



NEWSLETTER

International Federation of Environmental Health

October 2012 Edition

IFEH Newsletter – October 2012

Welcome to the October edition of the IFEH Newsletter

From a modest beginning last year, the World Environmental Health Day event was taken up as a theme by many more Member Organisations this year. Events are taking place in Indonesia, the location for the launch event in 2011, Portugal, England, Northern Ireland and other European countries. The success of these events highlight important environmental health issues and we hope many other Member Organisations will build on this solid foundation and now start planning for next year's World Environmental Health Day.

It has recently been confirmed that the next IFEH Council meeting and AGM will take place on the 18 and 19 May 2013 in the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Scotland. This venue, which is preceded by the REHIS Annual Conference on the 16 and 17 May, is ideally situated close to Glasgow International Airport and Glasgow City centre.

World Environmental Health Day – 26th September

The theme for this year is "Building for the Future" and has been chosen so that it is broad enough for every member organisation to develop some aspect which supports the theme – it could be very general and based upon something like developing educational curricula and training – or very specific such as dealing with indoor air pollution or housing issues.

The important thing is that all of our member organisations should get involved and do something to highlight the important work of the profession right across the world in protecting public health. We have heard of work being planned in England, Northern Ireland, Portugal and other European Countries and last year many of our members participated in both large and small projects. It was, however, our student colleagues in Indonesia who produced that remarkable recording of the World Environmental Health Day hymn which can be found on YouTube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BGUd9njld0>.

Among other things CIEH will be organising the first ever Twitter debate on World Environmental Health Day to encourage all EH Professionals to tweet and say where they are and what they are doing on the day. With modern communications this is an opportunity to demonstrate to the world the diversity, complexity and importance of the work we do as a profession on behalf of local, national, and world health.

Roy Emerson Award

The Board have now agreed and appointed a Committee to oversee the establishment and presentation of this new Award established in memory of Roy Emerson, the Federation's first President.

The scheme will take the form of an essay competition for student Environmental Health Professionals and the first submissions will be judged within each member Country with one finalist from each being nominated to the International final which will be judged by a Committee of International Academics.

The winner of the Award will be invited to the 2014 International Congress in the USA with expenses covered by the Federation where it is hoped that he/she will be able to present their work in a plenary session.

More information, including the topic for the essay, will be available shortly and will be circulated throughout the membership.



/ Last day at the Indian snacks and Deli at the Hockey stadium!

London 2012 – an EHO's Olympic Experiences.

By Steve Cooper

What an opportunity – The London Organising Committee for the 30th Olympiad canvassed for volunteer environmental health officers and environmental health students to work at the Games monitoring food safety and health and safety in all 40 venues.

I applied, was accepted and appointed as one of a number of environmental health team leaders starting work on 25th July through to 10th August.

After attending the orientation days I realised just how vast the Olympic Park and associated sites are, lots of walking, lots of venues and over 833 food outlets throughout all the sites to provide the estimated 14 million meals over the games period.

From 24th July to the close of the Games environmental health volunteers undertook over 700 monitoring visits to a vast range of food outlets and walked an average of 11km a day. I was fortunate enough to spend 4 days in the Olympic Village where security was very tight and food safety an absolute priority. The main catering unit was open 24 hours and at the peak was serving 90,000 meals a day to 15,000 athletes, coaches etc and an Olympic workforce of 8,500.

I have never seen a catering premises operating on such a scale.

I also spent time on the Greenwich, Hyde Park and Olympic Park sites with a really nice day in Weymouth – a 3.5 hour drive each way plus 5 hours on site – that was a long day!

Our monitoring focused mainly on supporting the contractors by concentrating on high risk areas such as ensuring adequate temperature control, efficient cleaning, elimination of cross contamination and personal hand washing. We also had a number of days focusing on waste management and pest control. Using a traffic light system we were able to give quick decisions on what (if anything) needed to be done to address any issues we found – Red meant stop and get things sorted before starting again, Amber meant we'd be back in a couple of hours to check minor issues had been addressed and Green – well done, keep it up!

The EH team was about 80 strong with a few of us able to stay for the whole period and others coming in for two, three or whatever number of days they could spare. We had EHOs from England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Australia and three colleagues from Canada who were able to bring their own experience of the Vancouver Winter Olympics to help us.



Response to the friendly EHO teams from the caterers was very positive and most of our results were Green. That decision was always welcome from the staff operating the units as the photo on the previous page shows – last day at the Indian snacks and Deli at the Hockey stadium!

Everyone has asked – did you see any of the events? Well, we could only look in when we got the opportunity after we had finished our visits. However I saw some hockey and handball, pole vault and long jump heats and the first heat of the men's 5,000 metres. However, I have managed to get tickets for my family for Excel on the 3rd September to see some of the Paralympic events – table tennis, boccia, power lifting and sitting volleyball.

In a 42 year Environmental Health career this was one of the best projects I have ever taken part in and it was a real highlight to begin retirement on!



/ IFEH Hon Treasurer Steve Cooper pictured at the Olympic Stadium without his running gear!

Environmental Health Officers' Association (EHOA) Film Festival success

Congratulations to the EHOA who's DVD on Food Safety has been awarded the Certificate of Creative Excellence at the US Film Festival Awards.

"Food Safety 4U" was among the more than 1100 entries from 29 countries that competed in the awards. The DVD was awarded a Certificate for Creative Excellence in the Category, Personal Growth & Development.

The U. S. International Film and Video Festival was founded in 1967 and is one of the world's leading international events devoted exclusively to recognition of outstanding Business, Television, Documentary, Educational, Entertainment, Industrial and Informational productions.

This DVD is ideal for use on Level 2 courses. This award winning DVD uses fun and easy-to-understand scenarios to teach topics that are perceived to be complicated. The 40 minute DVD ensures that primarily learning objectives are covered, in an interesting format through imaginative filming and a creative script.

Tobacco plain packaging campaign

In a world-first, the Australian Parliament passed legislation on the plain packaging of tobacco products on 21 November 2011. The new law is expected to come into force in December 2012. However, not unexpectantly, the tobacco industry took legal action to stop this legislation becoming law, just as they have in every other country who has tried to introduce anti smoking measures. The UK Government are looking to follow this lead and has carried out a public consultation on plain packaging which closed in August 2012. Therefore, readers will be interested to read the following statement issued by Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organisation.



Statement by WHO Director-General, Dr Margaret Chan

15 August 2012

The World Health Organization (WHO) strongly welcomes the landmark decision from Australia's High Court to dismiss a legal challenge from the tobacco industry, and calls on the rest of the world to follow Australia's tough stance on tobacco marketing.

Several major tobacco companies challenged Australia's legislation to require cigarettes and other tobacco products to be sold in plain packaging without any branding. But the industry's attempt to derail this effective tobacco control measure failed. As of December 2012, Australia will be the first country to sell cigarettes in drab, olive-green packaging without branding.

With Australia's victory, public health enters a brave new world of tobacco control. Plain packaging is a highly effective way to counter industry's ruthless marketing tactics. It is also fully in line with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The lawsuits filed by Big Tobacco look like the death throes of a desperate industry. With so many countries lined up to ride on Australia's coattails, what we hope to see is a domino effect for the good of public health.

The case is being watched closely by several other countries who are considering similar measures to help fight tobacco.

The evidence on the positive health impact of plain packaging compiled by Australia's High Court will benefit other countries in their efforts to develop and implement strong tobacco control measures to protect the health of their people and to stand resolute against the advances of the tobacco industry.

Tobacco use is one of the most preventable public health threats. Tobacco products will eventually kill up to half of the people who use them – that means nearly six million people die each year. If governments do not take strong action to limit exposures to tobacco, by 2030 it could kill more than eight million people each year.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control entered into force in 2005. Parties are obliged over time to take a number of steps to reduce demand and supply for tobacco products including: protecting people from exposure to tobacco smoke, counteracting illicit trade, banning advertising, promotion and sponsorship, banning sales to minors, putting large health warnings on packages of tobacco, increasing tobacco taxes and creating a national coordinating mechanism for tobacco control. More than 170 countries are Parties to the Convention.

Finally the next edition of the Newsletter is due to be published in January 2013. If you have any news for the Newsletter from your organisation please send this to me by the first week in December. Please note the change of email address for articles. My thanks go to Steve Cooper, Andrew Forteach and Henning Hansen who have assisted in the production of this issue.

**If you wish to feature any news from your organisation in the next IFEH Newsletter, please contact:
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