# Ohio Journal of Environmental Health

## 2nd Quarter 2024

# Recognizing Ohio's Newes Registered Environmental Health Specialists

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In this issue...

- President's Message
- District Director Feature
- 2024 Annual Educational Conference Award Highlights

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Official Publication of the Ohio Environmental Health Association

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The object and purpose of the Association shall be the betterment of the health and welfare of mankind through the improvement of the environment. This shall be done by sponsoring state and regional meetings and publications, by developing methods of measuring and evaluating achievements in environmental health, the establishment of a central point of reference and education material for the membership, the procurement of cooperation with other agencies and organizations, and such other activities as will lead to the greater efficiency and professional growth of the membership.

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Adam R. Howard, MPH, REHS Delaware Public Health District ahoward@delawarehealth.org 740-203-2069

Dustin Kent, MPH, REHS Delaware Public Health District dkent@delawarehealth.org 740-203-2058

Tracy L. Buchanan, REHS Retired, Ohio EPA

#### **Publication Information**

The Ohio Journal of Environmental Health is published by the Ohio Environmental Health Association (PO Box 234, Columbus, OH 43216-0234). A one year subscription, without membership, is available at a cost of \$60.

Postmaster send address changes to: 2818 Annabelle Ct, Grove City, OH 43123. Second Class Postage Paid. Grove City, Ohio.

Other correspondence relating to address changes, applications for membership and other matters should be addressed to: Ohio Environmental Health Association, Vicki Johnson, Administrative Aide, PO Box 234, Columbus OH 43216-0234; Phone 614-871-0665.

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Volume 73 Number 2 2nd Quarter 2024

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## **President's Message**

Thank you all for your faith and support as this term as president of the Ohio Environmental Health Association has started. First, I would like to thank all our past Presidents and our most recent past President Sarah Burkholder. Thank you, Sarah, for your leadership



and steady guidance over the past year.

Thank you to Stephanie Johnson and the Spring Educational Committee for all the work putting on another great conference. The breakout sessions I attended were informative and the ability to network with peers from across the entire state of Ohio was great. I heard many good things from our newest members that attended the OEHA test preparation class organized by Brittany Zoecklein.

It is now a time for OEHA to think about the future, so much of our time and energy as an association has gone into working with our state partners on coming to a consistence on an appropriate survey tool for both the food service operation and retail food establishment programs. The survey process will now include an open book test completed by each individual working in the food program. The test will be fifty questions in length and each person will have 120 minutes to complete it. Fifty percent or greater of the environmental health specialists in any given health department must have a score of eighty percent or higher as one of the items to be deemed as approved. We now need to work on clarifying our associations by-laws, policies

**Dustin Kent, MPH, REHS Delaware Public Health District** 

and procedures, providing our members with technical and professional growth, recruitment of committee members for all levels of the association, recruiting new members and environmental health specialists.

Currently Hicks Partners is monitoring about 40 bills on behalf of our organization. One I will have given proponent testimony on June 5th will be House Bill 207. If enacted it will require licensure of special use pools that were previously exempted from licensure as part of an amusement ride as inspected by the department of agriculture. While the inspectors for the department of agriculture are experts in the structural and mechanical aspects of amusement rides, they are not experts in the operation of public swimming pools. Water quality associated with these facilities can be a concern and should be licensed and inspected by our members as well as the department of agriculture. Each group offers a unique expertise and neither alone can provide the public with all the expertise necessary for these rides to operate with optimal safety. Other bills Hicks Partners and our Association have been



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following include changes to Biosolids, waterlines, mold, township zoning, lead, smoking bans, public nuisance, food allergens, food donations, solid waste, solid waste and etc.

Summer is a busy time for all of us in Environmental Health. Summer sport concessions, seasonal outdoor public swimming pools, summer fairs and festivals, building trades, and all vector diseases are all in their busy season. Remember as you can to take time for yourself. Work and family life balance is important. Take time to spend what time you can with your family during the summer. Do the great work you do to represent your agency and our association but also make memories with your family and have fun out there.



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## Recognizing Ohio's Newest Registered Environmental Health Specialists

In this section we recognize those individuals who successfully met the standards to earn the title Registered Environmental Health Specialist in the State of Ohio. This year we congratulate the following who achieved the status of Registration from January 1, 2023—December 31, 2023.

- Molly Elizabeth Owens
- Dedonte Cheatham
- Landon Timothy Magers
- Kristina Miller
- Anthony Allen Blevins
- Erika Fickey
- Kimberly Wayman
- Sarah Medford
- Devin Marie Unger
- Megan Suzanne Eder
- Brianna Michelle Elston
- Jennie McAdams
- Kaitlyn Wasky
- Damali Amina Gaskin
- Casiera Nicole Robich
- Paige Marie Seech
- Joseph Michael Wesner
- Erik C. Grimslid
- Emily Nicole Dean
- Travis Lee von Neumann
- Rachael Ann Belford
- Dana M. Fischio
- Ryan Kent McAnelly
- Steven Keith Smith
- Karleigh Marie Spence
- Yingjia Zhu
- Zachary Tyler Young

- Abby LeeAnn Tincher
- Zachary Watson
- Emily Marie Weglage
- Ashley N Thacker
- Neal T Sargeant
- Beth Madis
- Austin Charles Sprayberry
- Zachary Ryan Elswick
- Cinthia Marie Dennis
- Natalie Kracker
- Abby Ross
- Hunter Tyler Blessing
- Ellie Amanda Miller
- Daniel Christopher Tokar
- Kelly Lynn Barco
- Abdihakim M. Ahmed
- Monica Lynn Janes
- Amanda Spencer
- Reagan D Townsend
- Jacob Allen Deighton
- Jacob Nathaniel Morris
- Sarah Wadi Jumaah
- Jaime Rae Kelling
- Mason Isaiah Leuthaeuser
- Michaela Renee Byler
- Adam Hocevar
- Courtney Michelle Long

## 2024 Annual Educational Conference Award Highlights

I would like to congratulate all of the award winners and thank the District Awards Chairs for their work recognizing member achievements at the State and District level.

#### State Committee Members/District Awards Chairs

Emily Speck, REHS	Northeast
Portage County Health Department	
Det Wienstein DEUS	NI a utilazza at
Pat Wiemken, REHS	Northwest
Fulton County Health Department	
Hannah Zaciewski, REHS	Southwest
Miami County Public Health	
Open position	Southeast
SE OEHA members – we need you!!	

If interested in serving, see Carrie Kamm

Special thanks to Kathyrn Madden for serving as the southeast awards chair and subcommittee chair for State Science Day for so many years.

#### Life Members

The following 2024 class of new Life Members were recognized:

- Harry Eckert, REHS (NE District), (retired 2018) 13 years.
- Ken Sharkey, REHS (NE District), Cleveland City Health Department (retired 2023) - 32 years.
- Jean Hayden, REHS (SE District), Ohio Department of Health (retired 2021) - 33 years.
- Cammie Mitrione, REHS (SW District), City of Hamilton (retired 2023) - 29 years.

Gus E. Dria, REHS Canton City Public Health

Thank you for your years of service to public health and OEHA. Enjoy retirement.



Photo: Gus Dria and Life Members, Ken Sharkey.



Photo: Keith Riley, Sue McFadden, Paul Rosile and Ken Sharkey. Not shown, Michael and Tracy Buchanan...sadly, they did not make it to the gathering location before the group dispersed.

#### **George Eagle Scholarship Awards**

The George Eagle Memorial Scholarship Committee annually reviews applications and awards a graduate and an undergraduate scholarship for \$2,000 each.

The 2024 undergraduate scholarship was awarded to Payton Heitmeyer from the University of Finley. Payton is majoring in Environmental, Health, Safety and Sustainability.

No OEHA members applied for the \$2,000 graduate scholarship in 2024...really, no OEHA members are currently working on their masters. If you are working on your masters, consider applying in 2025.



Photo: Payton Heitmeyer, GE Undergraduate Scholarship Committee Chair.

#### **Publication Award**

The 2024 State Publication Award was presented to Steve Ruckman, MPH, REHS from Worthington City Schools. This award was presented for Steve's article published in the 3rd Quarter 2023 Issue of the Ohio Journal of Environmental Health entitled "Interpersonal Communication...What's Holding You Back".



Photo: Adam Howard, OEHA Publications Committee Chair a Steve Ruckman, 2024 Publication Award recipient.

Each year, the District Director and District Planning Committees recognize members with a Membership Award and Outstanding Sanitarian Award at the Fall Education Conferences. Here is a summary of the 2023 fall winners:

#### **Membership Award Recipients**

- NE Courtney Myers, Stark County Public Health
- NW Danielle Schalk, Wyandot County Health Department
- SW Emily Tyler, Wright Patterson Airforce Base
- SE Kathyrn Madden, (Retired) Columbus Public Health

#### **Outstanding Sanitarian Award Recipients**

- NE Colton Masters, Mahoning County Public Health
- NW Melissa Adams, Delaware Public Health District
- SW Dillon Dyer, Ohio EPA
- SE Nathan Ralph, Franklin County Health Department

#### The Ivan Baker Membership Recognition Award

The Ivan Baker Membership Recognition Award is given to a member who has made a sustained effort for many years in promoting the advancement of the Ohio Environmental Health Association. The 2024 Ivan Baker Membership Recognition Award was presented to Courtney Myers, MPH, REHS from Stark County Health Department.



Photo: President Sarah Burkholder and Courtney Myers, Ivan Baker Membership Recognition Award recipient.

#### **Ray Watts Outstanding Sanitarian Award**

The Ray Watts Outstanding Sanitarian Award is given to a member who has made outstanding contributions in the field of environmental health. The 2024 Ray Watts Outstanding Sanitarian Award was presented to Colton Masters, MPH, REHS, from the Mahoning County Public Health.



Photo: Gus Dria, Awards Chair and Colton Masters, Ray Watts Outstanding Sanitarian Award recipient.

#### **President's Award**

The 2024 President's award was presented to Eric Zgodzinski, DrPH, MPH, REHS, CPH.



Photo: President Sarah Burkholder and Eric Zgodzinski, 2024 President's Award recipient.

#### **OEHA Outstanding Supporter Award**

The outstanding supporter award was created to recognize profit and non-profit sponsors and exhibitors that have provided outstanding support to the Ohio Environmental Health Association. The 2024 Outstanding Supporter Award was presented to HS Govtech, for all the support they have provided OEHA. Thank you for your dedication and support!!!



Photo: Shannon Self, OEHA Exhibitor Chair and Zachary Ringlein, Senior Project Manager, representing HS Govtech, Outstanding Supporter Award recipient.

#### Vice President and Program Chair Award

The Vice President's Award was presented to Stephanie Johnson, MS, REHS, Clark County Combined Health District. Thank you for organizing a great conference.



Photo: Stephanie Johnson and President Sarah Burkholder

#### **Past President's Award**

The Past President's Award was presented to outgoing President Sarah Burkholder, MPH, REHS, Holmes County General Health. Thank you for all your time and talent leading the association.

Whether you are at the beginning of your career or a life member enjoying retirement, we all have a part in making OEHA stronger and our communities a better place to live. Thank you for all the hard work. A special thanks to all of our members that have taught me so much over my last 20 years in the association.



Photo: Dustin Kent and Sarah Burkholder

## Featured District Director's Message: Northeast

#### **Courtney Grossman, BSPH, REHS Carroll County General Health District**

Environmental Health, what an ever changing, challenging but very rewarding career to be in. Did you think when you were in high-school or even college you would be in this career? I sure didn't. I didn't even know being a Registered Sanitarian was a thing, or what all a health department did until my junior year of college. A little bit about



my background, I am a Kent State University (KSU) 2014 grad, with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health. I was in the Radiation Therapy program at KSU when I realized that wasn't my fit. I knew I wanted to help people, loved the outdoors, and cared greatly for the environment. So, once I learned about becoming an environmental health professional, I was hooked!

As a kid I grew up on a small farm in Stark County. I began my career in Environmental Health with the Stark County Health Department in 2014, where I started in the nuisance program and water sampling. About a year later I was moved into the swimming pool and sewage program, where I also helped with animal bites and campgrounds. In 2016, I decided to take a job opportunity with Canton City Public Health in the Air Pollution Control (APC) program that is contracted with Ohio EPA. Then in 2019, was offered a position as the Director of Environmental Health at Carroll County. You never know what this field of work will throw your way. If your goal is to someday be in management and an opportunity comes along, go for it! I was very nervous to take that leap,

being only 28 at the time. I was comfortable and happy as an APC monitoring technician, but in my heart, I knew this was an opportunity I shouldn't pass up. So,



I took the plunge. Yes, there were tough days but seeing how much our small health department has grown, getting our programs into a healthy status, and creating partnerships has been so rewarding. To say I am proud of our team is an understatement.

As a small population county, 26,721 people, our health department has a total of 20 staff. Our Environmental Division has two EHS's, an Administrative Assistant who also handles Vital Statistics, and the Director of Environmental Health. We also hire a mosquito technician to conduct surveillance through the Ohio EPA grant in the summer. Our EHS's are generalists but each have a primary focus, one being food and the other sewage and drinking water, letting them grow where they are most passionate.

Through my experience in environmental health, a challenge I feel we all must face is handling confrontation when we must give people news they do not want to hear. Who wants to tell someone they need to drop \$20,000 on a new septic system, or throw away a large amount of food that is out of temperature, or informing an installer they installed a system incorrectly, and must redo something that they already put a lot of time and money into? Probably nobody unless you love confrontation. But the reason we do these things is to keep the environment and people healthy! Something to hold on to are those positive comments. Every now and then someone will come along and let you know they appreciate your efforts and that you are doing a good job. It is easy to dwell on the individuals who make us second guess ourselves or who cause the most grumbles. But during those tough times, pull out those positive comments from others. Also know, you have other EHS's to lean on, we get it, and have probably been through a similar tough situation.

In all counties we go through unique challenges depending on culture and differences in the actual environment. In Carroll County, I would say one of our biggest challenges recently is the impact on groundwater in certain areas of the county from old septic system technology, such as leach wells and gravel beds in highly permeable ground. Then once discovered determining how to resolve the issue feasibly for our constituents. Currently, we have been collaborating with our County Commissioners, Ohio EPA, Ohio Department of Health, and consulting firms to propose a sewage treatment plant for this impacted area that has contaminated groundwater.

We are the only health department in our county, and we do not have zoning or a residential building department. Many people in our county are the "Do it Yourself" type, resulting in a lot of homeowner installations for septic systems. Our office has had some difficult situations working with people from the Amish community not understanding the Ohio Sewage and Private Water Rules. Some believe they can do what they wish on their property, especially if they come from another state that may not have rules like Ohio. A goal of our program is to be equitable toward this



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community to bring in-person training to them for septic products that are desirable to the Amish community, if they wish to install their own system.

To finish, I just want to also say I am grateful to be your Northeast Director this year. It has been wonderful being on the planning committee. Our committee members cover many environmental health programs, who come from different backgrounds, some who are actively working and some who are retired who still have the passion. The committee is working diligently to line up speakers with unique topics, some you may have never even heard about! If you are interested in being on an OEHA committee or the planning committee, please reach out to me or find me at the Fall Conference, that will be once again held at the Hilton Garden Inn, on October 15th and 16th. See you there!



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## Call for Pictures of our Members in Action!

Please send pictures of yourself or coworkers doing the great work of Environmental Health Specialists in the field. Please submit pictures to dkent@delawarehealth.org with the name of the photographer and individuals in the pictures. I will send a release to the photographer and individuals in the pictures that allows the image and likeness of individuals to be used by OEHA on our website without compensation. Please gather the email of any other individuals that may be in the immediate picture frame.



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## AEC in Pictures



### Announcements

Have a grant, educational opportunity, move, promotion, or other announcement you would like to share? Please email a member of the publications committee.

## **Open Positions** (With an opening of 6/15/24. For current listing <u>click here</u>)

- Public Health Nurse Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- Supervisor, Public Health Nurse Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- Infant Vitality Coordinator
  Mahoning County Public Health
- Public Health Nurse Mahoning County Public Health
- Grants Fiscal Manager
  Mahoning County Public Health
- CMH Public Health Nurse II Clermont County Public Health
- Health Communications Specialist Delaware Public Health District
- Director of Financial Services Delaware Public Health District
- Mosquito Control Technician—Seasonal Ross County Health District

#### Educational Opportunities

- New Employee Training July 10, 2024; Delaware, Ohio
- AOHC Fall Conference September 18-20, 2024; Dublin, Ohio
- Finance for Health Department October 15-16, 2024; Dublin, Ohio
- LEHDS October 15-16, 2024; Dublin, Ohio.
- New Employee Training November 7, 2024; Delaware, Ohio





### **OEHA** Committees & Chairs

**Body Art** Sarah Badenhop, REHS Columbus Public Health

**Campground** Mark Janowich, REHS Erie County Health Department

Food Greg Chumney, MPH, REHS Licking County Health Department

Lead Greg Putka, REHS Lorain County Public Health

Private Water Systems Randy Ruszkowski, REHS Stark County Health Department

Sewage Eric Cherry, REHS Huron County Public Health

Solid Waste Chuck De Jonckheere, REHS Hamilton County Public Health

Swimming Pool, Spa, and Special Use Pool Thomas Fink, REHS Cuyahoga County Board of Health

> Vector Control Sarah Fink, REHS Ohio EPA

Archives Melissa Adams, REHS Delaware Public Health District

> Constitution & By-laws Vacant

**Exhibits** Shannon Self, REHS Delaware Public Health District

Nominations & Elections Open

Membership & Professional Development Carrie Yeager, REHS Butler County General Health District Resolutions Jennifer Wentzel, MPH, REHS Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County

Website Garrett Guillozet, MPA, REHS, AEMT Delaware Public Health District

Auditing Jennifer Wentzel, MPH, REHS Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County

> Awards & Recognition Gus Dria, REHS Canton City Health Department

George Eagle Scholarship Jacqueline A. Gruza, MPH, BS, REHS Greene County Public Health

> **Membership** Luke Jacobs, MPH, REHS Columbus Public Health

Public Affairs Stephan Ruckman, MPH, REHS Worthington Schools

**Publications** Adam R. Howard, MPH, REHS Delaware Public Health District

Concentrated Animal Feed Facility Jason Menchhofer, MPH, REHS Mercer County Health District

**Ohio Public Health Advisory Board** Garrett Guillozet, MPA, REHS, AEMT Delaware Public Health District

**Ohio Public Health Partnership** Chad Brown, MPH, REHS Licking County Health Department

Sewage Treatment System Technical Advisory Committee Dan Lark, REHS Lake County General Health District **OJEH** Ohio Environmental Health Association 2818 Annabelle Ct Grove City, OH 43123

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