

Managing Editor's Desk

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Who Are We and What Do We Want To Be (Part 2)

In the June issue of the *Journal* and under this title, I talked about some of the developments that are beginning to emerge which could soon impact, if not overwhelm, our profession. In that editorial, I also said that before these developments got too far along, it was important for our profession to formulate a perspective to advocate. Otherwise, we run the risk of having others shape our future while we quietly watch from the sidelines.

Before NEHA can pick up the gauntlet, however, and join the policy discussions now underway having to do with everything from health care reform, to the creation of a new federal Food Protection Agency, to how local environmental health programs might soon be subject to some form of accreditation, it is vital that we understand what we are (as a profession) and what we want to be. Quite frankly, this is a discussion within the profession that we've never had.

To get this discussion started, NEHA dedicated both this year's opening Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition keynote session, as well as the AEC & Exhibition focus groups, to this very topic. As energizing and enlightening as these June discussions were, however, many NEHA members who were unable to get to Tucson obviously haven't had the chance to participate and to share their considered viewpoints. We can now also bring you into this important discussion.

We have a blog available on the NEHA Web site (www.neha.org) that allows you to participate in this crucial discussion... NEHA both invites and encourages your participation.

In another *JEH* editorial I wrote several months ago about how NEHA is changing to become more attractive to younger professionals, I talked about wanting to start podcasts, blogs, social networking, and so forth. I am pleased to report that that day has come. In fact, we now offer programs that range from blogs to online education to even our own "Radio NEHA", which gives us a means for keeping you informed and

educated on breaking issues. It is the blog in particular that I want to draw your attention to now.

We have a blog available on the NEHA Web site (www.neha.org) that allows you to participate in this crucial discussion about who we are and what our future should be. NEHA both invites and encourages your participation. The more robust the discussion on the blog, the more we can come to understand how practicing environmental health professionals see their future. NEHA can then pick up on the themes from this discussion and advocate what our community of professionals is looking for.

At this time, we don't have a deadline on the duration of this blog. We are, however, hoping to get a sense of the most pressing concerns of our profession, certainly by the latter part of the year.

Finally, I should mention that even if you aren't particularly inclined at this time to contribute, please check the blog out anyway. It is amazing how much we can all learn from each other. Therefore, whether you are a contributor or a learner (or both), it is more likely than not that this blog will have value for you. Thanks for looking in! 🐞

