

Conference of Local Health Officials – EH Committee Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2025

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Committee Attendees

Benton: Scott Kruger, Mac Gillespie

Deschutes: Adrea Albin

Hood River: Trish Elliott

Jackson: Chad Peterson

Klamath: Kyle Stropes

Lane: Erik Nebeker

Lincoln: Kaline Chavarria (co-chair)

Multnomah: Jeff Martin

Umatilla: Joe Fiumara

Washington: Jon Kawaguchi, Kathleen Johnson (co-chair)

Yamhill: Gary Van Der Veen

OHA Staff Attendees

André Ourso, Gabriela Goldfarb, Rob Smith, Ali Hamade, Anthony Nickerson, Megan Christian, Linda Novitski, Nic Riley

March Minutes

Approved with one edit to the attendance list.

Legislative Update

Gabriela Goldfarb gave a review of the most notable bills EPH is still tracking.

SB 551 – prohibits single use plastic bags in restaurants for takeout and condiments and plastic utensils.

Similar to straw ban, those will only be offered on request. EH specialists will check as part of food safety program inspections. Expect to pass

HB 3525 – requires landlords to test wells and share test results with tenants and OHA. Concerns around rental housing, and from agricultural interests. Scope is narrowing to apply only to groundwater management areas designated by DEQ.

SB 1154 – clearly defines OHA role in designated groundwater management areas

HB 2169 – increases the pace and scale of statewide water reuse practices.

REDE Group Update

Kaline gave a quick report on her meeting with the REDE group. They are in the process of gathering information in an attempt to quantify the administrative burdens in managing environmental health programs.

Healthy Waters Unit Updates

Linda Novitski, Recreational Water Specialist, gave an overview of the CyanoHAB program: OHA works with DEQ to determine susceptibility of water bodies, track results, issue recreational advisories, conduct syndromic surveillance, and provide technical assistance to partners.

She described the conditions that prompt the issuance of precautions and advisories. OHA issued 15 advisories in 2024, notably at Eckman Lake and South Tenmile Lake.

Linda also spoke about the CDC biospecimen pilot program, attempting to link clinical symptoms from cyanotoxin exposure to the actual concentrations. OHA is putting together a framework to implement the program, beginning with urine sample collection. LPHAs who agree to participate will be asked to receive, store and transfer urine samples to the Oregon State Public Health Lab.

Please email Linda at Linda.Novitski@oha.oregon.gov or call 971-200-9080 to sign up or learn more about the CDC biospecimen pilot. OHA is actively looking for additional LPHAs to sign-up.

The Oregon Beach Monitoring Program is a partnership with DEQ. DEQ gathers samples along the beaches and tests them for fecal bacteria from May through September, and OHA issues advisories when necessary.

Megan Christian, Healthy Fish Consumption program coordinator, gave an overview of the new program which monitors freshwater fishing spots, using tissue samples to evaluate toxin levels and creates advisories when necessary.

Suggested Topics for July Meeting

None

Meeting adjourned at 10:22 am.