them. It through discussion that we will arrive at a solution that will be workable and beneficial to all.

- Phi Phan, President

Environmental Public Health Week 2008

From open houses and school displays to newspaper clippings and web releases, environmental health-inspired events were held across the province of Alberta during Environmental Public Health Week 2008 (January 14-21).

Proclamations were given by:

- ▶ Mayor Dave Bronconnier (City of Calgary)
- ▶ Mayor Stephen Mandel (City of Edmonton)
- ▶ Mayor Dwight Logan (City of Grande Prairie), at Peace Country Health

Media articles:

- ▶ Calgary: 24Hrs
- ▶ Grande Prairie Daily Herald Tribune

Calgary Health Region activities:

- ▶ Bowness High School mini-career fair—EPH display (and EHO) present
- ▶ Calgary Health Region web articles included “Clean Sweep of the City” and “Students will go bug-eyed over this!”

Announcements on Outdoor Electronic Message Boards:

- ▶ Peace Country Health, at the one of the busiest intersections in Grand Prairie.
- ▶ Capital Health, on Jasper Avenue, Edmonton.

Thank you to all of those involved in making Environmental Public Health Week 2008 a success.

- Wayne Quan



Grande Prairie Mayor Dwight Logan (above) reads EPH Week Proclamation

Alberta Branch 2008 Spring AGM—Calgary

All Branch members are STRONGLY encouraged to attend the **Spring AGM**. Here's the 411 as of press time:

- Date:** Saturday, May 24, 2008
- Time:** 10:00 a.m.— 1:00 p.m.
- Place:** Carriage House Inn, 9030 Macleod Trail South, CALGARY

Just a few reasons why you should attend the Branch Spring AGM:

- ▶ **Lunch** will be served and is **FREE!!!**
- ▶ The **draw** for the **Branch membership raffle** will be made (thank you to those who entered!)
- ▶ Immediately after the meeting, there will be **TWO rounds** of **ALTERNATIVE GOLF!!!**
 - Disc Golf, 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Park 96, 14660 Parkland Blvd SE, Calgary
 - Virtual Golf & Mini Golf, 6:00 p.m. onwards at Schanks, 9627 Macleod Trail South, Calgary
- ▶ Oh yeah, you'll **help your Branch move important issues forward.**

Just one more thing: For those needing hotel, a “**Special Meeting Rate**” is available at the Carriage House.

Contact your Zone Councillor for more details. See you there!



2007 Fall Educational Workshop

The Alberta Branch hosted the 8th Annual Fall Educational Workshop at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton on October 3, 4 & 5. The Workshop, entitled "Future Frameworks and Partnerships", was well attended and by all accounts was a successful endeavor.

Just some of the highlights

- ▶ In advance of the Workshop, Karen Emde (Capital Health) oversaw training of approximately 30 EHO coordinators of the "Water for Life" Water Officer program.
- ▶ A HACCP Workshop was provided by Alberta Agriculture HACCP Advantage on October 3, with approximately 144 in attendance.
- ▶ Approximately 153 delegates attended the Workshop proper, at which several topics were presented including
 - ▶ food facility inspection report disclosure
 - ▶ evidence-based food facility inspection systems
 - ▶ Alberta veterinary disease surveillance
 - ▶ housing as a cornerstone of community health
 - ▶ population studies related to food and water safety in Canada
 - ▶ Alberta Infection Prevention and Control Strategy
 - ▶ Alberta Food Safety Strategy
 - ▶ Pool Technology Updates
- ▶ Delegates shared many laughs on Thursday night at The Comic Strip on Bourbon Street, West Edmonton Mall, followed by additional networking at neighbouring establishments.



Ron de Burger (above) presents Toronto's experience with food facility inspection report disclosure.



A few of the 21 (yes, 21) exhibitors (above).

A special thanks on behalf of the Branch to the Workshop organizing committee (your hard work is greatly appreciated): Shauna Dimock (Chair), Nelson Fok, Sandra Hamilton, Glenn Jenkins, Rob Mahabeer, Samy Tawfik, Edwina Kordyback, Sharon Regimbald, Keara Shaw, Phi Phan, Debra Langier-Blythe, Ludmilla Rodriguez, Victor Mah and Ingrid Zazulak.

- Shauna Dimock and Lance Honish



Alberta Branch Golf Tournament 2008

It's Spring, so it's time to awake from hibernation and go hit a few balls!

The details of this year's Branch Golf Tournament had not been finalized at press time. It is sure to be a fun event, no matter where and when.

For more information about this year's tournament, please contact Peer Mikkelsen at Peer.Mikkelsen@CalgaryHealthRegion.ca



\$10K Donation to Concordia

In November 2007, a \$10,000 donation was provided to the Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton by the Alberta Branch. The donation signifies the Branch's ongoing support of Concordia's Environmental Health training program. A plaque at the entrance to the "CIPHI Alberta Branch Environmental Health Classroom" will be an ongoing reminder for Concordia's Environmental Health students of the close ties between the Branch and Concordia.

- Lance Honish



Branch President Phi Phan (in Canadian Finals Rodeo attire) presents cheque to Dr. Gerald S. Krispin, Concordia's President (above).



Plaque at the entrance to the Alberta Branch Environmental Health Classroom at the Concordia Campus (above).

(Photos courtesy Anthony Mak)



Inside the Alberta Branch Environmental Health Classroom at the Concordia Campus (above).

2008 Fall Educational Workshop—Grande Prairie

The Branch is pleased to announce that the 9th Annual CIPHI Alberta Fall Workshop will be held for the first time in **Grande Prairie**. Please mark the **first week of October 2008** on your calendars and join us in the beautiful Peace Country for yet another educational and fun Workshop experience (check page 4 to see all the fun we had in 2007)!

Stay tuned for more information (check the CIPHI Alberta website (<http://www.ciphi.ab.ca/>) for updates).

In the meantime, if a member should have any inquiries, please contact President Phi Phan at president@ciphi.ab.ca or phi.phan@capitalhealth.ca or Adrea Simmons at adrea.simmons@pchr.ca.

Membership Report

As of February 25, 2008, we are off to a good start for membership in the Alberta Branch (see membership stats below). All members who renewed their membership prior to Dec. 31, 2007 were entered into a draw for a free registration (valued at \$499) to the NEC in St. John's to be held July 20-23, 2008. Congratulations to **Maureen Elko** who was this year's winner! Enjoy the conference.

The raffle for a free membership is now over. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets. The draws for the membership will be made at the Spring AGM. **If you haven't yet renewed your 2008 membership, renew NOW!** The application form is online at <http://www.ciphi.ca/pdf/apply-en.pdf>

- Tricia Herridge

Alberta Branch Membership Summary, February 2008

Zone	Regular	Retired	Student	Life	Total
Arctic	6	0	0	0	6
Calgary	15	1	0	0	15
Capital	27	1	1	0	29
Central	12	1	0	1	13
Federal	4	0	0	0	4
Northern	18	0	1	0	19
Southern	6	1	2	1	10
Total	87	4	4	2	97



Online Environmental Public Health Course—NEW!

This is an exciting time for our profession! The first online credit course specifically tailored for Environmental Public Health professionals is targeted to be launched in September, 2008!

Funded by the *Public Health Agency of Canada* (PHAC), the five CIPHI accredited schools have formed the *Consortium of Environmental Public Health Educators*. The goal of the *Consortium* is to collaboratively build educational capacity that can be readily accessed by practising environmental public health practitioners throughout the country. The first on-line pilot course by the *Consortium* will be available to ALL practitioners with the CPHI(C) qualification, and to selected practitioners in other public health disciplines.

The pilot course *Management Principles in Public Health* is consistent with CIPHI core competency requirements and has been identified as a high priority for current and future leaders of our profession. The course will carry 1.5 credits and will be delivered by the Concordia University College of Alberta in September, 2008. Concordia is also investigating the feasibility to ladder this pilot course, the PHAC Skill Enhancement Course, and future *Consortium* courses onto a possible future Concordia advanced degree program.

For more information, please e-mail me at anthony.mak@concordia.ab.ca

- Anthony Mak, Acting Director-Environmental Health Program
Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton

Branch Website: Spring Makeover

The Branch website has undergone a Spring makeover, so, check it out!

The address is www.ciphi.ab.ca

Here's just some of the information you'll find on the new-look site:

- ▶ Quick links to important Branch news items
- ▶ Branch documents
 - ▶ Position statements
 - ▶ Correspondence
 - ▶ Meeting minutes
 - ▶ Alberta Branch News
- ▶ Branch Executive listing
- ▶ Branch awards
- ▶ Branch constitution and bylaws
- ▶ Upcoming events
- ▶ Useful web links

Thanks to all of those involved in maintaining the website!



Guest Column

Getting the Message Across:

Overcoming Language Barriers in Food Safety Training

by Sharon Regimbald B.Sc., CPHI (C) and Keara Shaw B.Sc., BEH, CPHI (C)

Capital Health, Environmental Public Health Services, Edmonton, Alberta

Editor's Note: The authors were awarded the Stanier Prize for 2007 by the Stanier Institute for this opinion paper. Congratulations, Sharon and Keara!

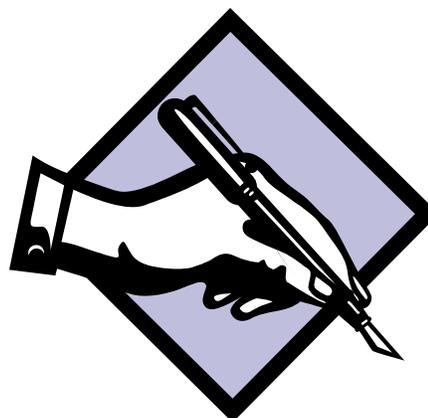
Training food handlers in safe food handling practices is one of the most important aspects for ensuring a safe food supply. Most provinces in Canada have legislation requiring food facilities to have a minimum number of employees with provincially approved food safety training. As public health professionals, it is our responsibility to deliver food safety training to current and potential food handlers. Currently, Capital Health, Environmental Public Health Services (the local environmental public health department for the metro Edmonton, Alberta region) offers food safety training in English, Vietnamese, and Cantonese. The Vietnamese and Cantonese courses were developed to meet the demand after food safety certification became mandatory under the Alberta Food Regulation (Government of Alberta 1985). A major issue with the delivery of food safety training in only three languages is that it does not address the remaining ethnic populations in multicultural cities. Edmonton, like other large urban centres in Canada, is ethnically diverse with many individuals who speak English as a second language (ESL). We have observed that these individuals often have difficulty completing the current English food safety training because of language limitations. Since the development of the Cantonese and Vietnamese courses, other language requests have been made, including, Punjabi, Arabic, German, French, Spanish, Polish, Korean, Tagalog (Filipino), Japanese, and Malaysian, to name a few.

It is not possible to offer food safety training in each of these languages as there are insufficient resources, such as staff and time, to meet the demand. Not only is language-specific instruction straining on resources, we believe it does not improve communication between the food handler and the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) during onsite inspections. Food handlers should be familiar with food safety

concepts and industry related terms in English to effectively communicate with their EHO, other staff, and their patrons. If language-specific instruction cannot be achieved, how do we overcome language barriers when delivering food safety training? We propose that, without altering the course curriculum or modifying the provincial learning outcomes, changes to class format, presentation style, and evaluation methods be made to better suit the needs of the ESL student. A modified ESL based format would provide for effective food safety training to an ethnically diverse population eliminating the need for language-specific instruction.

In Alberta, there is a demand for modified ESL food safety training. Food handler positions are considered an occupation under pressure; the demand for food handlers is greater than the workforce can supply. To address these shortages, many employers have been filling their vacancies through Canada's Foreign Worker Program. This program was created by the federal government to allow employers to hire temporary foreign workers if the employer was unable to find Canadian workers to fill a job opening. There is no minimum language requirement to join the Foreign Worker Program; it is up to the employer to determine what language level the employee requires to do the job (Human Resources and Social Development Canada 2007).

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Guest Column continued ...

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In addition to temporary foreign workers being employed in the food industry, immigrants too are more likely to be employed in accommodation and food service industries than those born in Canada (Zietsma 2007). Due to legislative requirements, some of these individuals are obligated to obtain food safety training. The education level of immigrants is higher than has been in the past (Zietsma 2007), yet many have difficulty completing the course because of language barriers. Providing food safety training to food handlers in a manner they understand may contribute to overall improved food safety within the food industry.

Changes to class format may include reducing the instructor to student ratio and increasing the length of time for course delivery. These changes would allow the student increased access to individualized attention from the instructor. Capital Health's current 12 hour course is offered in two full days or three half-days. We have observed that the pace of this course proceeds too quickly for the ESL student, hindering them from understanding core course material. An ideal situation for an adult education ESL class would be to meet every day for 60 to 90 minutes, as longer periods of instruction have demonstrated to be counterproductive (Graham & Walsh 2005).

Additionally, the presentation style of food safety material to the ESL students should be modified. Our present course delivery (lecturing and videos) may not be appropriate for many ESL students as we have observed a higher failure rate among these students. In order to ensure their success, a different teaching approach could be used. Teaching approaches should vary and activities should appeal to different learning and cognitive styles. Visuals should be used as much as possible, such as pictures, objects, diagrams, flow charts, cards and video extracts (New Brunswick Educational Services Branch 1996). Pre-teaching of key words before each unit would clarify important terminology used during the course. As well, important terms and definitions can be taught and displayed in the classroom to be referred to as needed. Through such reinforcement techniques, the student could be able to discuss these concepts with other staff, their

employer, and their EHO. Our goal as health educators is to have all the students complete the course with a solid understanding of key food safety concepts and industry related terms.

It is also proposed that changes to the evaluation method be made to ensure the success of the ESL student. The exam must be written in clear, plain English and use terminology that the ESL students have become familiar with throughout the duration of the course. Therefore, complex language and sentences should be avoided during testing because the ESL student may answer the question incorrectly, even though they understood the concept (Murdock 2006). The current method of evaluation used in Alberta is a multiple choice exam, which has proven itself ambiguous and difficult for many ESL students. However, it has been shown that multiple-choice exams do not accurately assess the ESL student's knowledge because they involve a large amount of reading and often depend on comprehension of subtle shades of meaning (BC Education 1999). If multiple choice exams are to be used the reading level needs to be lowered and the use of negatives removed (Murdock 2006). There are various methods of evaluation that could be used to better assess the student, which could include picture matching and oral response. Additional instruction and re-assessment could also be offered to the initially unsuccessful student. Any modification to the evaluation method would require provincial approval to ensure the modified ESL food safety training is accredited.

It is in our opinion that food safety training be offered not only in English but also in a modified ESL format. With the growing number of job vacancies in the food industry and the numbers of foreign workers filling these positions, all food handlers should have equal opportunities to be educated in safe food practices. If a class is designated as a modified ESL food safety training course changes can be made to class format, presentation style, and evaluation methods so that the instructor will be appropriately prepared and the student will benefit. Education of food handlers is still the best way to ensure food safety.

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Alberta Branch News

The Alberta Branch News is published quarterly by the Communications Committee of the Alberta Branch to provide current information on the many activities of the Alberta Branch. The newsletter is distributed to members and friends of the Alberta Branch.

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Guest Column continued ...

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Maintaining a high level of sanitation and safe food handling practices within a food establishment is critical to public health across Canada. We must get this message across to every food handler regardless of language barriers.

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