

NC STATE BOARD OF SANITARIAN EXAMINERS

November, 2005 NEWSLETTER

General Update

Currently in North Carolina, there are 1126 Registered Sanitarians; of that number 136 are retired or unaffiliated and 125 are interns. The exam has been administered two times in 2005 to 52 interns and 10 students from Western Carolina of which 35 passed and 17 failed. Another exam was administered on October 21, 2005 in Raleigh to 28 registered to take the exam.

Board Membership Changes/Status

The Board has held five (5) meetings in 2005. During this time, the makeup of the Board changed with the retirement of Tim Green as Health Director in Alamance County. Layton Long, Davidson County Health Director was appointed by Governor Easley to fill the Local Health Director vacancy. Camille Bishop also resigned as Secretary to the Board and Janice Jones was hired to this position effective July 1, 2005.

Five terms will expire on December 31, 2005. They are: Nilla T. Sloop, Piedmont Representative; Len Gilstrap, Carteret County, Eastern Representative; Terry Pierce, Secretary of DENR Representative; Sheila Nichols, Division of Environmental Health Representative and Dr. Burton Ogle, Western Carolina University, Environmental Sanitation Educator Representative. All five positions are eligible for reappointment for another term. Nilla Sloop will not seek reappointment due to her pending retirement in 2006.

The current officers for the Board are: Chairman, Nilla T. Sloop, Wake County; Vice Chairman, Terry Pierce; Secretary/ Treasurer, Len Gilstrap, Carteret County. Malcolm Blalock is the Education Committee Chairman and Len Gilstrap is the Legislative Committee Chairman.

Board Issues

If you refer to our website, <http://www.rsboard.com>, you will find the minutes of the meetings and information related to the many issues that face the Board such as:

- educational requirements;
- requests for reciprocity;
- approval of applications for internship;
- military hardship requests;
- continuing education course approval;
- investigating complaints regarding the conduct of Registered Sanitarians;
- revisions to the Board's Laws and Rules; and
- other matters that come before the Board.

Website

The Board's website, www.rsboard.com, has been well received and is getting used by many individuals. It is averaging almost 1,000 visitors a month. The Board welcomes your input for suggestions on ways to make the site more useful. Please send any comments or thoughts to any Board member or Ms. Jones. If you have not visited the website, we urge you to try soon!

Examination Changes

The Board renewed the contract with NEHA that enables North Carolina to use the national exam for the credentialing of professionals in the state. NEHA has contracted with a new vendor,

Environmental Health Testing (EHT), and there have been some changes made with the new vendor. The cost of the exam has gone to \$125 for less than fifty people and \$115 for fifty or more. The new vendor who is providing the examination does not allow proctoring by anyone but state affiliates. Because of this, the Board has notified each previously approved proctor of this change in policy.

Disciplinary Actions

The Board has received several complaints that have necessitated investigation teams being appointed pursuant to 21 NCAC 62 .0404. By statute, two Board members are assigned to investigate complaints and to report back to the Board for potential action. Below is a synopsis of complaints investigated and actions taken in the past year:

The Board conducted an investigation of a complaint involving Mr. Gerald Strickland of Robeson County. The complaint against Mr. Strickland involved his guilty plea on charges of “conspiracy to defraud producing, using or trafficking in counterfeit access devices” in US Federal Court. The Board initiated proceedings, including holding a contested case hearing, to take action to suspend or revoke his registration. As a result of the hearing the Board ruled for a five-year suspension of his registration. The case is currently in judicial appeal.

There was another complaint investigation involving Mr. Marshall Brothers and Mr. Fred Smith, both employees of the Warren County Health Department. The investigation led to the Board initiating action to suspend or revoke their registration for purchasing property from a developer at a price much lower than tax values. Prior to conducting a hearing, Mr. Brothers and Mr. Smith initiated discussions that resulted in settlements being reached, making a hearing unnecessary. The settlement included the individuals agreeing to donate the property purchased at less than tax values to a non-profit organization. In addition, each individual agreed to receive a letter of censure being issued by the Board. Subsequently, Mr. Smith surrendered his registration.

There was another complaint before the Board that has been partially investigated. This investigation is ongoing.

At the October 20 meeting of the Board, complaints against two additional registered sanitarians were reported. Investigators were appointed for each complaint.

Legislative Update

The Legislative Committee worked diligently to complete the rewrite the Statutes and Rules related to the Registration of Sanitarians. A blank bill was filed by Representative Pryor Gibson in the recent legislative session but it was not accepted due to changes in procedures related to blank bills in the General Assembly. It is the intent of the Legislative Committee to have this rewrite introduced as a bill in the next legislative session. Concurrent with the proposed changes to the statutory changes, the Board has worked on a number of proposed changes in the administrative rules. The proposed changes may be found on the Board’s website at: <http://www.rsboard.com/rsweb/new/news.htm> . We need your support when we move forward with this important legislation.

Budgetary Information

The Board adopted the first formal budget for the Board and voted to move the Board’s accounts to the State Employees Credit Union. The Share Account was moved to a Money Market

Account to receive a higher interest rate. These actions were taken to reduce the cost to the Board for the accounts maintenance and to earn more interest on the accounts the Board has. Because of the expenses involved incurred in the investigation of complaints and the legal actions following the complaints, the Board is currently spending more money than it is taking in. Current balances are:

• Checking Account	\$ 8,773.85
• Money Market Account	\$ 951.00
• Share Account	\$ 32.28
• STIF (Short Term Investment Funds with State Treasurer)	\$ 38,980.88
• Total Financial	\$ 48,738.01

Database Partnership

The Board has appropriated up to \$5,000 to a project working with DEH and a software development company to create a joint database that is accessible on the Internet. This will eliminate duplication of data, reduce data entry, and help to correct data in all areas when an entry is entered. Because the new system will be Internet-based, individuals registered by the Board will be able to update portions of their records (change of employer, addresses, phone number, etc.) online. The public will also have access for viewing portions of the database.

Continuing Education Information

The Education Committee has reviewed numerous requests for Continuing Education course approval in the last year (October 2004 to present). At the October meeting of the Board, the Education Committee reviewed 118 requests for course approvals. A significant number of the requests were denied because of a lack of a timed agenda. The Committee evaluates each request on the basis of the amount of time for training relative to the profession and on the relevancy of the training. Without a timed agenda, there is no way for the Board to know how much time to award or whether the topics being taught are relative to the profession. So, the submitter is notified that the request is denied until a timed agenda is obtained.

If you are submitting a course for continuing education approval, please be sure to send a copy of the timed agenda, any advertisement, the syllabus, or other documentation to document how much time each topic was presented. With this information, the Education Committee can process your request with less confusion and frustration.

In addition to the traditional continuing education requests, the Committee is seeing an increased number of requests for non-traditional trainings (web-based, college courses, NEHA Journal, and others).

The Board recognizes the fact that some individuals are not able to acquire their continuing education until late in the year. However the Board encourages everyone to obtain their continuing education as early as possible so that no one gets into a bind needing courses near the end of the year that have not been approved by the Board. The Board would like all continuing education requests to be submitted as early as possible to eliminate the potential for bottlenecks of request occurring near the end of the year.

Renewal for 2007

In an effort to reduce costs, beginning next year (2006), the Board will not be sending renewal notices to individuals. A .pdf file will be sent to the ehl and lhd listservs, and the file will be posted on the Board's website (www.rsboard.com) for downloading and forwarding to the Board. Please be aware of this change and be prepared to take appropriate action when your renewal is due late next year.

Newsletter News

The Board, in an effort to share newsworthy items on a more timely basis than the newsletter printed on the back side of the annual renewal form, is planning to publish on its website (www.rsboard.com) a newsletter three (3) times a year. The newsletter will be sent to the ehl and lhd listservs and published on the website. In order to operate in a modern, more cost-efficient way, the newsletter will not be printed and mailed to individuals.