



2007 NEHA Sabbatical Exchange Ambassador England

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Sabbatical Goal

The overall goal of my sabbatical exchange was to study, observe and share information with colleagues in the field of environmental health while in England. During my three-week stay, this exchange was an opportunity to discuss, create, share ideas and concerns, establish new programs and develop procedures. In addition, it was an opportunity to set environmental health standards, implement new policies and programs, recommend enforcement actions and participate in the actual inspections and environmental duties.

Introduction

I am an Environmental Health Specialist and have been employed with the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health located in Mason City, Iowa, for the past 16 years. Mason City is located in north central Iowa and has a population of approximately 30,000, while Cerro Gordo County has around 47,000 citizens. Growing up on a farm south of Mason City, I appreciate the simple, rural living of Mason City and its surrounding communities. As I headed off to London, England, on 9 October 2007, I wondered what it would be like to visit, work or live in a city with a population of 7.7 million people. As I stepped off the plane after a 15 hour trip, all 7.7 million people were at the airport, or so it seemed. I followed all my instructions very carefully to catch the train, and then only take a “black cab” to the Union Jack Club. My host had written in my instructions, “We know what the black cabs are like and I think that they only have those in the taxi ranks.” Well, this all seemed simple enough, except I arrived at the wrong airport, my luggage was still traveling around the world, I had 5 minutes to catch the first train and as I queued in line for a taxi, they were red, silver and black. Not to panic at this point, I was assured by the young lady in line that it was OK to get into the next “red” taxi. With 15,000 hotels in London, surely the taxi driver would find my destination and 30 minutes later I arrived at my hotel, the Union Jack Club in London, England.

Overview

The United Kingdom (UK) consists of the countries of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. London, the capital city of England is a major tourist destination attracting 27 million visitors every year and will be host to the 2012 Olympics. London ranks as one of the most expensive cities in the world, alongside Tokyo and Moscow. London’s largest industry remains finance and at present, two U.S. dollars are equal to one British pound (£).



Above are photos of famous London sights: Top left – the London Eye, top right is Big Ben and bottom right are phone boxes.

Ann Goodwin was my contact/host for this sabbatical exchange. Ann is a Principal Policy Officer with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) in London and works on special projects such as pandemic flu, international policy, climate change and genetically modified organisms (food crops, etc.) She commutes by train to work, 2 hours door to door. Yes, each way. I am 10 minutes from my work, by car, if the stoplights do not turn red. Ann suggested that I probably would not want to hire an automatic (rent a car) while in England as they are expensive and they drive on the opposite side of the road. Some days, I have trouble driving on the “right” side of the road; I can’t imagine driving on the “wrong” side. Trains, taxis or walking were my transportation while in England.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health is a registered charity for the professional body of environmental health practitioners, with over 10,500 members across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and other parts of the world. The London headquarters is home to CIEH’s central management team, heading up the following divisions: Policy, Education & Professional Standards, Communications, Memberships & Information Services, Events, Training, Publishing & Finance, and IT & Administration. Ann provided a tour of the offices in London where I attended a Policy Development Board meeting on 11 October. Items on the agenda for discussion were the health effects from climate changes, food hygiene standards in hospitals, effectiveness of regulations, fundamental changes taking place in the way environmental health is delivered, private sewers, private water supplies, etc.

My sabbatical exchange was planned around attending the CIEH annual conference. I sent the required paperwork in the post and was accepted as an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. The CIEH conference, “Best of the Best-Back to Basics,” was held on 15-16 October 2007 at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham. The city of Nottingham is the county town of Nottinghamshire in the East Midlands of England and the estimated population is 278,700. Nottingham is home to Robin Hood, Boots the Chemist, a pharmaceutical company and the birthplace of Raleigh Cycles.

Prior to the conference on Sunday, 14 October, Ann and I attended a workshop, Accelerated Learning, presented by David Newsum, a freelance training consultant. The workshop was informal and David is a very motivating, entertaining and musical trainer with guitar in hand. The workshop provided innovative solutions and a learning experience which closely matches the ways in which the brain works. The four P’s of learning are prepare, present, practice and performance. As I teach ServSafe, food safety training in Iowa, it is always helpful to obtain new ideas and solutions to impact the students.



The new style conference, “Best of the Best,” was aimed at all Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP) and the focus was to help practitioners address the problems and issues that they deal with on a day-to-day basis through access to information on best practices and networking opportunities.

Graham Russell, head of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) delivered the keynote address, "A vision for LBRO." The LBRO will act as a go-between with its most important task to make sure the UK is business friendly and not over regulated. In the coming year LBRO will be sorting out a programme of activity that will start to change the way regulatory services are delivered. LBRO will work with organisations like CIEH to ensure that a proper balance is struck between protecting consumers and ensuring businesses are helped to comply with the regulations. The objective of LBRO is to build a world-class regulatory system.

One of the sessions I attended was "Coventry Scores on the Doors." Coventry Council has been participating in a pilot programme for the past 12 months, with over 1500 businesses. Scores on the Doors schemes are raising standards of food hygiene. They bring food safety to the forefront and raise public awareness about the importance of food hygiene. Coventry Council uses a three star risk rating; they have a staff of 14 people and inspect approximately 32 food facilities per month. A rating is not awarded if major improvements are required or formal action is being taken, however the better the compliance, the better the star rating. The rating is valid until the next inspection, but may be withdrawn if standards are not maintained. A London-wide Scores on the Doors scheme was also announced, covering 80,000 food premises. Most participants felt it should be a national scheme and if approved by the Food Standard Agency (FSA), displaying ratings in restaurants could be made compulsory by the end of 2008. Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health participated in a similar five star pilot project in 2001. The purpose was to educate and inform the public concerning the level of food safety at food service establishments. It was also an incentive for restaurant owners and operators to improve and/or maintain a high level of food safety much like the Scores on the Doors scheme. Beginning 1 January 2008, it will be mandatory that restaurants in Iowa post their most current food inspection in a location readily visible to the public.

During the international session, presentations were given by three Environmental Health Officers from Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. The presenters were in the UK as the result of Professional Fellowships awarded by the Commonwealth Scholarships Commission. Many areas of concern were discussed by the speakers such as the growing population, few resources for preventative health, poor communications, and the shortage of environmental professionals to cover the large distances. In two regions of Kenya there are 35 million people, 4,000 doctors and 20,000 nurses. I also was given the opportunity to speak about our environmental duties in Iowa. This session was very enlightening and inspires us to participate and promote the role of environmental health in developing countries. An International Special Interest Group (ISIG) of the CIEH is looking for people interested in environmental health to work and learn in Europe, America and in developing countries.

David Clapham, Principal Environmental Health Manager, Bradford, England, presented a briefing session on private water supply regulations for 2008. These regulations will introduce a change in the way private water supplies are dealt with by rural authorities. The overview of this session was upcoming

changes in supply classifications, risk identification, monitoring for more chemicals and reporting. Risk assessment rather than compliance testing is designed to improve the quality of the water supplies. They have over 1,000 private water supplies that are tested by request of the home owner.

“Way down yonder in New Orleans,” was presented by Dr. Jerome Goddard on dealing with emergencies. Dr. Goddard is a highly entertaining presenter; he travels and speaks internationally about various aspects of insect pests and human health. Dr. Goddard, State Medical Entomologist, Mississippi Department of Health is a key member of the team that was sent in to sort out the aftermath of Katrina. A team of environmentalists treated potential breeding sites and handed out thousands of cans of insect repellent. When the salt marsh mosquitoes started hatching, you get 400 to 500 mosquitoes a minute. He estimated that during the clean up his team tested 40,000 mosquito samples for disease agents and found nothing. The reason diseases failed to break out is that the species that harbor the viruses were destroyed. I was touched by the compassion from fellow colleagues during and after this session.

On Monday evening, 15 October, all delegates were invited to attend a fine medieval knees-up social event. As Robin Hood is said to have lived in Sherwood Forest, which extended from the north of Nottingham to the north side of Doncaster, Yorkshire, the social evening was centered on that theme. The evening included great food, drink and dancing. This event took place at the idyllic setting of Colwick Hall, Nottingham’s magnificent Georgian country house mansion and once the home of Lord Byron. (As many of you have inquired, and I am sorry to report, I did not encounter Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest.)



This photo depicts our gathering for the meal at the CIEH Conference with colleagues: (from left to right David, Rose (host), Ann (host), and Howard.

Cheers to Denise Donnelly, CIEH Events Manager and the committee for their hard work and dedication to environmental health. The new “Best of the Best” Conference was indeed the best. I felt very much at home as the conference was designed similar to the ones we attend at the Iowa Environmental Health Association Conference (IEHA) and the annual National Environmental Health Association Conference (NEHA). A variety of 60 plus

sessions were scheduled so practitioners could choose which session to attend. The sessions included information on environmental protection, health and safety, housing, food, and public health. The exhibition hall was full with 40 exhibitors displaying the latest developments and techniques. With more than 350 delegates in attendance this approach allowed the perfect networking opportunities and contacts to be made. Refreshment breaks and lunch could be taken when it suited you best during designated times. I enjoyed attending the conference, the sessions were very well presented, the information was invaluable, and the networking with fellow colleagues and exhibitors was enlightening. I must confess to Ann, I did sample every variety of biscuit during break time and at lunch. The biscuits, cheesecakes and pastries were “awesome.”

Upon conclusion of the conference on 16 October, I traveled with my next host, Rosemary Lee to her home in Manchester, England. The city has an estimated population of 441,200. Manchester is well known for its sporting connections with two Premier League football teams. Manchester was known as the dominant international centre of textile manufacture and cotton spinning.

Rose is a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner employed with the Wigan Council. She is the Smoke-free Wigan Coordinator and has spent many hours on the implementation of the smoke-free legislation. Her office is housed in Wigan, a town in Greater Manchester, England. The estimated town population is 81,203. Wigan business connections to the town include: Heinz, JJB Sports and Uncle Joe’s Mint Balls Factory. Wigan is famous for having one of the highest concentrations of Pubs and Social Clubs in the UK and is home to the annual World Pie Eating Championship, usually held at Harry’s Bar. Although I missed the pie eating contest at Harry’s Bar, Rose and Ray treated me to fish and chips and a side of mushy peas. The cod fish was heavily battered and at least 12 inches in length and the chips were “french fries.” I am not sure about the peas, except I like Iowa peas best. On Saturday night I was treated at Rose’s pet restaurant, the Spicy Hut Restaurant and TakeAway to several dishes of Indian cuisine.

Major changes in health legislation occurred this past year and one of the biggest was the ban on smoking. On 1 July, 2007, public places and work places went smoke-free in England. Wigan Council receives many complaints concerning where people can and cannot smoke. Outside a bingo hall, people were smoking at the front door, another call claimed the owners were smoking inside their establishment and another complained that patrons were smoking in a semi-enclosed area at a bar’s front entrance. The legal definition of what type of shelter for smokers was permissible outside bars and restaurants states that no one can smoke inside any building or in any area that is more than 50% enclosed. The law was designed to prevent high concentration of hazardous air and reduce the second-hand smoke to others. Cigarette ends are found on over 80% of the UK’s streets and are regarded as



England’s largest environmental litter problem. They believe that the only way

levels of street litter can be changed is by encouraging behavioral change. By enforcing the ban on where persons can and cannot smoke it is hoped that many people will stop smoking or reduce the amount they do smoke.

On Wednesday, 17 October, I attended and spoke at the trainer's forum in Preston. This forum was presented by CIEH trainers and attended by 50 practitioners, most of whom were trainers in food safety. We shared information about food safety and how our inspections and training are different. Jon Flatman, a trainer for CIEH announced we would be using the concept of "speed-dating" at the end of the day's session. Of course he had everyone's attention, including mine. Every five minutes persons moved from one circle to another. This was a very unique way of meeting other professionals, networking, sharing information and concerns with several persons.

Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) is a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) scheme developed to provide guidance and support. Devised by their government Food Standards Agency (FSA), SFBB is designed to help catering businesses such as restaurants, cafés and takeaways in their food safety management procedures. The food safety management pack is a simple, practical approach, developed to be pictorial and jargon-free and it is based on the 4C's: cooking, chilling, cleaning and cross-contamination. The pack includes information on personal hygiene, temperatures, cleaning procedures, food safety, managerial control, hazard identification. A simple diary for record-keeping is included to chart daily and weekly progress. The UK government has spent millions on developing this very simple system for HACCP in small food businesses and caterers. Since the launch of the new regulations introduced in 2006, more than two-thirds of local authorities in England have received funding from FSA and by March of 2008 it is estimated that more than 50,000 small businesses will have received instruction and support on SFBB.

In England an Environmental Health Practitioner (EHP) is required to achieve a four year degree, including a year's placement, similar to an internship in Iowa. An EHP would then be able to follow a specialist pathway if they so choose. Students study knowledge and skills, then acquire and develop knowledge in all aspects of environmental health to include food safety, health and safety, environmental protection, housing and public health issues. In addition they learn to protect and enhance public health. A practitioner is taught to understand the business, assess the risks, ask what is reasonable to control and ask if they have a plan in place for food safety. In Iowa, we are required to attend classes and workshops offered by the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) and by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We learn our skills from our colleagues, who are the best resource. Most importantly, our work requires good people skills, good public relations, networking and the respect of the public we serve. With 400 local authorities in England, there is a national shortage of qualified EHPs just as in the United States. In both nations the shortage can be contributed to marketing strategies, heavy workloads, low salaries and lack of public awareness as to the definition of environmental health.

It was very interesting to participate in the food inspections with Wigan Council. Unlike Iowa, food establishments are not licensed in England, the

owners of the restaurants just have to be registered with the local council (health department). Lynn Fish, an Environmental Officer with Wigan Council, and I inspected an outside caterer, as I would refer to in Iowa as a small “mom and pop operation” and a primary (elementary) school. The practitioners’ two main concerns are under-cooked foods and cross-contamination. Several of the health risks we looked at were the same; however, we did have different opinions on cross-contamination, food protection, personal hygiene and sanitation. In England, like Iowa, a separate hand sink is required; however, in England there are no hot and cold mixing water faucets at the hand sinks. The staff are allowed to dry their hands on a common towel. The dishes and utensils are washed with hot water and detergent, rinsed and then air dried or towel dried. It is believed that if the dishes have been washed, rinsed and dried then the dish is safe from bacteria. In Iowa, a sanitizer is required after the rinse and all dishes are air dried. Refrigeration of some products does not seem to be a concern, possibly because the temperatures in England do not get that hot. Eggs are not required to be refrigerated and some products, such as butter, are not refrigerated because of lack of space.



*At work in
the
inspected
kitchens in
Wigan*



In England, the practitioner take notes in their “Pace Notebooks” during the inspection, asks the owner/operator lots of good questions, offers advice and helpful suggestions. However, no report is left with the operator. A standard letter is then typed and posted to the facility at a later date. The Pace Notebook is designed for practitioners to keep detailed notes to prevent court proceeding being jeopardised. The notebook helps ensure all enforcement officers follow the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, avoiding the risk of losing court cases due to errors in legal procedures. The Notebook is small and fits easily into a jacket pocket. In our department, we do the inspections on site with the computer, print the report, do an exit interview and leave a copy of the inspection report at the facility. Being computerized has saved us lots of staff time and repetition of the report.

On Sunday, 21 October, David Newsum very graciously offered to drive me to Ludlow for the final week of my exchange. I was not sure if I wanted my luggage in the boot or the bonnet, so we placed it on the back seat. That seemed safe enough. The trip was an excellent opportunity to talk about food inspections, training, policies and enforcement. As it was Sunday, we couldn’t pass up the traditional Sunday dinner. We stopped at the Baron of Beef, a country pub in

Bucknell, Shropshire and were served a very delicious four course meal. The roast of the day was beef, served with roast potatoes, market vegetables and the famous Yorkshire pudding, a puffed pastry with gravy. As they would say in England, this was a brilliant choice.

Ludlow, a historical town in Shropshire, England, situated close to the border with Wales in The Welsh Marches has an estimated population of 10,000. Ludlow was built under the protection of the castle over 900 years ago and the grid pattern of the streets still remains a feature of the center of modern Ludlow. It is encircled by the remains of a fine town wall. The Broadgate is the only remaining gate in the town walls. As the town was built on a hill, you either walk uphill or downhill to your destination. After a week working in Ludlow, I was undecided if I preferred walking down or up to work each day.

Chris Moss and Sue Allen were my hosts in Ludlow. Chris and Sue are Pollution and Sampling Officers with South Shropshire Council in Ludlow. The Environment and Community Services Division of South Shropshire Council, with a staff of approximately 24 are responsible for a variety of duties. The licensing team license alcohol, taxis, street trading, lotteries and animal welfare. The commercial team handles food safety, health and safety and infectious diseases. The pollution control team regulates mineshafts, contaminated land and private water supplies. The housing team is responsible for housing conditions, assistance and homelessness. Waste Services, better known as “The Street Scene team,” manage abandoned vehicles, litter and dog control, client side street cleansing, food waste collection and pest control.

On Monday, we collected the “cool box” and headed out to take water tests. The husband of the household had been feeling poorly and wanted to make sure the water was safe to drink. Their water was gravity fed from a spring several miles away. We made our way across the pasture, with the sheep, to observe the 500 gallon reservoir (picture at right). Chris and Sue seemed impressed that the reservoir had a tight lid and I was stoned (in shock) at what I was seeing. The next stop was to test the water because of the surface run off during the severe flooding early this year. This well, or “bore hole” as they referred to it was a 3 foot circle, 50 foot deep, with a static water level at 6 foot. It was considered dry built as it was made out of brick. The owner had added concrete block to raise the opening above ground level and dug trenches at the bottom of the hills to prevent any future run off. The submersible pump, attached with a rope had fallen into the sediment at the bottom of the well, so we were unable to get a proper water test. With almost 50% of the tests failing in Ludlow with E Coli or bacteria present, homeowners are advised to boil the water or chlorinate the water before drinking. Most homeowners like the taste of the spring water and are unwilling to treat the water. The next day we took water samples at the nearby water plant. Finally during this



water test, Chris and I could agree this “well” was what I refer to as a “well” in Iowa.

The septic system requirements, installation and maintenance are very similar to ours in Iowa. Their system consists of sub-surface perforated pipes, laid in shallow trenches partially filled with shingle (gravel). In Iowa this drainage field design is called a leach field and in England they use the term soakaways. If site conditions are unsuitable an alternative disposal method such as a biological treatment plant, cesspool or constructed wetland (reed bed) is used. If a cesspool is used it has to be emptied once a month.

In England a nuisance is defined as a health concern from an odour, dust, smoke, light or accumulation. A nuisance might also be a noise that causes disturbance to someone. Noise as a nuisance is a form of pollution and people haven't been aware that it can have an impact on their health. Anyone at any time can be affected by noise. Noise and nuisance complaints are called into the Ludlow office daily and they range from a disturbing noise to a tenant, a bright light shining into a homeowner's bedroom, an unpleasant smell or odor, smoke from a fire, or the barking of an unattended dog.

Fly-tipping, the illegal dumping of waste in an unauthorized area continues to be a problem in Ludlow and has risen by 5% with more than two million incidents reported around England. Local councils were told to follow examples of authorities that were reducing fly-tipping. The government is developing legislation that will give local authorities and the Environmental Agency the power to stop, search and instantly seize vehicles being used to commit fly-tipping offenses. All reports from the councils are filed and then sent to Fly Capture for documentation.

Rats continue to create problems in Ludlow as well as across England. To try to control the problem, the council pays £40 per private household for a pest company to apply treatment three times a year. Approximately £1200 to £1400 is



paid out monthly to pest companies by the council. This program is supported by local taxes. Water companies also do sewer baiting to control the problem. Contributing to the rat problems are the mild winters, the backyard feeding of birds, and waste management. A recent survey showed that rat numbers are increasing by about 20% each year.

The licensing team handles animal welfare issues such as licensing of the wolves, horse racing and circus acts. One of the most dangerous it would seem to me, is the licensing of the wolves. What started out as a hobby to Tony Highway has evolved into a self-funding, not-for-profit organisation called Wolf Watch UK. The primary function of Wolf Watch UK is as a rescue center for displaced wolves. The organisation is run by volunteers who have dedicated their free time and skills to develop this project for the past ten years. Time did not permit us to check on the licensing and welfare of the wolves. As one must go inside the enclosure with the wolves, this might have been beyond my call of duty.

A tour was arranged at the Ludlow Food Centre, Shropshire's largest purpose-built food emporium. The hall is 4,000 square feet and has eight glass fronted food production units. This facility is new to the area and has an excellent HACCP program in place concerning food safety. They grow and produce their own farm produce and organic specialty foods. They make their own jams and cheeses, pasteurize their milk and have a butcher's shop. George and staff provided an excellent tour, food samples and offered to send me a traditional pigs head with an apple in its mouth for my table center piece this holiday season. Whatever tradition this is, I do not observe that in Iowa; however, Sue's tradition of hanging chocolate pence (coins) on my Christmas tree this year sounds like a brilliant idea, at least the coins will be edible.

The second tour took us to South Shropshire BioWaste Digester Plant, operated by Greenfinch Limited. Kitchen waste and other food waste are being collected from households and businesses and delivered to the plant. The core process of the anaerobic digester is to process and recycle biomass into biofertiliser and compost. Biodegradable waste is separated into a solid fraction and a liquid fraction. The waste passes through the shredder into a conditioning tank on to the buffer tank and then passes to the pasteurisation tank and finally to the storage tank. Liquid digestate is used as a biofertiliser and the solid digestate is used for agriculture soil conditioner or compost for gardens. Another example of use would be a dairy farmer constructing this unit and the digestate state could be used for electricity, heating, liquid fertilizer or bedding. For additional information please check out their web site at www.greenfinch.co.uk.

The outdoor markets, shops and pubs in Ludlow were very charming and could be described as unique. The markets are held on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. They sell wonderful fresh fruit and vegetables, baked goods, beautiful flowers and miscellaneous wares. At the local butcher shops you



can purchase most any kind of meat to include dressed pigeon and various organs of animals. Outside the local butcher shops hang pheasants and rabbits, feathers and furs, insides and all. I was told they have to hang a while to taste better before you dress them out. This of course would be a matter of opinion. At the pubs, it is acceptable to bring your dog inside the premise and tie them up while you indulge in

a beverage or food. The pubs are quite accommodating; they even provide dog dishes for food and water. As I was just an "international customer" without a dog, what could I say? Only guide dogs or patrol dogs are allowed inside a facility in Iowa. Shops are open from 9:00 am or half past 9, until 5:00 pm or half

past 5 during the week and business hours are restricted on Sunday to only 6 hours of operation set by choice of the facility.

As this was my first international trip, to say it was an experience of a lifetime would be an understatement and I have to include a couple of personal highlights. I spent many hours researching and note taking and thought I was very well prepared for my trip. However, the research does not prepare you for everything. I never realized that all 7.7 million people in London run to the train stations at 5:00 pm. I have never had to pay 20 pence or 20 cents to use the loo (toilet) at a train station; in fact I had never been in a train station or ridden on a train prior to this experience. I spent 20 minutes looking for a garbage can at the train station and found out you just place your garbage on the floor. Because of the threat of bombs, there are no garbage cans inside the station. Food was another highlight. I decided to try the "Full English Breakfast" which consists of fried everything: eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, streaky bacon, sausage, bread and black pudding. Black pudding is made with pork fat, pig's blood, cereal, oatmeal and barley. (I could not bring myself to try that). Beans are a favorite in England, what I would consider pork and beans in Iowa. I have never seen so many beans eaten on everything or anything. (I personally do not care for beans for breakfast). The sabbatical exchange was a unique experience, both professionally and personally and I would recommend for all environmental health professionals to have the opportunity to participate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as public health professionals, we must all work together towards the safety of our public and our environment. Where we choose to live and work does not matter because our mission statements all contain the same message:

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health---dedicated to enhancing the health status of our communities through public health initiatives.

Iowa Environmental Health Association---to promote education, influence policy and provide resources to environmental health professionals in order to protect the environment and promote public health.

National Environmental Health Association---to advance the environmental health and protection professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all.

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health---to maintain, enhance and promote improvements in environmental and public health through knowledge, understanding and campaigning.

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors---to advance the profession, science and field of environmental public health through certification, advocacy, education and setting standards.

Our goal is to protect and improve environmental conditions which influence the health and safety of every citizen. As the world around us changes, we must stay prepared. So often it takes a major disaster such as Hurricane Katrina, the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, a food borne illness outbreak, or the threat of a pandemic outbreak to remind us of the reality that we must be

prepared for the worst. Most often we are thought of as the “regulator;” however in reality, we are so much more. An Environmental Health Specialist or Practitioner is an educator, consultant and public relation expert. We must join the world in the fight to ensure our food and the environment remains a safe place to live and work for ourselves, our children and their children. We must seek the opportunity to build lasting international relationships, recognize new opportunities and plan for the future.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge and thank several individuals who assisted and supported me in this endeavor. This was truly a once in a lifetime, unique opportunity in the environmental field to study internationally. I would like to extend a very special thank you to Ann Goodwin who served as my contact/host with the CIEH. She spent many hours making contacts for my visit to the UK, setting up a very detailed agenda and was a very gracious host. Thank you to Rosemary Lee and staff with Wigan Council and to Chris Moss, Sue Allen and staff at South Shropshire District Council, in Ludlow for two very rewarding adventures. I would like to thank David Newsum for presenting the workshop and the transportation to Ludlow.

To my new international colleagues and friends I say thank you for the experience and memories to last a lifetime. Great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave and impossible to forget. We are truly two nations divided by a common language.

I would also like to acknowledge my family, who encouraged and supported me in this endeavor. To my colleagues at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health, my supervisor, Brian Hanft, the director, Ron Osterholm and the Board of Health for the support and encouragement to fulfill this sabbatical exchange. Thank you to the co-sponsors, National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) for their financial support.

