

Stan Aaronson, Chairman
Clare Schmutz, Member
Bill Schneider, Member

STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD FOR REGISTRATION OF
PUBLIC HEALTH SANITARIANS

Jim Begbie, Secretary
Cheryl Russo, Member

May 4, 1990

Governor Bob Miller
State of Nevada
Capitol Complex
Executive Chamber
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Dear Governor Miller:

The Nevada State Board for Registration of Public Health Sanitarians was created by the 1987 Legislature to preserve and protect the public health and safety and general welfare of the people of Nevada by registering sanitarians.

As a part of the registration process, we have approved posthumous certificates for two outstanding pioneers in the field of public health in Nevada. The board recognizes the significant contribution made to the enhancement of health, preservation of our state's limited natural resources and improvement in the quality of life. The board continues to wish to recognize other individuals whose contributions have been similarly significant.

The board views these recognitions as being valuable in showing how far public health has progressed in Nevada during its 125 Years of Vision. We are soliciting your support and endorsement of our recognition efforts by incorporating public health in the theme of Nevada - 125 Years of Vision.

Sanitarians are often overlooked in terms of benefiting tourism. These individuals provide public health services (safe drinking water protection, protected food supply, wholesome food stuffs, waterborne disease prevention, solid waste management and sanitary food and lodging establishments) that all tourists use. Economic diversification is enhanced by the knowledge that potential business relocations can be assured of a safe and protected environment.

Supporting the State Board for Registration of Public Health Sanitarians efforts to identify public health pioneers sends a clear message to Nevadans that environmental issues have the clear support of the State's highest office.

We would appreciate your support and direction as to which agencies may be able to cooperate or advise the board of past public health officials who have made contributions to the 125 Years of Vision.

I will be contacting your office in the near future to follow through with gathering support.

Sincerely,



Stan Aaronson, Chairman
State Board for Registration of Public Health Sanitarians

cc: Nevada Environmental Health Association
Board Members
John Sarb, Assistant to the Governor
Larry Henry, Press Secretary

enclosures

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

What is an Environmental Health Specialist/Sanitarian and what are his roots? The definition given is, "a professional person qualified by education and experience to control environmental factors for the optimum health and comfort of mankind".

Until recently, Environmental Health Specialists in Nevada were called Sanitarians. The name was recently changed to more adequately reflect the environmental nature of the job.

The Environmental Health Specialist has been on duty in Nevada protecting the public since the late 1920's. The profession has had a long and rich history. Dr. Freedman in the Sanitarians' Handbook states, "The history of the Sanitarian has been long and honorable. His roots from the beginning have been in the professional life - the life of service to the community. He is an offspring of the physician."

Freedman further states, "It has been claimed that the major decline in mortality observed during the latter half of the 19th Century and the early part of the 1900's was due to innovation in environmental sanitation." Sewage disposal system dampered the relentless cycle of cholera epidemics; draining swamps controlled malaria. Proper disposal of garbage went toward the control of insects and rodents, which are reservoirs and vectors of disease. Milk pasteurization, municipal water systems, autoclave sterilizers for hospitals and chemical fumigators were introduced to the world. The environmentalist had a part in all areas of public health, not only inspecting facilities but also designing them and developing procedures to protect the public health. It was the Environmental Health Specialist who made sure the public received this protection. Nevada Environmental Health Specialists are part of this tradition.

In Nevada, an Environmental Health Specialist is required to have a Bachelor of Science degree in the life sciences with a strong background in biology, microbiology, chemistry, etc. After several years of experience, he may apply to be a "Registered Sanitarian" (R.S.), which requires the successful completion of a National examination recognized by most states.

The Environmental Health Specialists' duties are varied. Examples are protection of food, milk plants and dairies, water supplies, inspection of sewage disposal systems, swimming pools, spas, motels and hotels, drug and vitamin plants, labor camps, and schools. More recently the Environmental Health Specialist has played a key role in assessing and communicating the risks from hazardous chemicals to the public. The Environmental Health Specialist investigates foodborne illness, and nuisances, educates the public, and appears in court to enforce health laws in the State. He is a true professional who receives his satisfaction from the knowledge that he has prevented disease and made the world a safer place for all. In Nevada, Environmental Health Specialists are employed by the Nevada State Health Division, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, the Washoe County District Health Department and Clark County District Health Department. Environmental Health Specialists also work in the private sector such as for the gaming and mining industries and contractors for the Nevada Test Site.

Definitions

Sanitarian - A sanitarian is a person with education in the environmental health sciences, who applies those knowledges, skills and attributes to management of our surroundings so as to protect both human health and the environment.

Field of Environmental Health - The field of environmental health is composed of individuals whose vocational efforts are directed toward controlling environmental hazards; preserving and improving environmental factors for the achievement of optimum health, safety, comfort, and well-being. To reach this goal, environmental health manpower represents many diverse disciplines and career categories.

For example: Sanitarians, Engineers, Educators, Physicians, Agronomists, Soil Scientists, etc., may fall within the expansive field of environmental health, while also maintaining identity within their distinct career category.

Sanitarians work in the following program areas:

1. **Air Quality:** To assure a community air resource conducive to positive human health, which does not injure our environment and is aesthetically desirable.
2. **Food Protection:** To assure safe, wholesome, and sanitary food and food products wherever produced, processed, distributed, transported, or served.
3. **Hazardous Substances and Product Safety:** To assure protection from unhealthful or unsafe substances or products.
4. **Housing (Shelter):** To assure adequate, safe, and healthful housing for all persons.
5. **Institutional Environmental Health and Safety:** To assure that institutions such as hospitals, schools, nurseries, and penal institutions are operated so as to prevent health and safety problems.
6. **Land Use:** To assure that land resources are planned and utilized in such a manner that will prevent health and safety problems for this and future generations.
7. **Noise Control:** To protect the public from or prevent hazardous or annoying noise levels in residential, business, industrial, or recreation areas and structures.
8. **Occupational Health and Safety:** To assure the positive health and safety of workers in places of employment through controlling hazardous environmental factors.
9. **Radiation Protection:** To prevent unnecessary or hazardous exposure to any types of radiation.
10. **Recreational Areas and Waters:** To assure that recreational and swimming areas are designed and maintained so as to prevent health and safety problems.
11. **Solid Waste Management:** To assure that all solid wastes are managed so as not to create environmental health or aesthetic problems.
12. **Vector Control:** To control insects, rodents, and other animals which adversely affect man's health, safety, and comfort.
13. **Water Quality:** To restore or maintain the quality of water resources by the treatment or prevention of polluted water.
14. **Water Supply:** To assure the provision and maintenance of water supplies which are safe and adequate in quantity and quality.

Executive Summary

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is pleased to present the most complete career description of sanitarians now in existence.

This publication includes the sanitarians' activities (Role Delineation), along with the sanitarians' competencies (Knowledge, Skills and Attributes), which have been developed by the National Environmental Health Association under contract with the Bureau of Health Manpower of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The first section describes the activities of entry level sanitarians (Role Delineation). It gives the responsibilities and duties of sanitarians employed throughout the United States. Positions 1, 2, 3A and 3B indicate generic divisions of responsibilities, not levels, categories, or steps of job classifications. There can be one, or as many as six steps for each of three positions, depending on the personnel structure of the employer. The overlapping activities between positions are:

- Position # 1: that environmental health practitioner who is involved primarily in inspections, field sampling and testing; enforcement and public information activities.
- Position # 2: that environmental health practitioner who is involved primarily in educational, investigative, consultative, planning and enforcement activities.
- Position # 3: (Administrative) that environmental health practitioner who is involved primarily in supervisory, administrative and planning activities; directs enforcement and investigative programs.
- Position # 3: (Technical) that environmental health practitioner who is involved primarily in directing educational and investigative programs; acts as a consultant to industry and governmental agencies; and demonstrates administration ability in environmental management.

This Role Delineation is a summary of the practice of the sanitarian, which, in performance language, identifies all types of activities being practiced in sanitarian positions today.

The second section outlines the competencies of the sanitarians, the Knowledges, Skills and Attributes needed by the practitioner before engaging in the activities mentioned in section one; in other words, everything one needs to know to be a sanitarian. This section gives technical and behavioral competencies required to practice in the field. There are five basic knowledges:

1. Knowledge of disease and injury causation and control techniques;
2. Knowledge of administrative law and process;
3. Knowledge of the utilization of resources in the collection, arrangement and interpretation of data;
4. Knowledge of environmental health administration;
5. Knowledge of behavioral sciences.

These five knowledges comprise the foundation of our profession.

The National Environmental Health Association designed this work to be used by sanitarians throughout the United States to explain as well as to promote the profession. By using this document, environmental health directors, personnel administrators, trainers and educators, and health planners, can better utilize current manpower and provide greater career opportunities and salaries for the professional sanitarian. This information can help managers write job specifications/descriptions, standards of performance, provide guidance for training in continued competency, and they can use it as a basis for redesigning professional career ladders and salary structures.

Additional explanation, assistance, or research reports will be provided upon request to the National Environmental Health Association.