

NEHA NEWS



Preconference Offerings at the 2025 AEC

Our 2025 Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition—to be held on July 14–17 in Phoenix, Arizona—will include a full preconference schedule that allows attendees to attend a workshop or training on a variety of environmental health topics. More details, added sessions, updates, and registration information can be found at www.neha.org/aec-preconference.

Registration is required for all preconference sessions, regardless of cost. Preconference registration can be added while registering for the main conference. All preconference offerings will take place in person and are eligible for continuing education (CE) contact hours unless otherwise noted.

Infectious & Vectorborne Diseases

From Blueprint to Action: Building and Managing an Effective Vector Control Program (July 14)

This interactive workshop equips participants with the foundational knowledge and practical tools needed to design and implement a successful vector control program. Key topics include assessing local vector risks, crafting comprehensive control plans, implementing monitoring strategies, and fostering community engagement. Attendees will also explore resource management, staff training, and compliance with public health guidelines. Whether you are building a program from scratch or enhancing an existing one, this session provides actionable insights to combat vectorborne diseases effectively. *Fee: No cost, but preregistration is required.*

Water Quality

Beneath the Surface: Advanced Insights Into Groundwater, Soil, and Wastewater Systems for Private Water Protection (July 14)

Designed for environmental health professionals, this in-depth workshop delves into the complex interplay between groundwater systems, soil processes, and wastewater management, with a focus on private water supplies. Topics include groundwater–surface water interactions, soil microbiology, climate change impacts, and innovative wastewater contaminant mitigation strategies. Through expert presentations, group activities, and discussions, participants will gain advanced knowledge and practical skills to develop sustainable water management practices in their communities. Join this opportunity to deepen your expertise, collaborate with peers, and make a meaningful impact on water quality and sustainability. *Fee: No cost, but preregistration is required.*



Council for the Model Aquatic Health Code (CMAHC) Aquatic Venue Public Health Inspector Course (July 14)

This certification course is tailored for public health professionals responsible for inspecting public and semi-public aquatic venues. Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of pool inspection protocols, including filtration, disinfection, and communication strategies to ensure effective inspections. Whether you are a new inspector or an experienced health official, this course provides valuable insights to enhance your professional practice. Successful completion certifies participants as CMAHC Aquatic Venue Public Health Inspectors and is valid for 5 years. *Fee: \$300. Preregistration is required.*

Well, What Now? Abandoned Wells and Community Engagement in Tribal and Rural Communities (July 14)

This workshop addresses the pressing challenges of abandoned wells and private well maintenance, with a focus on tribal and rural frontier communities. Participants will explore the health and environmental risks associated with abandoned wells, sustainable management practices, and strategies for engaging with local communities. The session includes expert-led presentations on water quality testing and well management, as well as hands-on activities to develop practical skills in well assessment and maintenance. Join this collaborative workshop to gain actionable knowledge and tools to support well safety and community health. *Fee: No cost, but preregistration is required.*

Workforce & Leadership

Communication: Verbal Techniques for Challenging Situations (July 14)

This session is designed to help professionals navigate challenging conversations with confidence and composure. Attendees will learn verbal techniques to defuse tension, de-escalate conflicts, and foster positive outcomes in difficult interactions. The session will also cover effective written communication and the role of body language in conveying messages. Whether you are addressing a



sensitive issue or managing a tense situation, this workshop offers practical strategies to communicate with clarity and professionalism. *Fee: \$25 for NEHA members and \$50 for nonmembers. Preregistration is required.*

New Policy Statements

One of our responsibilities is to speak up on issues of concern to our members and the profession through the adoption of policy statements. These statements have been vetted by our team of experts and adopted by our Board of Directors as official statements of the association. Each statement sets forth our beliefs on a specific subject related to environmental health and is shared with state, local, and federal policymakers, as well as relevant environmental and public health boards. The policies remain active for 5 years.

Our policy statements include topics on body art, climate change, data modernization, food safety, preparedness, rural and frontier communities, vector control, water quality, and workforce development.

In December 2024, our board approved the following policy statements:

- **Policy Statement on Rural and Frontier Environmental Public Health:** We support federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions by 1) developing policies based on scientific knowledge and research to improve the health and safety within rural and frontier communities and 2) building, sustaining, and empowering environmental public health professionals by providing up-to-

date trainings, webinars, collaborations, and resources to implement the changes needed to improve environmental public health.

- **Policy Statement on Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems:** We support the investment of greater resources into research on onsite wastewater treatment systems design, construction, operation, and maintenance regulations, with an emphasis on their use as an effective and sustainable water quality management alternative to centralized sewage management. The policy also supports the implementation of national, state, and local policy and data standards on onsite wastewater treatment systems products, construction, operation, and maintenance. Further, we support the provision of training and workforce development opportunities to environmental public health professionals regarding best practices for constructing, designing, and operating onsite wastewater treatment systems.

All our current policy statements can be found at www.neha.org/policies-positions.

New Course: Strengthen Your Food Safety Expertise With Microbiology Basics

Our self-paced Microbiology for Food Safety course is aligned with the Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS) National Curriculum Standards competencies for biological hazards and is designed for food safety professionals seeking practical, science-based knowledge presented in a clear and accessible way. This beginner-friendly course breaks down microbiology concepts

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into easy-to-understand modules, giving you the tools to confidently identify and manage food safety risks. Whether you are a food handler, inspector, or manager, this course will equip you with essential insights into the microorganisms and toxins that can impact food safety.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Define relevant microbiology terminology
- Identify and describe the different types of microorganisms (e.g., bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites) relevant to food safety
- Describe the factors affecting microbial growth and survival in food (e.g., temperature, pH, water activity)
- Explain the stages of microbial growth and methods to control microbial growth in food
- Identify and describe key food safety regulations and standards, including those set by the Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture

The course time is 4 hours and you can earn up to 4 continuing education contact hours toward your NEHA credential. The cost is \$130 for members and \$150 nonmembers. Learn more and invest in your food safety knowledge today at <https://neha.users.membersuite.com>. Use your MyNEHA login to access the course through the Shop tab.

New Hurricane Response Guide for Environmental Health



Our hurricane response guide provides environmental public health professionals with comprehensive operational guidance for hurricane response. This resource is tailored for state, tribal,

local, and territorial environmental public health professionals and is focused on supporting our workforce before, during, and after hurricanes by addressing key environmental public health concerns such as water safety, hazardous materials, shelter safety, and more.

The guide includes:

- Response and recovery objectives across 15 environmental public health emergency preparedness and response functional areas
- Task checklists designed to assist professionals in the field
- Tips on best practices for hurricane-related environmental public health concerns
- Access to national standards, forms, and key guidance documents
- Recommendations for cross-sector partnerships and policies to enhance readiness, response, and recovery efforts

Learn more and access the guide at <https://www.neha.org/hurricane-response-guide>.

H5N1 Resources for Environmental Public Health

H5N1 avian influenza has emerged as a significant public health and agricultural concern in the U.S, with a notable evolution in its transmission patterns. While traditionally known as a disease primarily affecting birds, the virus has demonstrated an unprecedented spread into dairy cattle populations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is using its flu surveillance systems to monitor for H5N1 activity in humans.

We have compiled resources to assist environmental health professionals on the front line of protecting our food supply and communities from the threat of H5N1. These resources cover surveillance, testing and sampling, control and prevention, public education, and critical risk factors.

Find all these resources at www.neha.org/h5n1.

Apply for the Crumline Award

The Samuel J. Crumline Consumer Protection Award is a prestigious award given annually to local environmental health jurisdictions that demonstrate unsurpassed achievement in providing outstanding food protection services to their communities. The award recognizes innovative programs and methods that reduce or eliminate the occurrence of foodborne illnesses and highlights the importance of food protection at the local level. Winning programs often offer best practices that can be used by other jurisdiction to advance their food protection programs.

The award is named in honor of Dr. Samuel J. Crumline (1862–1954), a sanitarian physician and public health pioneer who was renowned for his innovative methods of improving public health protection. The Crumline Award was established in his honor in 1954 and was first awarded in 1955.

Does your local food safety program deserve national recognition? If so, mark your calendars to apply for the 2025 Crumline Award by March 14. Learn more and apply at <https://crumlineaward.com>. 🌸