



13th Annual Fall Educational Workshop

“Environmental Public Health: Issues and Policy Development”

Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton, AB

September 25-28, 2012

Visit <http://www.ciphi.ab.ca> for more information



Health Inspectors, Edmonton ca. 1912
(Photo courtesy Alberta Health Services)

Message from the President and Vice-President

Thank you to Lance Honish and his Newsletter Committee for putting together another informative edition of the Alberta Branch News. Fall brings about a busy time for CIPHI volunteers at the Provincial and National levels, so our newsletter continues to be an effective and important way to keep members updated.

Membership in Alberta Branch now linked to PD hours

Thank you to those members who participated both in person and by proxy in our bylaw review initiative. The previous bylaws had not been formally updated since 2001 and we were happy to bring this project to a mean-

ingful conclusion. What has our Executive most excited is the update to language that speaks to membership in our Society. In short, not only do members have to pay your membership dues to belong to our Branch, they also are expected to participate in the continuing professional competencies (CPC) program. Our members voted with an overwhelming majority to adopt this special resolution and our Executive are proud to be the first Society within the Institute to link membership with CPC participation.

Sock Challenge – Can we get to 20,000 pairs?

The 2012 Sock Challenge is underway

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Message from the Editor

I was pleased that there was a great discussion about Alberta Branch News at the June 9 AGM. The interest from the membership will help to create an improved and more engaging ABN.

First, my thanks to the newest member of the Newsletter Committee, **Pamela Stewart** (Central Zone), for coming on board. She's already brought some new ideas and fresh enthusiasm to the Committee.

Stay tuned for some additional changes to Alberta Branch News:

- ▶ An ABN photo contest (which will be launched as soon as I can find some decent swag for prizes!)
- ▶ Features about programs and courses that count towards PDHs

- ▶ Additional reminders of upcoming ABN submission deadlines

Finally, my thanks to Alberta Health Services (and particularly Lavera Sebulsky at the office of Dr. Gerry Predy) for retrieving some fascinating information about the history of public health inspection in Edmonton for the CIPHI 100 year anniversary, including the cover photo. One can tell that 100 years ago there were some colourful characters in our profession, as there are today.

I encourage you to please email your feedback and submissions to me, at:

abn.editor@gmail.com

- Lance Honish, Editor

President/VP Message, con't.

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and piles of "Chaussettes" should be accumulating in various offices across the province. Last year, Alberta Branch members collected over 17,000 pairs and the 2012 goal is to collect 20,000 pairs of socks for homeless shelters and other support agencies across Alberta. That's roughly 650 pairs of socks per member, which sounds like a huge number but we never cease to be amazed at what our members can do when they get behind a worthy cause. Good luck everyone.

Your 13th Annual Fall Educational Workshop – Edmonton, Alberta

The Fall Educational Workshop is right around the corner and we are excited

to bring our members a unique, 3-day educational experience with an international flavour. The Workshop Planning Committee has partnered with several agencies, including Alberta Health – Health Protection, Alberta Health Services, the Alberta Centre for Toxicology and the Health Bureau of Zhejiang Province (China) to co-host our annual event alongside the *4th Annual Canada/Alberta – China/Zhejiang Life Sciences Forum*. The driving motivation for this workshop is to express that CIPHI Alberta Branch promotes the idea that Environmental Health as a practice must never have a proverbial "box" put

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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.



EHO Exchange-California Area Indian Health Services

As part of an Environmental Health Officer recruitment and retention strategy, Health Canada, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch and the U.S Department of Health & Human Services, Indian Health Services offered an EHO exchange program. I was fortunate enough to have been chosen as one of two Canadian Federal EHOs selected through an application process to participate in the 2011-2012 exchange program. The objective of the experience was to provide an opportunity to share expertise, lessons learned, and to strengthen environmental public health program management and delivery to First Nation and Tribal communities.

My exchange experience took place during the first two weeks of March 2012. The host region for the exchange was the California Area, Indian Health Services, Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEH&E). The OEH&E includes the following program areas: Environmental Health Services, Health Facilities Engineering, and Sanitation Facilities Construction. There are approximately 50 employees that deliver these programs to tribal communities across California. More specifically, the Environmental Health Services program is delivered by five Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) and lead by a Division Director. According to the program Director, the environmental health program is very understaffed for effective delivery of environmental health programming in the California Area (20 EHS would be ideal). There are six OEH&E district/field offices throughout California, four of the offices provide envi-

ronmental health services throughout the state. The main district office is located in Sacramento.

The Environmental Health Specialists in the California Area are part of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (PHSCC), one of America's seven uniformed, non-military service. The PHSCC consists of public health professionals that deliver public health programming within the U.S. Federal Government.

California has the largest Native American population and number of distinct tribes than any other state. The approximate on-reservation population of Native Americans is 90,000. In California there are 95 Federal Indian Reservations, out of a total of 300 across the U.S.A. There are 109 federally recognized Tribes/Bands out of a total of 566 across the U.S.A. Not all the tribes have a reservation. The term Rancheria applies to most reservations in northern California and generally refers to tribes that only have housing infrastructure and no other public facilities (except for water and wastewater infrastructure and a tribal office).

Tribes are led by a Tribal Leader or Chair and have a council. Their land is held in tribal trust (meaning the title to tribal lands are held by the federal government in a trust status for the benefit of current and future generations of tribal members (i.e. a reservation)). Trust status

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Andrea Germann, FNIHB EHO in front of a Tribal office (left) and visiting a community water treatment system (right)

EHO Exchange-California (con't.)

(Continued from page 3)

means that the land falls under tribal government authority and is generally not subject to state laws. Trust status also creates limitations on the use of the land and requires federal approval for most actions.

The California Area environmental health program follows three main streams of environmental health program delivery to tribal communities—traditional/general environmental health: food safety, water quality, air quality, waste management; institutional environmental health: occupational health & safety; and injury prevention. Environmental Health Specialists function as consultants, as they cannot enforce legislation on reservation – similar to FNIHB EHOs. Therefore, the term *survey* rather than *inspection* is used for environmental public health assessments. Tribes may also choose to take Indian Health Services (IHS), environmental health funding and opt out of IHS, environmental health services. Tribes may also choose to use the environmental public health services of the state county or both the county and IHS. In the California Area, there are three main environmental public health priorities for IHS: food safety, health centre accreditation, and injury prevention.

In the state of California, it is illegal to operate a casino unless it is on reservation. Therefore, nearly all reservations in California have a casino. Food safety is of concern due to the large number of casinos on reservation. Some of these casinos are very large and on average feed 5000 to 10,000 people per day. Therefore, based on the complexity of the food handling and high volume clientele there is high risk for foodborne illness to occur if good food safety practices are not in place.

Tribal Health Centre accreditation is another priority area. The health centres are usually large and there may be one for several reservations in the area. The health centres are usually fully equipped with doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and small emergency services. The health centres strive to be accredited so they can bill out services such as medi-care, in this way it is economical for the Tribe. EHS conduct regular environmental health sur-

veys to help the health centres either become accredited or maintain accreditation.

Injury prevention is another large program area—there are data supporting that Native Americans die from injuries at rates twice that of other Americans. Leading causes of preventable injury and death identified include motor vehicle collisions and elders' falls. The injury prevention program provides services and funding to Native American communities in the following areas: injury prevention education, seat belt surveys, car seat installation clinics, bike helmets, smoke alarms and equipment for elders' fall prevention.

I was fortunate to visit many reservations and Rancherias across the state of California. My overall impression was that the communities with large, successful casinos seemed to have less environmental public health issues and adequate housing. The communities without large casinos seemed to have similar public health issues as many First Nation communities in Alberta Region such as water quality, wastewater management, solid waste management, and housing issues. My activities during the exchange were fairly well rounded. Some of the activities I participated in were dental x-ray surveys, food establishment surveys at Casinos, solid waste assessments, visited several water and wastewater treatment systems, Headstart survey and participated in an injury prevention meeting.

The benefits gained from this experience are many. This was a unique opportunity to meet, network and share knowledge/resources with environmental health colleagues from another country. The experience also facilitated reflection regarding environmental health program delivery to First Nation communities in Canada, Alberta Region and how existing programming can be improved. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity.

For more details regarding the exchange experience, please feel free to visit my blog at <http://ehoabroad.blogspot.ca>

- Andrea Germann CPHI(C)
Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch
Environmental Public Health Services, Alberta Region

Alberta Branch Awards 2011

The 2011 Alberta Branch Awards winners were officially announced earlier this year. Congratulations to this year's recipients:

Advocate Award: Denise M. Perret

Nominators: Victor Mah and Doug Everett

Denise is Corporate Counsel and head of the Legal and Legislative Services team for Alberta Health. The team provides advice on legal and related strategic matters regarding the operation of the provincial health care system and the business activities of the Department. Since becoming part of the health law team in 2005 she quickly came to appreciate the important role of the Public Health Inspectors and Environmental Health Officers in protecting public health. Denise has worked on and been instrumental in the development, communication and implementation of a number of environmental public health regulations and provides counsel in interpreting the Public Health Act and its Regulations. She has been influential in advancing environmental public health issues to the forefront and is primarily responsible for our regulatory review success and the quality of many of our regulations.

Court Case Award: Calgary Safe Built Environment Team

Nominators: Mark Fehr and Norm Carlson

The Calgary Safe Built Environment Team brought a successful prosecution to the court system with the Judge imposing a \$207,000 fine, the largest financial penalty under the Public Health Act. The case involved six rental properties managed by a person previously convicted for offenses under the Public Health Act in 1998. Hazards to the properties included improper window egress, mould, no working smoke detectors, electrical hazards and severe water damage. The tenants in these building were low income and could therefore not easily afford to move to a safer property. Due to the severe hazards and vulnerability of the tenants, the inspectors were passionate about the case. They spent considerable time conducting inspections, collecting photographic evidence, consulting with the responsible parties and taking detailed meticulous notes. Legal enforcement was used as a last resort and the excellent work by all inspectors involved persuaded the charged to submit guilty pleas. The Judge repeatedly

praised the efforts of the Public Health Inspectors and the materials they provided to the courts.

Also nominated: Glenn Jenkins

Daniel R. Vujevic Award: Ashley Yu

Nominators: Adrea Simmons and Terry Scott

Ashley was certified in 2010 and has worked in Grande Prairie since that time. She has been a team player and always willing to face challenging situations. She goes out of her way to provide support to operators to ensure health requirements are met or even exceeded. She devoted countless hours to make sure renovations to a large area Farmer's Market were performed in accordance with the regulations. She has also served on the AHS Personal Services DSOP Committee, assisting in the development of the DSOP and forms that are going to be used provincially. In July 2011 she worked closely with a large tattoo show ensuring that the organizers and artists were informed of and adhering to all the requirements under the provincial regulations. Ashley has been a CIPHI volunteer since her practicum, helping at the Alberta Branch CIPHI workshop in Grande Prairie, assisting with Environmental Public Health Week activities, serving as a member of the Advocacy Committee and now a member of the Historian Committee.

Also nominated: Daniel Dompreeh, Ayuk Eyong

Environmental Public Health Manager Award: Jim Meagher

Nominators: Adrea Simmons and Ashley Yu

Jim worked in the field for over thirty years before his retirement in September 2011. He showed his dedication to CIPHI by holding several positions with the Albert Branch including Alberta Branch News Editor, North Zone Councilor and Membership Chair as well as serving as an examiner for the Board of Certification. With the merging of the former nine health regions, Jim delayed his retirement to help merge and transition the North Zone into working order. He spent countless hours on the road visiting different sites in the new North

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Alberta Branch Awards 2011 (con't)

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Zone to get everyone working together and updating equipment where needed. Jim also encouraged many of the younger inspectors to take on new roles of responsibility and was integral in the training and guidance of the next generation of management.

Also nominated: Mark Fehr

Fortitude Award: Richard Reive

Nominators: Lance Honish and Amanda Lyons

Richard has blazed a new trail for Environmental Public Health by giving attention to the infection prevention and control practices in community-based health care settings. Observing a gap between practice standards and actual practice, Richard saw the need to address these gaps by performing complaint inspections of these facilities, utilizing enforcement actions including closure of clinics, acting as a consultant for other Environmental Public Health departments in Alberta facing the same issues, presenting at conferences and professional meetings and publishing articles in professional newsletters. His message was not always well-received and was at times met with hostility and questioning of his authority and profession. However, in the face of these challenges, Richard maintained his professional and respectful attitude, and simply got the job done.

Innovation Award: Tony Thepsouvanh

Nominators: Angella Kim and Marcy Iwanyk

Tony was the brainchild behind the *Environmental Public Health Education Series via Telehealth – Videoconferencing*. Telehealth was a new initiative that began in the spring of 2011 as a way to inform and engage the First Nations communities. The goal was to provide on-reserve partners with timely and relevant environmental public health information which they can use in their day-to-day activities. This recent initiative proved to be a success as the first two telehealth sessions was attended by approximately 20 remote sites. Tony was also the creative director behind a video clip created for Health Canada's 2011 All Staff meeting. Tony spent countless hours during his breaks and after hours, di-

recting, coordinating and filming fellow EHOs performing a variety of routine and special duties. This video has gained quite the reputation in Health Canada and offers a unique advocacy and educational tool for the Environmental Public Health Program. Tony has also been an active volunteer for CIPHI Alberta including Membership Chair, Social Committee member, Vice President, Board of Certification examiner, Newsletter Committee member and photographer for many CIPHI events.

Also nominated: Vicki Wearmouth, Karen Clarke

L.E. Stewart Award: Nyall Hislop

Nominators: Rick Dimock and Michael Khan

Nyall has worked in Edmonton for the past fourteen years and in 2005 he completed his Masters degree in Epidemiology while continuing to work full-time. His thesis focused on identifying risk factors for food poisoning in commercial eateries using health inspection records. Aside from demonstrating that his methodology worked, Nyall was able to create profile for food establishments that had legitimate food poisonings. Aside from his thesis work, Nyall has been actively involved in a number of other initiatives that have advanced the food program over the years. He is currently a member of the Food Regulatory Advisory Committee, has published several articles in various journals, presented at numerous events for several organizations, and redesigned and updated the Suspected Foodborne Illness (SFBI) questionnaire used by Alberta Health Services. Nyall continues to be involved in the research and development of new standards and guidelines for Safe Food – Edmonton and Alberta Health Services. He also promotes development of skills for those who are new to the field of Environmental Public Health by coordinating practicum students, training staff and teaching at Concordia University College of Alberta After-Degree Program in Environmental Health.

Also nominated: Dale Nelson

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Alberta Branch Awards 2011 (con't)

(Continued from page 6)

Long-Term Service Award: Ken Fujioka

Nominators: Frances Fong and Ken Dong

Ken has 33 years of service in which he continues to learn and take on new assignments like working on the Institution DSOP Committee and Institution Regulation Review Committee. He is also generous with his time and expertise when it comes to mentoring prospective Environmental Health Officers. As a coordinator for the child care facilities inspection program, he carries out his duties effectively and efficiently, and ensures that monitoring of each premises is on track for

completion by the end of each year. However, the most endearing quality of all is his desire to be a part of the team. He takes time and effort to organize the office Lotto pool, shares his newspapers with office colleagues, and is always ready for a lively debate on any subject.

Also nominated: Doug Drysdale

President's Outstanding Academic Achievement Award

2011 Recipient: **Kelli Sparks**

2012 Recipient: **Eric Gash**

- Koreen Anderson, Past President

President/VP Message, con't.

(Continued from page 2)

around what it can and cannot be. This event will not only be an opportunity to learn from others but also allows our members to showcase the many areas of Environmental Health we have expertise in.

Welcome Jeremy Roberts – Our new Arctic Zone Councilor

Jeremy graduated from Ryerson University in 2001 with a BAsC in Occupational and Public Health and was certified later that same year. Over the last eleven years, he has worked as a PHI and EHO in Ontario, Nunavut and now in Yellowknife. Additionally, from 2008 - 2011, he worked as a Canadian Forces reservist in Halifax. We look forward to utilizing Jeremy's broad perspective on the Executive and to reading his first zone report at the Fall General Meeting later this month.

Healthy Places, Healthy People – Celebrate Environmental Public Health Week

Picking up on the theme of the 2012 Annual Education Conference in Ontario, the spirit of this year's Environmental Public Health Week speaks to the many ways that our members make a difference in their communities. Alberta Branch members are working to get proclamation request letters from local municipalities and we will also be hosting our 3-day

Fall Educational Workshop with two exciting social events planned by our Social Committee. Finally, World Environmental Health Day is Wednesday, September 26, which will be kicked off with a keynote address from the Alberta Associate Minister of Wellness, Mr. David Rodney.

Lastly we would like to thank you for taking the time to keep yourself informed. This newsletter, our website, zone reports and zone meetings are venues we should embrace and support. These are places to introduce ourselves, share ideas, and identify issues or events with other members in our Institute. Without the work of volunteers, the Institute would not be able to provide members with these benefits; so, we would also like to ask you to take the time to thank some of the Institute's many volunteers (or maybe even volunteer for a position).

See you all at the Fall Workshop and do your part to make the sock challenge a success!

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason MacDonald, President, CIPHI Alberta Branch

Jon Elliott, Vice-President, CIPHI Alberta Branch

Concordia Corner

Greetings from Concordia University College of Alberta and the Environmental Health Student Association (EHSA). During the summer semester, students in the Environmental Health program worked together to complete assignments, create and deliver presentations, and develop solutions to problems presented in class. Throughout these months, a different teaching strategy was used with students that focused on group work, where more importance was placed on assignments and projects instead of examinations. Group work was applied in every course from working together to solve toxicology case studies to role playing ethical dilemmas to determine ethical solutions to problems. Groups were determined in the beginning of the semester and professors ensured that every group had members from the fall and summer cohort and members with various backgrounds. Initially, most of us found group work challenging since many students had different backgrounds, experiences and undergraduate degrees. However, as the semester progressed, we were able to use our differences to our advantage by delegating work tasks and teaching one another about what we knew. Every day was a learning and mentoring experience because we would absorb knowledge from our classes as well as learn from the experience and

knowledge of our peers. Group work allowed us to grow as professionals by teaching us how to cooperate, listen and communicate effectively to reach a common goal.

This summer we were exposed to new perspectives and outlooks on communication and ethical dilemmas. Carla Eskow's Health Promotion class was heartfelt and inspirational as she presented us with a side of professionalism we often forget to value in our careers. Also we were exposed to a different type of presentation style, pecha kucha, that proved itself to be a creative and effective communication tool. Carla's class taught us the importance of being tolerant, kind, and to treat every human being with dignity and respect. Since we are often exposed to more scientific matters in our studies, Carla's health promotion class was a refreshing reminder that being a good public health professional requires more than expert knowledge and skills, but requires us to embody reflection, empathy and understanding. Equally important, Glenn Sinclair's Ethics class provided us with a new way to view ethical problems by understanding stages of moral reasoning. The knowledge we learned and the group activities we pursued in this class gave us insight into how different people in different stages work through a moral dilemma and how we, as future public health professionals,

can recognize these stages in people and move up or down stages to help people understand and accept a particular solution to a ethical dilemma.

The summer semester was vibrant and full of many activities and gatherings. Whether it was a potluck gathering at a classmate's house or if all stayed after school to work on group projects, we were given plenty of opportunities to spend time with our classmates. The summer cohort greatly appreciated the time and mentoring the fall cohort provided us with this semester. We are grateful for their patience and advice that helped us



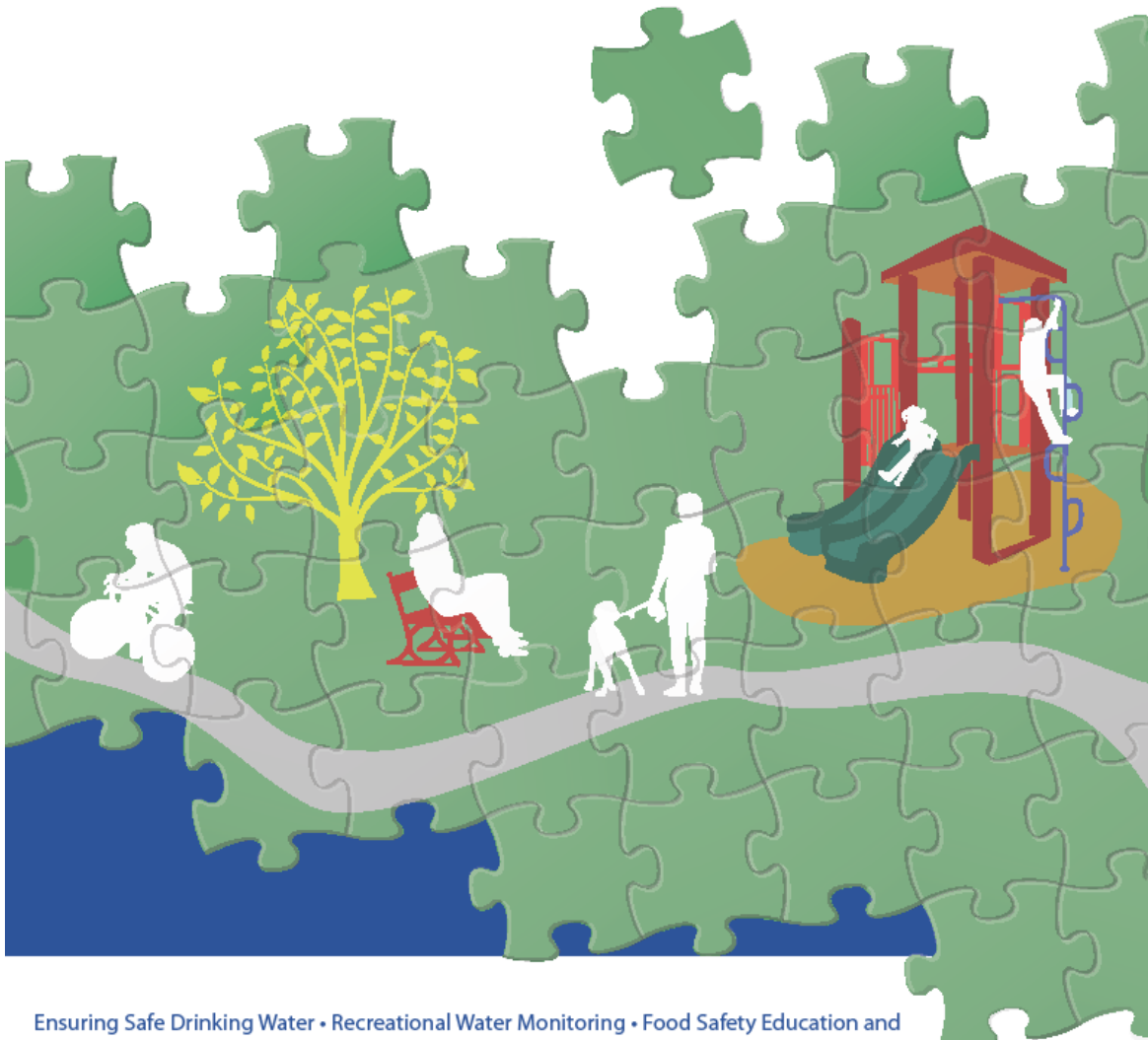
Concordia Environmental Health Students from the Summer and Fall Cohort

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Environmental Public Health Week 2012

HEALTHY PLACES HEALTHY PEOPLE

**Public Health Inspectors & Environmental Health Officers:
Proudly Building Healthy & Safe Communities Across Canada!**



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Environmental Public Health Week
September 24th - 30th, 2012



Branch Golf Tournament 2012

A huge thank you to the 19 attendees that braved the soggy elements to participate in the 2012 CIPHI Alberta Branch Golf Tournament held June 10, 2012 at Lakewood Golf Course in Sylvan Lake. Mother Nature thankfully spared the forecasted rain, however the host inspector, Pamela Stewart, insists that the gusty winds and soggy fairways were likely responsible for her whopping score of 134 (too bad there wasn't an award for high score). Nobody went home empty handed as there was plenty of swag given away!

Congratulations go out to the winners of the big prizes:

- ▶ Dr. C.G. More Trophy for low gross score went to Mike Walsh of Sherwood Park with a score of 85.
- ▶ Dave Davis Award for low net score (score minus handicap) went to Thor "sandbagger" Hameister of Wainwright.

Other notable winners include:

- ▶ Thor Hameister: Closest to the pin
- ▶ Debra Langier-Blythe: Longest putt (women)
- ▶ Jim Murphy: Longest putt (men)
- ▶ Dave Brown: Most times in the water



Thor Hameister (left) receives Dave Davis Award for low net score (score minus handicap)

Thank you to our prize donor Ogilvie LLP, who generously donated the highly sought-after liquor basket, which was taken home by Mel Cherlenko of Stettler.

Hope to see all members next year!

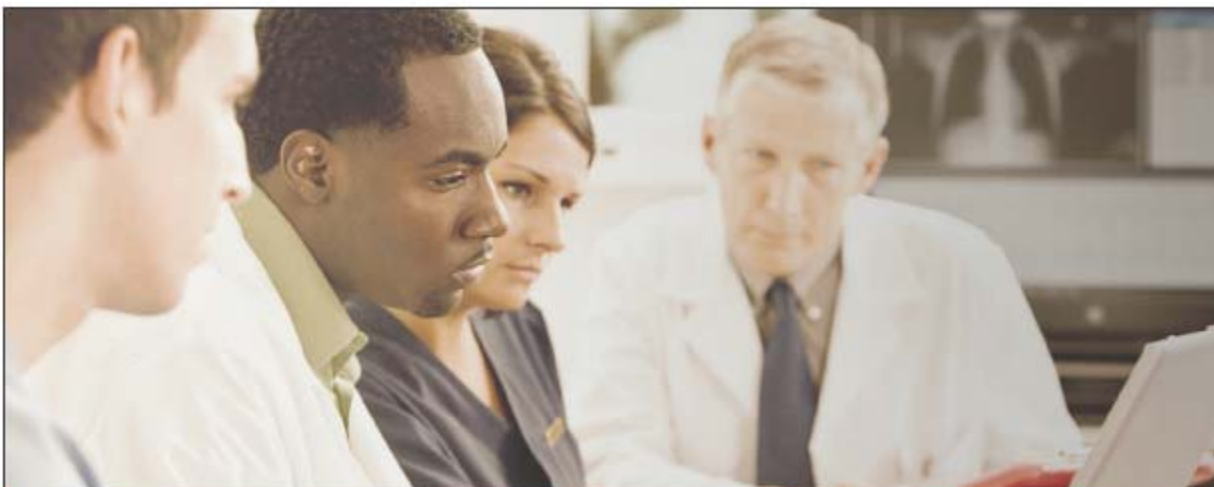
- Lena Jobb and Pamela Stewart



Mike Walsh (left) receives Dr. C.G. More Trophy for low gross score



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Alberta Branch News

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

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Concordia Corner, con't.

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prepare for the upcoming semesters and ease our fears and uncertainties. A graduation dinner was held at Earls on July 26th for the fall cohort that completed the program. It was a night of celebration, laughter and excitement for both cohorts.

We would like to thank all our professors this semester for giving the summer cohort a confident start to the program and providing the fall cohort with the skills and knowledge they need to move forward in their practicums and future careers. To the cohort that has left us to pursue their practicums, thank you for helping us transition into the program. We wish you all the best with your future endeavours and hope nothing but success and happiness come your way.

Ravneet Sandhu , President EHSA

