

# The Preventive Measure

WINTER 2019  
Volume 20, Issue 1



## 2019 Leadership

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### In this issue:

- Page 1** Message from the President
- Page 2** Renew Your Membership!
- Page 3** Now What? A Tool to Help Commercial Fishermen...
- Page 5** Save the Date: FDA Retail Food Protection Seminar
- Page 6** NCAEHA Highlights
- Page 8** 2019 Scholarship and Awards



Greetings and Happy New Year! I hope this newsletter finds you well and that you had a wonderful holiday season with friends, family and loved ones. There is no hiding from the cold now and with the cold came our **Winter Conference** which was held in Fairfax, Virginia on **January 31, 2019**. Thank you to all of our speakers for joining us!

In addition to the Winter Conference, I am excited to share with you that our Board member elections are complete. Thank you to all who voted. I am thrilled to continue on as President and help support NCAEHA. **Nicole Biala**, our new VP of Membership and **Allison Olguin**, our new VP of Programs & Professional Advancement will be joining the Board along with **Amanda Losardo** who was appointed our new MD Representative. Also, **Austyn Ries** is working with **Chuti Nakronsri** to take on the role as our Director of Communications in the near future. I hope you were able to meet some of our new Board Members at the Winter Conference where they were sworn into their positions. Congratulations to all!

I am also thrilled to announce that we will be co-hosting the **FDA Central Region Retail Food Protection Seminar with DC Health** on **August 27-29, 2019** in Washington, DC. This seminar will provide training, updates, technical support as well as networking opportunities to participants. Please save the date as more details will follow.

Finally, as we welcome in 2019, I want to share with you some of what you can expect from NCAEHA in the upcoming year. In addition to our Winter Conference and the **FDA Central Region Retail Food Protection Seminar**, we will also host a Spring Conference in DC in April and a Fall Conference in Maryland in late October. We will be surveying the members for interest in various continuing education, training and testing opportunities to ensure we're meeting your needs. And as always, we will host the Annual Awards Dinner this summer or early fall. If you have other ideas for member opportunities that you'd like to share with the Board, please email me at [NCAEHA.President@gmail.com](mailto:NCAEHA.President@gmail.com).

Please be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter and bookmark our website and let us know if you are interested in being involved in NCAEHA. We always have room on our committees!

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Spring Educational Conference (a date will be announced soon) for another informative conference. Please let myself or any member of the Board know of any thoughts or suggestions you may have on how we may better serve you. Cheers to an amazing 2019!

Best Regards, *Kristen Pybus*



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# JOIN NCAEHA! RENEW YOUR 2019 MEMBERSHIP NOW



## BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP:

- ✓ Be a part of a local association in the DC, MD, and VA area that is focused on environmental health (EH)
- ✓ Network with other local EH professionals in academia, industry, government, private sector, and other areas
- ✓ Advance your career by pursuing a credential or certification with our discounted annual courses like the REHS, CP-FS, CPO, and more
- ✓ Gain more knowledge and/or earn up to 15 Continuing Education hours per year by attending our nearby Educational Conferences
- ✓ Enjoy a good time with your EH colleagues and build new connections at our social events
- ✓ Recognize an EH professional by nominating them for an award or scholarship
- ✓ Pursue local EH employment opportunities with easy accessibility through our announcements
- ✓ Stay updated through our newsletter, website, and social media and announcements on other events, trainings, webinars, and more



Memberships will expire on December 31, 2018.  
Regular Membership Renewal: \$20.00  
Student and Silver Membership Renewal: \$5.00

Membership Renewal may be completed:  
- Online at [www.ncaeha.org/membership](http://www.ncaeha.org/membership)  
- In person at the next Educational Conference

Payments are accepted in person via credit card, cash, check, or money order.



# Now What? A Tool to Help Commercial Fishermen Encountering Sea-Disposed Chemical Munitions

CDR Danielle Shirk Mills,  
MPH, RS/REHS, GA-CEM, EMHP  
November 2018

Before the 1970s, disposal of excess, obsolete, or unserviceable munitions at sea was common (**Photo 1**). It was believed that the vastness of ocean waters would neutralize chemical agents that might have leaked from these weapons. Sea-disposal operations included the disposal of conventional munitions of every type and chemical munitions with various chemical agent fills. Commercial fishing, clamming, and dredging operations can stir up these munitions and they can be encountered anywhere at sea, not just charted hazardous areas.

There is now increasing concern about environmental and human health effects associated with the disposal of these agents both on land and in the ocean. Environmental health practitioners, especially those along coastal areas, should be aware that these incidents are occurring. Since 2004, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been notified of several incidents in which personnel were exposed to chemical agents associated with recovered sea-disposed chemical munitions. Several of the reported incidents resulted in toxic chemical agent contamination/injuries to workers involved in commercial clam fishing operations. All incidents involved World War I-era blister agents recovered from previously unknown sea disposal locations off the U.S. East Coast. The first incident was the result of harvesting clamshells for the use as aggregate in concrete and for driveways on the eastern shore of Delaware in 2004. A military explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technician developed substantial blistering (**Photo 2**) after responding to an incident off base in which an unknown projectile was recovered and destroyed by detonation (Fendick et al., 2013).

In 2010, commercial fishermen recovered an unknown number of munitions while dredging for clams off the coast of Long Island, New York. During the effort to dump the munitions back in the ocean, a munition fell on the deck of the boat, releasing a black liquid substance. Drops of the substance also landed on the clothing covering the leg and arm of a crew member.

After several hours, two crew members felt ill and were transported to a local hospital for evaluation. One was evaluated and released, while the other developed small blisters on his forearm and upper thigh. These injuries were recognized as sulfur mustard exposure by a nurse trained in chemical agent injuries. Exposure was confirmed by chemical analysis (Fendick et al., 2013).

In 2012, a 75-mm projectile was recovered at a clam processing plant in Delaware. It was reportedly brought to the plant accidentally during dredging operations for clams in Delaware Bay. An EOD team removed the munition for disposal. The munition contained mustard agent. None of the potentially exposed persons developed signs or symptoms of exposure to mustard. Clam fishermen told investigators that they routinely recover munitions that often “smell like garlic,” a potential indication of a chemical agent (Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, 2010).

In 2016, an ocean clammer was sorting through clams on an ocean clamming vessel and was exposed to a liquid-like substance while dislodging a rock or object that had clogged the hopper of the vessel. He developed blistering symptoms but did not present to a medical care center until 36 hr later. Due to his significant burns—reportedly 7–8% of the skin surface on his shoulder and arms—he was transferred to a burn unit in Philadelphia where the injury was recognized as a burn consistent with mustard exposure (The Maritime Executive, 2016). In 2017, a fisherman was exposed to a suspected chemical warfare agent in an event that closely mirrored the 2016 event.

CDC has concerns for the health of fishermen who might be exposed when munitions are dredged up with clams and other bottom dwelling sea life (**Photo 3**). CDC started an interest group for stakeholders, including the U.S. Coast Guard and federal and state departments of health and environment, to discuss responses to these incidents and help improve future responses. The goals were to protect fishermen, improve recognition in treatment facilities, and improve the public health network notification.



Photo 2. Image of the burns to the hand of an explosive ordnance disposal airman exposed to mustard in 2004. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army.



Photo 3. An unrecognizable munition brought up during ocean floor dredging. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army.

Photo 1. Conducting sea disposal operations. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army.

Working with interest group partners, CDC recently introduced a new tool for the fishing industry designed to be helpful when chemical munitions are encountered. It lays out a sequence of personal protection, disposal, and after-event monitoring. The tool also provides guidance regarding what to do starting from the point that a munition is inadvertently brought aboard. The tool concisely covers four things important to protecting the health of fishermen who could encounter these munitions: 1) disposal overview, 2) protective equipment donning and doffing, 3) nine-step emergency disposal procedure, and 4) symptoms and healthcare provider card. It even includes a “take me with you to your healthcare provider” card with useful information about signs, symptoms, and chemical testing.

The tool can be found at [www.cdc.gov/nceh/demil](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/demil). Next steps include preparing personal protective equipment (PPE) kits and training resources for fishermen, as well as for medical providers who could treat the resulting exposures. The expanding use of the world’s oceans, and particularly its coastal zones, requires not only an increased awareness of both chemical and conventional munitions in the sea but also increased response and medical treatment capabilities.



CDR Danielle Shirk Mills,  
MPH, RS/REHS, GA-CEM, EMHP

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**References:**

Fendick, R., King, J., Tincher, T., Radke, M., Begluitti, G., Cruz, M., . . . Delaney, L. (2013). Exposures to discarded sulfur mustard munitions—Mid-Atlantic and New England States 2004–2012. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 62(16), 315–316.

The Maritime Executive. (2016, August 12). Clam fisherman dredges up chemical weapons. Retrieved from <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/clam-fisherman-dredgesup-chemical-weapons#gs.9pkPPwE>

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. (2010). MassDEP Field Assessment and Support Team (FAST): After incident report, New Bedford clam contamination incident. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/cleanup/sites/nb610.pdf>



# Save the Date!

DC Health & the National Capital Area Environmental Health Association are Proud to Host the

## FDA Central Region Retail Food Protection Seminar

August 27-29, 2019

Marriott Washington Metro Center, Washington, D.C.



**DC HEALTH**  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



**FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION**  
OFFICE OF REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF STATE COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS



# Welcome to the NCAEHA Team: New Faces in 2019

## Allison Olguin - VP of Programs and Professional Advancement

Allison Olguin obtained a BS in Environmental Science from Washington State University in 2000, and has a variety of different professional experiences in Environmental Health. Over the course of her career, she has worked in the Virology section of the Utah State Health Lab in Salt Lake City, in a water quality lab at the Centennial Water and Sanitation District in Colorado, as an Environmental Specialist for the Florida Department of Health, and finally, as a middle school science teacher in Virginia.

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## Nicole Biala Gragasin, REHS - VP of Membership

Nicole Biala is an Environmental Health Specialist II for the Fairfax County Health Department. Originally from California, Nicole graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Health Sciences with an option in Community Health from California State University, Long Beach. Nicole began her career in 2013 with Fairfax County as an Environmental Health Technician for the OS&W section conducting recreational water facility inspections and private well water inspections. She soon advanced on to become an Environmental Health Specialist II where she gained further experience in food safety, hotel, and child care inspections for the Consumer Protection Program. In addition, Nicole continues to develop her career as she has recently joined the Plan Review team where duties include approval of plans for new and emerging restaurants. Nicole has served on multiple notable committees within the Health Department including the Active Managerial Control team, EH IT team, the Health Department's Customer Service team and has taken part with NACCHO mentoring. Furthermore, she is an active general member with NEHA and maintains the NEHA REHS/RS credential. Nicole has been a part of the NCAEHA as a general member since 2014.

[NCAEHA.Membership@gmail.com](mailto:NCAEHA.Membership@gmail.com)

## Amanda Losardo, MPH - Maryland Representative

Amanda Losardo graduated from The State University of New York College at Oneonta in 2014 with a BS in Human Biology. She earned her Master of Public Health with a concentration in Epidemiology from George Mason University in 2017. Amanda started her career in environmental health working as an Environmental Technician in the Disease Carrying Insects Program (DCIP) at the Fairfax County Health Department. With DCIP, she conducted systematic trapping and surveillance of mosquitoes and ticks and the pathogens they carry. Amanda then interned at the United States Environmental Protection Agency and worked on a wide variety of projects, including but not limited to, pesticides, asbestos, air quality, and drinking water. After her internship, Amanda was hired as an Environmental Technician with the Onsite Sewage and Water Program at the Fairfax County Health Department. She performed inspections on pools, drinking wells, and septic systems. Amanda currently works as an Environmental Health Specialist in the Food Protection Program for Prince George's County Health Department.

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## Austyn Ries - Director of Communications

Austyn graduated with a B.S. in Community Health with a concentration in Nutrition from George Mason University in 2016. She has previously worked as an Environmental Technician in Fairfax County Health Department's Disease Carrying Insects Program (DCIP) where she conducted trapping and surveillance of mosquitoes and ticks, as well as obtained a Pesticide Applicator License to conduct inspection and larvicide of stormwater ponds throughout the county. She has since joined the department's Consumer Protection Program as an Environmental Health Specialist II, conducting various environmental safety inspections including food, pools, hotels, and childcare facilities since January 2017. She has garnered experience in email marketing and communications throughout her career and looks forward to working and learning with the NCAEHA team.

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# Recap: 2019 Winter Educational Conference

Thursday, January 31, 2019 - Fairfax County Health Department, Fairfax VA



Bob Custard, CEO - Environmental Health Leadership Partners, LLC



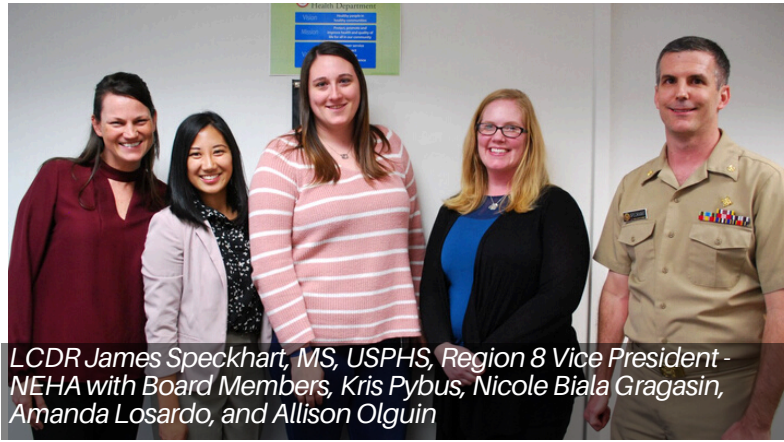
Maj. Trinette Flowers-Torres, USAF, Lead, Antimicrobial Resistant Infections Focus Area



Bryant Bullock, Environmental Health Specialist III, Fairfax County Health Department



Greg Kraft, General Manager, Hearn Kirkwood



LCDR James Speckhart, MS, USPHS, Region 8 Vice President - NEHA with Board Members, Kris Pybus, Nicole Biala Gragas, Amanda Losardo, and Allison Olguin



Over 60 attendees arrived at the conference!



Gerard Brown, Program Manager, Rodent and Vector Control Division, DC Health



Patrick Quade, Founder/CEO & Colin Finan, Director of Government Relations & Business - IVasPoisoned.com



All NCAEHA Board Members, old and new, stand together in one place! Learn more about us at [NCAEHA.org](http://NCAEHA.org)



# 2019 Scholarship and Awards

## *James M. Wordsworth Scholarship*

James Wordsworth has been a long standing restaurateur and advocate for the work Environmental Health Professionals do to help keep the public safe. Mr. Wordsworth is a Honorary Lifetime Member of NCAEHA and every year helps make a scholarship available to a candidate that is seeking higher education in a field related to Environmental Health.

Nominations due June 1, 2019

## *Jerrold M. Michael Award*

Jerrold Michael was the Founding President of NCAEHA. He was a true leader and pioneer in the field of Environmental Health. This award is to recognize a professional in the field of environmental health that has contributed to his or her employer's environmental health mission, to the goals of the National Capital Area Environmental Health Association, and to the advancement of the environmental health profession.

Nominations due June 1, 2019

## *NEHA Certificate of Merit*

Each year, NEHA recognizes one individual and one team, from each of its Affiliates, who has made outstanding contributions to the profession of environmental health. It is one of the benefits of your affiliation with NEHA.

Nominations due May 1, 2019

**Please direct questions and submit applications to:  
Nicole, Vice President of Membership  
NCAEHA.VP.Membership@gmail.com**

**[ncaeha.org/scholarshipawards](http://ncaeha.org/scholarshipawards)**