

Session Abstracts

National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)
71st Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition

Emerging Pathogens

Thursday, June 21

8:30 – 9:20am

Produce Safety—What’s Going on Here?

Shirley B. Bohm, RS, MPH, Consumer Safety Officer, FDA, MD

This presentation will examine the sources of biological contamination and the methods of entry of pathogens into fresh fruits and vegetables based on laboratory studies and foodborne outbreak investigations. It will describe voluntary industry and regulatory strategies and recommendations for preventing contamination and controlling growth of these pathogens. It will also highlight environmental factors that, because of their critical nature, emphasize the need to bolster the environmental health infrastructure to ensure adequate food protection.

9:30 – 10:20am

Norovirus: A Community and Institutional Threat—Yellowstone County’s 2006 Norovirus Outbreak

Jennifer L. Pinnow, REHS/RS, CFSP, Assistant EH Director, Yellowstone City-County Health Dept., MT

Ted Kylander, REHS/RS, EH Director, Yellowstone City-County Health Dept., MT

In 2006, Yellowstone County (Billings), Montana experienced a Norovirus outbreak that resulted in over 1100 cases and nearly 100 hospitalizations. In response, the Yellowstone City-County Health Department activated their emergency operations center and tailored the incident command system for an infectious disease outbreak. In this presentation, participants will recognize how the incident command structure can be used in illness control and prevention activities as well as recognizing the potential risks and impacts a Norovirus outbreak can have on a facility or community. Successful strategies for working with the local media and community partners will also be included.

10:30 – 11:20am

Collaborative Planning for Drive-Thru Flu Vaccination Clinic

Colleen McKay-Wharton, MA, CHES, Public Health Consultant, CMW Consulting, NJ

In November and December of 2006, the Somerset County Health Department, together with more than ten county and local agencies, implemented the county’s first ‘Drive-Through Flu Vaccination Clinics’. The November clinic was targeted to the First

Responders and their household members in the county, and the second was for the general public. This exercise was part of the county's pandemic flu planning, as one possible mode of providing mass vaccination in the event of a public health emergency. Both exercises were successful, resulting in extremely positive feedback from both those receiving the vaccine and those participating in the implementation of the clinics. In addition, valuable 'lessons learned' were also identified. Details regarding the implementation of these clinics will be shared during the presentation.

1:00 – 1:50pm

Hepatitis A Virus Infection: Public Health Concerns and Intervention

Paul Masaba, MD, MPH&TM, DTM&H, County Epidemiologist, Somerset County Dept. of Health, NJ

Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by hepatitis A virus (HAV), which is excreted in feces of infected people. HAV transmission occurs by the fecal-oral route, either by direct contact with a HAV-infected person or by ingestion of HAV-contaminated food or water. Food-borne or waterborne hepatitis A outbreaks are relatively uncommon in the United States. However, food handlers with hepatitis A are frequently identified, and evaluation of the need for post-exposure prophylaxis and implementation of control measures are a considerable burden on public health resources. In addition, HAV-contaminated food may be the source of hepatitis A for an unknown proportion of persons whose source of infection is not identified. Further, travelers to areas of high endemicity, such as Africa, parts of Asia and Latin America, are increasingly becoming a vehicle for introducing the infection to areas of low and very low endemicity, such as North America and Western Europe. As such, HAV infection remains a public health problem. Reducing the transmission of HAV can be achieved through improved food and water processing and handling, personal hygiene practices and pre-exposure vaccination with hepatitis A vaccine.

2:00 – 2:50pm

Effectiveness of Hypochlorous Acid to Decontaminate Norovirus and Avian Influenza Hong Kong A Strain on Environmental Surfaces

Mark Sampson, PhD, Director of Microbiology, PuriCore Inc, PA

HOCl is a natural antimicrobial produced by the human body to kill invading pathogens and fight infection. Activation of the body's own immune system leads to the formation of hypochlorous acid from water and salt by a chain of chemical reactions called the Oxidative Burst Pathway. This presentation will report on recent studies demonstrating the effectiveness of Sterilox HOCl at disinfecting surfaces contaminated with outbreak pathogens such as Norovirus (NV), methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), *Acinetobacter* and human Influenza.

3:00 – 3:50pm

Speaker and Topic TBA