

# KY.SANITARIAN NEWSLETTER

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## To Our Readers

The RS committee provides representation, recognition, and education to our 1000 members. This newsletter is an effort to continue our support and services to our members. We want to ensure that we are viewed as credible and responsible public health leaders. Your service is appreciated.

Roy Foushee Newsletter Editor

## Spanish Food Service School

The Ashland-Boyd County Health Department is helping improve food safety and communications. With the increase of the Spanish population in the Boyd County area, the environmental staff found it difficult to converse with workers especially in food service. The Ashland Boyd County Health Department has on staff Melitza Stephens who speaks fluent Spanish. She accompanies me on inspections for translations. This assures understanding of violations and concerns both ways-as the workers/operators and the inspector. We acquired a DVD from the state food branch entitled "Food Fear" in Spanish. On Aug. 13, 2008 a food service school was held in Spanish and 40 food service workers were educated in their native language. The attendees received knowledge in dealing with food temperatures, safety, personal hygiene, and food preparation. A packet of Spanish educational materials were given concerning hand washing, rodent control, sanitizing, etc. Most of the educational materials are pictorial should the students reading level be a concern. Submitted by: Suzanne Smith, M.S.,R.S.– retired.



Suzanne Smith left and Melitza Stephens Boyd County Health Department

## The List

Registered Sanitarians interested in performing contract work can have their name put on the RS database list. The form for having your name put on the list can be found at your RS website. You may find the website at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/sanitarians.htm>.

## Mission Statement

To Protect and promote the public's health by ensuring a sanitary, safe, and healthy environment

## **2008: A Hurricane in Kentucky**

• Just after concluding the 104th KY State Fair, the Louisville Metro Dept. of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW) along with the State of KY welcomed displaced residents escaping the wrath Of Hurricane Gustav in New Orleans and the surrounding area. Preparedness planners were ready for such a day. Recent pacts between state Emergency preparedness groups had formalized the mass evacuation and care plan. Beginning on August 29, 2008 the State Department of Health was notified to expect as many as 5,000 evacuees. The initial plan was to distribute the evacuees throughout the state including Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green, and Owensboro. In the end, 1,484 evacuees made it to the Ky Fair & Exposition Center. Upon receiving 1,500 evacuees, the secondary sights were to be opened. Ultimately, all evacuees were housed in the South Wing C of the KY Fair & Exposition Center. Environmental Health professionals understand the many environmental concerns that coincide with a confined living facility. There are many things that must be considered when responding to an emergency shelter situation. Probably the most important rule to remember: During an emergency, environmental health personnel or registered sanitarians will not serve in a regulatory capacity. You will be charged to act in an advisory capacity. It's not likely that you'll close down a national emergency. At last be prepared by doing your homework before the event happens.

• A week later on Sunday September 14, 2008 Louisville was hit by the remnants of Hurricane Ike with winds topping out at over 80mph. Several hundred thousand residents and businesses were without power for extended periods forcing operators to discard all of their perishable food items. Environmental health staff disseminated educational information on items that could be kept and those that must be discarded. This serves as another good reminder to have an emergency plan in place prior to the event.

Submitted by Matt Rhodes

Deputy Director

Louisville Metro Health Department

### **State and Local Environmental Health Staff respond to Hurricane Gustav**

The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) activated the Department Operations Center (DOC) in preparation of this large hurricane. DPH expected evacuees to be sent to KY if the storm hit as projected. The Division of Epidemiology and the Division of Public Health Protection and Safety helped staff the DOC during the weekend and work week. Local Health Department Environmental Health Specialists across the state responded to numerous situations regarding power outages and wind damage. Environmental Health Specialists responded promptly to the emergency event and storm needs, helping assure the safety of Kentuckians.

### **Winter 2009: Kentucky Endures What Is Deemed The Worst Power Outage In Kentucky History**

In four short months, Mother Nature has twice demonstrated her remarkable power, with the September 2008 wind storm and the January 2009 ice storm. The devastating effects of the ice storm caused the largest power outage in Kentucky's history, surpassing even the wind storm earlier in the fall.

Most all Local Health Departments and Registered Sanitarians were involved with some levels of response and recovery. Registered Sanitarians conducted investigations, shelter inspections, food safety and water inspections, coordinated many actions, secured and delivered water, and monitored the health and welfare of the communities. The success of Kentucky's response to this event in part goes to our Registered Sanitarians. We are grateful for the tremendous support and cooperation between Federal, State, and local health Department employees. You have coped admirably with trying and uncomfortable circumstances that disrupted your daily lives. Your professionalism and spirit, in difficult times, has made a real difference. Thank you.

Submitted by Matt Rhodes and Guy Delius.



Hurricane Shelter in Louisville

Areas of Environmental Health Concern:

- Power loss may lead to Lift Stations not functioning
- Waste Water Treatment and Drinking Water Treatment facilities may not function
- Medical Equipment may not work properly
- Generators may create toxic fumes in not used in well ventilated areas
- Nursing Homes may exceed heat or cool temperatures set by regulations
- Nursing Homes may not be easily evacuated
- Large Common space without separation is not ideal
- Restrooms are difficult to maintain with numerous attendees
- Shelter residents may cause unsanitary conditions-Waste Disposal must be monitored
- Showers are necessary within 24 hours
- Clean Linens must be separated from soiled
- Mental Health Issues must be monitored
- Hot and approved safe meals are important as is clean approved water and beverages

## **The Division of Public Health Protection and Safety and Registered Sanitarians Statewide help ensure the public's safety with VGB Federal Pool Drain Rule**

The federal Virginia Graeme Baker Act went into effect on December 19, 2008. New anti-drowning drain covers are required for pools and spas used by the public, including municipal pools, and those at hotels, private clubs, apartment buildings and community centers. Nancy Nord, acting chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission said the agency will focus initially on public baby pools and wading pools, as well as in ground spas that have flat drain grates on the bottom and just one drain system. "We will be focusing our initial efforts on the littlest swimmers in the littlest pools," Nord told reporters. Congress did not give the CPSC agency the \$7 million needed to enforce the law. As a result the federal government expects the states to take on much of the enforcement responsibility. The State Department For Public Health, Division of Public Health Protection and Safety has sent out information and CPSC guidelines for enforcement. The state also sent an additional informational letter to pool owners in March 09 to help inform and educate. You can find these documents on the Division's Pool Safety website. <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/poolsafety.htm>

The Kentucky Division of Public Health Protection and Safety has reviewed federal recommendations and worked directly with the Kentucky Attorney Generals office in designing a two tier or levels approach for public pool compliance purposes. The Level 1 pools are wading pools, pools designed specifically for children, and in ground spas that have a single main drain with a flat grate (not VGB compliant) that is not unblockable and does not have a safety vacuum release system (SVRS). Guy Delius, Director of PHPS, said "children's pools and spas are our most dangerous pools having the greatest chance for drain entrapment and warrant immediate action". The level 1 Kentucky public pool must comply prior to commencing operations. Level 2 pools incorporate all other public pools. These pool owners and operators will be made aware of the law, the need for compliance. Federal fines and other legal actions may follow those pools that do not comply.

### **Magoffin and Letcher County Water Woes**

Several Communities had severe water outages in 2008 and early 2009. Magoffin County had water treatment equipment failure and low rainfall that spawned a summer of intermittent available water. Registered Sanitarians at the local health department worked long days and hours to ensure the Magoffin County community had proper measures in place for safe operation. Hats off to the local health department for good work. The State Milk Safety Branch also assisted several times with coordinating tractor trailer shipments of water for the area residents. The 5,000 gallons of water in part was donated by Winchester farms-Kroger dairy, and were transported the state transportation cabinet.

Letcher County also had its share of water emergencies. The local water source (Kentucky River) became contaminated with diesel fuel from leaking storage tanks. The Kentucky River District Health Department's Registered Sanitarians worked tirelessly for many days to assure regulated food establishments, hospitals, nursing homes, hotels and all other regulated entities operated safely. General consumers were also affected due to the contamination, and no consumption advisories were issued for several weeks. Another good example of good public-environmental health work by our Registered Sanitarians.

Submitted by Guy Delius.

### **2009 –2010 Registered Sanitarian Contact Hours**

Kentucky Revised Statutes require Registered Sanitarians to acquire professional contact hours yearly, and to pay registration dues yearly. Be on the look out around May, for your professional registration renewal notice. If you have any questions you may go to our web site at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/sanitarians.htm> or for your specific contact hours you may go directly to our interactive web site to see your specific current hours at <https://chfs.ky.gov/regsan>. If you have further questions you may contact Beverley Joy Watkins at (502) 564-7398.

# Submitting Articles For Publication

If you have any articles or information that you would like to submit to the KY Sanitarian News Letter, please send them to your area R.S. director or Beverley Joy Watkins at [Beverley.watkins@ky.gov](mailto:Beverley.watkins@ky.gov) or Guy Delius at [guy.delius@ky.gov](mailto:guy.delius@ky.gov). The Committee will review future articles and if appropriate will add your article to an upcoming News Letter.

## Kentucky Registered Sanitarian Regional Directors

