

May 2023 EHFS Newsletter

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Training Opportunities

July 13th at 10AM - Montana Mushrooms: Dr. Cathy Cripps, mycologist with MSU, will present on wild mushrooms in Montana, including identification, poisonings, preparation, and general safety tips.

July 19th at 1:30PM - Summer Institute Sanitary Surveys of Small Water Systems: DEQ will provide training on how to conduct a sanitary survey on small non-public water systems to qualify certain establishments for alternate water testing schedules.

July 20th at 8:30AM - Summer Institute Wholesale and Retail Foods: Michael Hudson, the FDA State Liaison for Montana and Alaska, will cover the process of wholesale food inspections, good manufacturing practices, and preventive controls. Afterwards, Mario Seminara will go into detail on the retail food side, including risk-based inspections, special processing methods with and without variances, and HACCP plans.

Summer Institute Registration is open until July 7th. There are no "walk-in" registration options. Please visit the [Summer Institute Website](#) for a full agenda and registration links.

If you have any further questions related to upcoming trainings, Summer Institute, or would like to be added to the training announcement list, please contact Karena at Karena.Doctor@mt.gov.

-Karena

Licensing Update

- The 1st quarter payment went out, please check to make sure you received what was expected.
- I'm behind on processing applications, we are getting more than ever before, we are now over 15,000 licenses, our average has been between 9,000 and 11,000. Thank you for your patience.
- We are working on getting a new database in place; however, we will be using Gold through June of 2024 to make sure the kinks are all worked out. Thanks to all who are active in this process, the ideas have been really good and I hope we can implement most of them. Anyone who has ideas as to what they would like to see on our database, please let us know.

-Gail

Task Orders and Cooperative Agreements

Hey, everyone! As mentioned on the conference call, EHFS will be switching from the Cooperative Agreement format to a Task Order format. Many of you may not be familiar with this process, so we are going to be giving you all the information you need to know leading up to this change.

Staying the same:

- The language of the Cooperative Agreement – all the familiar language will be within the Task Order.
- Work to be completed by the county – you will still have the same selections to make that opt your county in or out of deliverables (i.e. pool & body art inspections, training, etc.)
- The amount counties get paid — counties are paid per inspection. When at least 90% of inspections per program are completed, the county will then receive 100% of license fees collected for that program.
- Timeline of contract – Task Orders will be sent out in October and are to be signed by December 31st and will be effective January 1st – December 31st.

Changing:

- The formatting of the agreement.
- Who must sign – The county commissioners will be the **ONLY** acceptable signers for the contract to be valid.
- The way the contract is transmitted – Counties who are capable of Docusigning will have the Task Order sent directly to the county commissioners' emails. The counties will be responsible for providing the email address and name of the commissioner. If sanitarians or health officers would like a viewer's copy of the Task Order emailed to them at the same time, that must be communicated to EHFS before October, when they will be tasked to the commissioners. If a county

does not use DocuSign, then the Task Order may be emailed to the county liaison and forwarded on to the commissioners internally.

- What happens with incomplete contracts – Any task orders not filled out completely and signed by a commissioner will be considered invalid and will result in the county NOT receiving payment for the year. We cannot pay counties without a valid Task Order in place.

What you need to do:

- Provide Staci Evangeline with the following:
 - The mailing address payments will be sent to
 - The county commissioner's name and email address
 - The county liaison's name, email address, and phone number
 - Any additional email addresses of anyone who would like viewer access of the task order when it is sent out (this would be the sanitarian(s) and/or health officer!)
- Plan to meet with commissioners between October and December to discuss the work this task order involves and get it signed.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Staci at Staci.Evangeline@mt.gov or 406-444-5309.

-Sandy

Licensing Mobile Units

Summer is here and mobile food units are in full swing! With that being said, there are a few things to keep in mind when licensing mobiles.

- When a license is issued, it is a state license. A license cannot be issued with a condition stating they must stay within a certain county. If they have a designated commissary and plan to travel, they should provide a plan for water/wastewater or other services that would not typically be available without a commissary. It is important to talk through this with operators during the plan review process.
- When the unit is approved with a variance, make sure the operator is aware that not all counties are required to accept said variance.
- There are some places that just do delivery. It is acceptable to state they can only deliver a certain distance from the brick and mortar location.
- The conditions section is a great place to list approved menu items (if approval is limited), name and/or location of commissary, or any variances if applicable.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

-Jenna and Gail

Pool Chemical Safety

What happens when mixing Dichlor or Trichlor, and calcium hypochlorite?

Possible results include injury, or death, and most likely someone will have a very bad day at the pool. Mixing stabilized chlorine products, such as Dichloro-S- Triazinetrione and Trichloro-S-Triazinetrione, results in the rapid formation of chlorine gas. Often this can happen as an accident when pool operators mistakenly add the wrong chemical to an erosion feeder. Many erosion feeders are sealed units and the rapid release of chlorine gas will over pressurize the tablet chamber causing a violent explosion. Aside from the obvious hazards associated with a physical explosion, chlorine gas is extremely toxic. Just a few breaths of concentrated chlorine gas can cause serious lung damage and possibly death.

Tips for general chemical safety:

- Don't mix chemicals.
- Recommend removal of chemical products like cleaners, gasoline, or construction products that are not necessary for the operation of the pool.
- Ensure all pool chemicals are in a sealed container with lids properly placed and that they are separated.
- Secondary containment spill trays are great to have under liquid chemicals.
- Treat chemicals with respect and wear proper PPE when handling.
- Check room ventilation to ensure toxic fumes aren't able to vent into public spaces.
- Have the appropriate hazardous material placards placed per fire marshal's instructions. Some fire jurisdictions have different expectations.
- Operators should be knowledgeable about the chemicals they are using and how to handle the chemicals safely. SDS can be useful for this.
- Are operators able to recognize signs and symptoms of chemical leaks and exposures?
- What would the facility do in case of an emergency or a complaint?
- Is there an emergency phone nearby?

-Erik

Risks of Our Profession

As sanitarians, we are tasked with protecting public health and safety. Our profession is rewarding, and the fruits of our labor often have positive tangible results.

While our work is mostly positive, there can be danger. It would be illogical to think an environmental health inspector would not be returning home at the end of the workday because of a violent act, but sometimes it happens. In many cases there are warning signs of impending or escalating danger. Below are a few instances of an environmental health employee not returning home at the end of the day.

January 20, 2021 in Sacramento, CA - An REHS completed a routine inspection of a pizza establishment. One of the employees was agitated by the inspection. The REHS returned to his car and decided to do paperwork instead of leaving the premises. The irate employee had exited the establishment with a large knife (the manager witnessed this and called the police), watched the REHS get in his vehicle, and then entered the employee's car through the unlocked passenger front door and stabbed to death the REHS.

June 6, 2000 in Oakland, CA – Two FSIS, one California Special Investigator, and one California Health Inspector were shot and killed (another inspector successfully fled the building) by a sausage manufacturing facility owner while conducting a follow-up inspection. The facility owner was not on-site upon the start of the reinspection but was called by an employee and then came to the plant where he started yelling at the inspectors. He then left and while still yelling, went to his office, came back with a gun and shot each inspector multiple times. All four died.

When confronted with an irate/ argumentative/ yelling/ threatening individual, quickly assess the situation. Listen to your 'little voice' and have situational awareness. If someone is yelling at you, berating you, arguing with you, and retreats to their office, vehicle, or home while doing so – leave the premises immediately. Return with a peace officer if any of your personal or work items are left behind. Personal or work items are replaceable. You are not. There is no job worth your life. Understand that the reckless and dangerous actions of the public can happen anywhere. Please have forethought as you enter any place where you will be conducting business with an emergency exit strategy, have situational awareness, and read the tells that virtually every human projects when stressed.

Take care. Thank you.

-Mark

Tattoo Inks

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently taken additional steps to protect consumers from contaminated tattoo inks. They have provided manufacturers with information and tools to help them reduce the microbial contamination in the inks they manufacture.

Between 2003 and 2023, firms conducted 18 recalls of tattoo inks that were contaminated with a variety of microorganisms, some of which are known to cause serious infections. In May 2019, the FDA issued a [Safety Alert](#) advising consumers, tattoo artists and retailers to avoid using or selling certain tattoo inks contaminated with microorganisms.

This month, the FDA issued [draft guidance](#) to tattoo ink manufacturers and distributors to help recognize situations in which a tattoo ink may become contaminated, and thus, be potentially injurious to health.

-Sadie

Public Accommodations – WaterBnB

Are WaterBnBs an acceptable public accommodation?

Yes, a WaterBnB could get approved for a public accommodation license. With the rise in rental properties, especially in the case of short-term stays such as AirBnB, new options are added all the time. Still, the same basic public accommodation rules such as potable water, wastewater, and solid waste apply as outlined in ARM 37.111.101.

-Elvis

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