

Robert W. Powitz – General Biographical Sketch

Being a Sanitarian is my profession. So everybody knows who I am and what I am. It's one of those things I absolutely insist on, because the word "Sanitarian" is the title of our profession.

What we call ourselves, you know, in terms of positions [i.e., job titles], is different.

So, my biography is: I'm a Sanitarian. – Bob Powitz

As a 12-year old youth, Bobby Powitz was first introduced into the world of sanitary science as a farm cadet. He was excited to be part of an agricultural training program, as he never really dreamed of being a fireman or policeman like other young boys. This hands-on apprenticeship, chosen because he was too young to obtain working papers, afforded him a pivotal meeting with one of the last of the uniformed sanitarians, and the young New Yorker was immediately intrigued. This encounter proved to be his coming-of-age, and set the foundation for a life-long dedication to the world of environmental health.



A graduate of Stuyvesant High School in New York City, Robert W. Powitz, or Bob, as he was now called, sought higher education to help fulfill his aspirations of working in the sanitary sciences. He received his undergraduate education in agronomy and plant pathology from the State University of New York and the University of Georgia. He immediately passed his first credentialing exam as a Sanitary Inspector, First Grade, and launched his professional career in environmental health as a Sanitarian for the state of New Jersey in 1967. After gaining his entry-level experience covering a range of restaurants, farms and bars in the Metropolitan district area of New Jersey, he went on to earn a Masters in Public Health with a specialty in institutional environmental health from the University of Minnesota. Bob then returned to New Jersey, became licensed as a Health Officer, and started a health department in a small community in the Garden State.

Wanting to upskill his talents so he could actualize more in this line of work, Bob circulated back to the University of Minnesota where he received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in environmental health, with a specialty in environmental microbiology and epidemiology. This program gave the now Dr. Powitz the stimulus to work on more substantive projects in environmental health. He turned to the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) to focus on a post-doctoral project where worked on a Role Delineation Model for the Sanitarian Profession. This was the beginning of his decades-long professional relationship with NEHA.

Following his tenure at NEHA, Bob Powitz worked in academia for over twelve years as the Director of Environmental Health and Safety and Biological Safety Officer at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan; where he also held the title of Adjunct Associate Professor in the College of Engineering. He considers his work at Wayne State to be perhaps his greatest achievement: He built the department and helped it grow, and also helped establish a master's program in hazardous material management.

The lure of Sanitarian field practice led back home to New York, where Dr. Powitz accepted a position to serve as Director of Biological Safety and Environment for the United States Department of Agriculture

at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, a high-containment laboratory and diagnostic facility. Bob's expertise led to rescinding restrictions of entry unto the island; removing all hazardous waste from containment; remediating all island landfills; initiating self-certification of biological safety cabinets using the latest NSF protocols; updating the Island's biological safety manual and overseeing the decontamination of containment facilities to allow for essential reconstruction.

Independence and professional opportunity called out, and in 1984 he established R.W.Powitz & Associates, PC, a professional corporation specializing in environmental and public health, contamination control and safety advisory services to industry, law firms, insurance companies and governmental agencies, where he is currently Principal and Technical Director. In a determined pursuit of environmental health credentials to augment his Sanitarian skills, Bob achieved professional status as a Registered Biosafety Professional and certified as an Environmental Assessor, Environmental Property Assessor, Hazardous Materials Manager, Hazard Control Manager and Water Quality Specialist. Dr. Powitz also holds a Certificate from the North American School of Conservation. With an interest and expertise in institutional health, he is presently using his consultant status and professional expertise to help improve the sanitary conditions in jail facilities in Pennsylvania and mental health facilities in Illinois.

Dr. Powitz was co-author of "Tools for Environmental Health", a popular and regular column on portable instrumentation that appeared in the Journal of Environmental Health. He is on the editorial board of Food Safety Magazine and authored a column featuring regulatory issues for retail food establishments. He also authored columns in American Jails Magazine and Corrections Managers' Report, and is currently a regular contributor to Executive Housekeeping Today. In addition to his writing, he presents well-received tutorials and workshops on contamination control and toxin-free cleaning initiatives; environmental health, safety and professional development for public health, correctional, housekeeping and food production professionals.

Dr. Powitz serves on the NSF International, Council of Public Health Consultants and is chairman of several NSF/ANSI standards development joint committees, including Drinking Water Treatment Units, Biological Safety Cabinets, Plumbing Products Sustainability, Water and Sustainability Terminology among others. He also serves on the Underwriters Laboratories Consumer Advisory Council.

Still connected to his roots in local public health, Bob Powitz currently serves as part-time Health Director for the Town of Franklin in the State of Connecticut. He is licensed as a Registered Sanitarian in five states and holds the NEHA Registration as a Sanitarian, where he is also credentialed as a Certified Professional - Food Safety.

Among his honors, Dr. Powitz is the recipient of the NSF/NEHA Walter F. Snyder Award for achievement in environmental health; the American Academy of Sanitarians' Davis Calvin Wagner Award for excellence as a Sanitarian and advancing public health practice, and the Harry R. H. Nicholas Award from the New Jersey Environmental Health Association. He is the first to hold the title of Diplomate Laureate in the American Academy of Sanitarians. Dr. Powitz is a Diplomate with the American Board of Forensic Engineering and Technology and is a member of Phi Theta Kappa.

The year 2017 marks 50 years since Dr. Robert W. Powitz received his first license as a Sanitarian. He is still working and remains very active in this profession, in public health as a Health Officer, with his private consulting company, authoring articles on environmental health, presenting at state and national conferences, advising and mentoring any professional that will listen (and some that don't!) and volunteering his subject matter expertise in a variety of environmental health related associations and projects. When not enjoying his career as "Mr. Sanitarian", Bob drives around in a restored 1935 Ford, and invests his free time in managing a gun shop, antiques dealer, sometime fisherman and connoisseur of Bob-tinis.

He lives in Connecticut with his lovely wife, Eva, five rescue cats and an aging goldfish named Daphne. Bob has two sons, Andy and George, and two grandsons, Brian and James.

Details of Nominee's Professionalism

Finally, I strongly believe that every regulatory official should present themselves in a professional manner, both in dress and in action. I have made it a habit to wash my hands at the beginning, during and at the end of the inspection, demonstrating a full 20-second wash each time. I may be old fashioned, but I believe that clothes should befit the position. If the inspector's department is that of a professional, the inspector will be professional. – Bob Powitz

Mentoring

- In 1968, Dr. Powitz took a promotion as New Jersey State Department of Health District Sanitarian to Senior Sanitarian with the (then) Department of Institutions and Agencies. He was based at Ancora Psychiatric Hospital and covered the New Lisbon State School and Leesburg Prison. The following year, he was approached by Dr. Oris Blackwell of Rutgers University to help introduce the students in the environmental health class to institutional practice. He did so until 1975 when he became Health Officer when he hosted both the class for a day as well as students who worked with him for a week's tutelage.
- At Wayne State University, Dr. Powitz initiated the first hazardous waste management internship program for undergraduate and graduate students. For 12 years he mentored students from Ferris State University, Environmental Health program; the Gerholz Institute (Ferris adult education), and, St. Clair College in Windsor, Ontario at his Office of Environmental Health and Safety. Several of these students became the doctor's employees and subsequently went on to successful careers in government, industry and hospitals. He also mentored graduate student candidates for the Graduate Certificate and Masters degree for the Department of Engineering, Chemical Engineering Program. This emphasis was on hazardous waste management. Bob was also instrumental in developing the certification exam in hazardous waste management. The Wayne State mentoring



program lasted approximately eight years; with approximately 4 students per year working part time in his department.

- For the past 20 consecutive years, he presented an overview of being a sanitarian to local high school students during professional development day.
- For several years, Dr. Powitz prevailed on the National Environmental Health Association and American Academy of Sanitarians, to host a student colloquium on job opportunities and options at its Annual Educational Conference. He invited participation by environmental health professionals employed by state, county and municipalities, the Uniformed Services, industry and academia. These individuals presented their scope of practice and outlined the job opportunities in their respective agencies. This has resulted in several students finding employment in both traditional and non-traditional public health roles.

Establishing “Sanitarian” as a Recognized Profession

- In 1985, Dr. Powitz, now a Forensic Sanitarian, tried to incorporate as a “Professional Corporation” (PC) with the Michigan Department of Commerce. The petition was rejected based because the Department of Commerce did not recognize the profession. He countered by threatening a lawsuit on behalf of all Registered Sanitarians in the State of Michigan since the state required this profession to sit for a state examination to renew the Sanitarian license annually. The State capitulated with an apology and Bob was granted PC status. He subsequently went through the same exercise in Connecticut and thereby establishing professional name recognition in that state as well.
- At the annual education conference in Orlando, Florida in 1993, there was attempt by some NEHA officers to drop any reference to the term “Registered Sanitarian” from its credentialing program. Bob was one of two Diplomates who drafted, at that conference, a position paper for the Academy strongly opposing this action. The paper was presented to the NEHA Council of Delegates and the proposal was postponed and ultimately defeated.

Support of Professional Credentialing

Dr. Powitz has always supported professional credentialing. During his tenure at Wayne State University, he encouraged his staff to sit for as many professional credentialing examinations as possible, and in so doing, led by example. Therefore, whenever he works in a different political jurisdiction or in areas of environmental health and safety where a specialization credential is available, he pursues that certification, license or registration. (Details on Dr. Powitz’ certifications, licenses and registrations can be found in Appendix III.)

Criteria for Sanitarian Status

As a post-doctoral research associate with the National Environmental Health Association, Dr. Powitz helped research and author the criteria for the Sanitarian profession. He was instrumental in redefining the profession in 1978; this was the first revision of the Sanitarian professional practice criteria since its formal recognition in 1936. By developing a series of questionnaires and sampling over 2,000 NEHA members, he was able to outline the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for an individual to establish the Sanitarian profession as a career. His work resulted in several states ultimately reclassifying the position.

Memorializing the History of the Sanitarian

If food-safety professionals were given one wish, we would unanimously ask that the human species be given a re-evolution, with the dominant gene encoded for the characteristic of habitual and thorough handwashing. – Bob Powitz

Bob developed a PowerPoint presentation on the History of the Sanitarian Profession in which he traced the rise of the profession from the 1840's to the present day. Together with a fellow Diplomate Laureate, he created a PowerPoint presentation on the history of Quarantine and Isolation; which also includes recommendations on sanitarian-initiated programs for health departments. As a result of these two programs, he curated a traveling exhibition of historic artifacts, ephemera and tools used by the Sanitarian profession. This includes a cased Babcock kit from 1870 (with provenance), an inspector's badge and thermometer from the 1920s, water purification devices spanning over a century and a half, early soap and disinfectant dispensers and several turn of the century whiskey adulteration monitoring devices (which Bob found quite interesting, and potentially useful!), for display at affiliate and other group meetings. This has generated quite a bit of interest in further study. Bob continues to share this with NEHA affiliates, professional groups and public health students, with an interest in assuring his collection continues to go on display for the next generation of professionals.



Basic Skills Training for Professionals

My Father was a tool and die maker; he had to buy all of his equipment as do all other trades. Even though I worked for the State and various towns, I had a job to do, and that job required certain equipment. I chose my profession and the tools that go with it. Ours is no different than any other trade. – Bob Powitz

Beginning in 1985, Dr. Powitz, together with Jim Balsamo of Tulane University, developed training modules on basic skills for the sanitarian profession; beginning with instrumentation. The modules developed are listed here:

- An Illustrated History of the Sanitarian Profession
- The Art and Science of Inspections, Audits and Evaluations *
- The Art and Science of Field Sampling *
- Disinfection, Sanitizing and Sterilization: What, How, When for the Sanitarian *
- Tool Time: A Hands-On Field Instrumentation Workshop *
- How to Objectively Evaluate Institutional Environments
- The Art of Writing an Airtight and Skid-proof Field Report *
- Objectively Measuring How Clean is Clean?
- Green Cleaning: A Practical Approach for the Sanitarian
- The Sanitarian as Consultant
- Being an Expert Witness
- The Forensic Sanitarian: A Professional Perspective
- Understanding Environmental Health Risks and their Practical Interpretation
- The Practicality of Using Consensus Standards in Conducting Food, Water and Septic Inspections
- Current Trends and the Future of Environmental Health: An Editorial Perspective from a Few of Us Who've Been There, Done That
- Applied Biological Safety for the Sanitarian
- Quarantine and Isolation: A Brief History and Practical Approaches for the Sanitarian
- The Role of the Sanitarian in Emergency Preparedness and Response
- What is Street HACCP and how is it Used in Retail Food Establishments?
- Understanding pH and Water Activity and Their Use in the Field
- Practical New Environmental Health Strategies for Controlling Norovirus Infections

All of the modules were presented at either a NEHA AEC or as part of an affiliate program. The ones that are marked with an asterisk are basic skill knowledge and have been adapted by several health departments, colleges and industry.

The Instrumentation workshop was the result of a five-year commitment with the Journal of Environmental Health in which he presented new and unique instrumentation to the reader in each edition of the journal. He also conducted three workshops as an AEC preconference program.

Individual Achievements

Get every credential you quality for. – Bob Powitz

Throughout his career, Robert W. Powitz has been steadfast in working to improve environmental health for the communities he represented. As a result, he has accomplished much, and has been recognized for his efforts and accomplishments. Below is an overview of some of his notable achievements:

- As the first licensed Health Officer for the Borough of Ringwood, New Jersey, Dr. Powitz established a full-time health department including environmental health, public health nursing and social work service components. He established a freestanding clinic for children and senior citizens; staffed entirely by volunteers and funded through foundation grants. The most notable of his actions was the elimination of endemic Ascariasis among the infants and children of the indigenous Ramapo Mountain People. As health officer, he sought funding and directed the construction of plumbing and septic systems to eliminate the numerous overflowing pit privies throughout the community. Within one year of starting the project, this parasitic disease was eliminated. In addition, through his actions, he established new criteria for siting and constructing sub-surface sewage disposal systems in areas of steep slopes and glacial till, that met both existing code and new construction standards.
- Bob was part of the first air pollution surveillance team in New Jersey and assisted in closure of several Meadowlands open dump burning sites. Additionally, he served on the first major abatement activity team: "Doremus Avenue Project".
- As New Jersey State District Sanitarian, Bob established housing inspections in Hoboken under the Model Cities Program.
- As institutional sanitarian in New Jersey he established the first nosocomial infection control program in a state hospital.
- He organized the Environmental Health and Safety Office at Wayne State University and served as its first director and biological safety officer for over twelve years. During that time, he established a hazardous waste brokerage at the university, and for five consecutive years, processed in excess of 54 tons of hazardous waste materials that included a solvent recovery and reagent-recycling program. He helped organize the first three successful household hazardous waste collection days in Washtenaw and Wayne Counties, Michigan. He also helped coordinate the efforts in Macomb County to establish a permanent household hazardous waste collection site.
- As Adjunct Associate Professor in the College of Engineering, Wayne State University, Dr. Powitz co-founded the Graduate Certificate and Masters degree programs in Hazardous Materials Management. He taught in that program for eight years and served as Principle Investigator on a government contract to define professional credentialing and educational requirements in environmental management.

- During his tenure at Wayne State, he established the first integrated pest management program for a university, including chemical-free control in housing, selected research facilities and throughout all vivaria. He also orchestrated a comprehensive campus-side rat and pigeon elimination program without the use of persistent pesticides. He regularly conducted training sessions, tutorials and conferences for the Michigan pest control industry.
- He designed and installed the first pyrogen-free water purification system used in a multiple-station, hospital hemodialysis unit. The design prevented febrile reactions, accompanied by nausea that was common among renal patients on dialysis. Dr. Powitz modified a newly developed water-purification system that was used by the semiconductor industry and adopted by two Michigan and one Louisiana hospitals. He presented his design approach at a national conference, which resulted in industry-wide acceptance and subsequent change.
- Dr. Powitz has always supported professional credentialing. During his tenure at Wayne State University, he encouraged his staff to sit for as many professional credentialing examinations as possible, and in so doing, led by example. Therefore, whenever he works in a different political jurisdiction or in areas of environmental health and safety where a specialization credential is available, he pursues that certification, license or registration. Consequently, he holds the following:

Licenses:

State of Connecticut: Registered Sanitarian, #543

State of Michigan: Registered Sanitarian,# 733, and, Certified Pesticide Applicator (expired)

State of New Jersey: Health Officer, # A194; Sanitary Inspector, First Grade, # B-489 (expired); Public Health Laboratory Technician, # 1e-258 (expired); Milk Tester (expired)

State of Ohio: Registered Sanitarian, # 1870 (expired)

Certifications and Registrations:

American Academy of Certified Consultants and Experts Diplomate, # 30

American College of Forensic Examiners: Diplomate: Forensic Technology, # 19025 State

of Pennsylvania: Registered Sanitarian,# 2591

State of California: Registered Environmental Assessor I,# 01983 State

of Connecticut: Notary Public, # 102136

National Environmental Health Association: Registered Sanitarian, # 70095;

Certified Food Safety Professional, # 181

New York State Registry of Sanitarians: Registered Sanitarian, # 00415

National Recreation and Park Association: Certified Playground Inspector,# 4502-0802

American Biological Safety Association: Registered Biological Safety Professional, # 016

Professional Certification Board: Certified Hazard Control Manager, # 1398

Certified Hazardous Materials Manager, # 0506 (expired)

Certified Healthcare Safety Professional, # 0017
National Registry of Environmental Professionals: Registered Environmental Laboratory Analyst, # 8371 (expired); Certified Environmental Auditor, # 623; Registered Environmental Property Assessor, # 1504
Environmental Assessment Association: Certified Environmental Inspector, CEI 9235 (expired)
Association of Construction Inspectors: Certified Construction Inspector, # 40951
Housing Inspection Foundation: Registered Home Inspector, #2580
Water Quality Association: Certified Water Specialist- V

- During his career in public health, Dr. Powitz has received the following professional honors:

Diplomate: American Academy of Sanitarians, Certificate# 336
Diplomate Laureate: American Academy of Sanitarians, Certificate # 001
Davis Calvin Wagner Award, 1996, American Academy of Sanitarians
Harry Bliss Journal Technical Editor's Award, 1999, National Environmental Health Association
Harry R.H. Nicholas Award, New Jersey Environmental Health Association
President's Award, 1990, Academy of Certified Hazardous Materials Managers
Phi Beta Kappa
Who's Who in Science

- Dr. Powitz is an active member in the following organizations:

Academy of Certified Hazardous Materials Managers
American Academy of Sanitarians
American Biological Safety Association
American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists
American Correctional Association
American Jail Association
American Society for Quality
Association for Practitioners in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of Food and Drug Officials
Association of Professional Industrial Hygienists
Claims Providers of America
Connecticut Environmental Health Association
Housing Inspection Foundation
International Association for Food Protection
Mid - Atlantic Biological Safety Association
Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association
National Environmental Health Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Safety Council
Water Quality Association

In addition to all the above, Dr. Powitz was profiled in the January-February Journal of Environmental Health, Profiles in Leadership: The 15 Faces of Environmental Health Leadership.

Contributions to the Betterment of Environmental Health

Way back when I was a puppy sanitarian, I distinctly remember the pride shown by Kenneth Jones, Health Officer of Bloomfield, NJ when he outlined the history of "Don't spit on sidewalk; Bat a rat; Swat a fly; Ban the public drinking cup, and, Out with the common roller towel" ... each a mantra of Dr. Crumbine. – Bob Powitz

A dedicated Sanitarian, Dr. Powitz has spent his entire career working toward elevating the practice of environmental health, and his involvement and achievements in this area are extensive. Highlights of this include:

Accomplishments in Academia

- He organized the Environmental Health and Safety Office at Wayne State University and served as its first director and biological safety officer for over twelve years. During that time, he established a hazardous waste brokerage at the university, and for five consecutive years, processed in excess of 54 tons of hazardous waste materials that included a solvent recovery and reagent-recycling program. He helped organize the first three successful household hazardous waste collection days in Washtenaw and Wayne Counties, Michigan. He also helped coordinate the efforts in Macomb County to establish a permanent household hazardous waste collection site.
- As Adjunct Associate Professor in the College of Engineering, Wayne State University, Dr. Powitz co-founded the Graduate Certificate and Masters Degree programs in Hazardous Materials Management. He taught in that program for eight years and served as Principle Investigator on a government contract to define professional credentialing and educational requirements in environmental management.
- During his tenure at Wayne State, he established the first integrated pest management program for a university, including chemical-free control in housing, selected research facilities and throughout all vivaria. He also orchestrated a comprehensive campus-side rat and pigeon elimination program without the use of persistent pesticides. He regularly conducted training sessions, tutorials and conferences for the Michigan pest control industry.

Hazardous Waste Management

While working at Wayne State University, Dr. Powitz was appointed by the Wayne County Commissioners to serve on the Hazardous Waste Facility Site Review Board. The activities of this board were the first in the State of Michigan to address the concerns of the public in permitting the construction of a waste reclamation facility abutting a residential neighborhood. Consequently, a precedent was established in Michigan to protect the public from perceived hazards and ensure maintenance of property values and quality of life.

Dr. Powitz organized one of the first hazardous waste management programs for colleges and universities and presented this at the National Safety Council College Safety Association meetings. Together with Macomb County, headed by Steve Tackitt and Washtenaw County, Michigan, they collectively held the FIRST household hazardous waste collection day in Ann Arbor. Together they organized three additional annual collection events until the local governments organized their own. As a result of this program, an outreach program was established that offered services to local schools along with developing micro and safe school chemistry experiments.

At Wayne State University, the hazardous waste program resulted in the collection of 54 tons of waste per year. To reduce volume and minimize actual waste disposal, Bob Powitz created a recycling program where a list of all useable chemicals for any school in Michigan was published and built a large batch distillation program to reclaim histology waste solvent, as well as a small batch ultra-distillation program for reclaiming high-purity solvents. He helped build a laboratory to characterize our waste and verify purity of reclaimed chemicals.

An offshoot of the hazard waste activities was the formation of a Graduate Certificate Program and Masters in Chemical Engineering. He was appointed to the rank of Adjunct Associate Professor in the College of Engineering and offered most of the introductory survey courses. As such, Bob carried a full teaching load. In addition, he established Wayne State as the regional testing site for credentialing Certified Hazardous Materials Managers and served as the examination proctor for eight years.

Pest Control

Dr. Powitz established an in-house pest control program for the NJ Department of Institutions and Agencies and later on at Wayne State University. At WSU, he initiated integrated pest management practices and developed new pest control protocols with the laboratory animal husbandry program. This became the training area for pest control technicians who intended to serve medical vivaria, animal shelters and livestock farms.

Institutions and Infection Control

- For two years, Dr. Powitz was the staff epidemiologist at Mercy Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. During his tenure, he was able to identify the multiple causality of post-Cesarean Section nosocomial infections. By changing traffic patterns within the delivery room, designing modifications to the air handling system, and improving overall sanitation, he was able to reduce the post C-section nosocomial infection rate from an average of 19% to less than 3%. His

modifications and procedural changes were adapted by all hospitals in the chain.

- Bob eliminated Ascariasis in a population of children among the Ramapo Mountain People, and for the first time, ensured 100% participation in a childhood disease immunization program. He also coordinated health education activities to target early intervention of an unusually high rate of diabetes mellitus among the Ramapo people (approximately 40% of the population are effected). Consequently, many of the devastating effects of this disease were prevented. Although the actual impact on the population longevity had not been established, direct medical cost savings were demonstrated.
- Dr. Powitz was one of the original contributors to the 1976 American Public Health Association's *Standards for Health Services in Correctional Institutions*. He has since authored numerous papers to provide guidance in assessing these standards to meet with current public health practice. He has referenced these standards on numerous occasions in court to improve the public health within several larger correctional systems. Most notably he was instrumental in improving conditions in the following correctional systems: New York City; Madison County, Alabama; City of Philadelphia, and, in the states of Rhode Island, Vermont, South Dakota and Michigan.

Contamination Control

Dr. Powitz was the first sanitarian to work with clean rooms and the semiconductor industry; specifically in developing cleaning techniques and ultra-pure water reclamation.

He developed a statistically accurate ATP sampling protocol for the Integrated Control and Measurement program that is now used in professional housekeeping. Together with three professional sanitarians, he developed a program that defines levels of cleanliness using qualitative observations on a matrix; resulting in a quantitative measurement that can be used for QA/QC/QI. The sampling is based upon MIL-STD-105E that yields repeatable data.

Voluntary Standards

Food safety can be made exciting and enjoyable. We just have to remember to sell it like we would a valued consumer product and relate the science to something that is understandable and commonplace. I salt all of my presentations with cartoons and a smattering of potty humor. Students never forget. – Bob Powitz

In 1967, as a District Sanitarian with the New Jersey State Health Department, Dr. Powitz was assigned the task of developing a plan review program for new restaurants and food processing facilities. At that time, few guidelines existed. He therefore became familiar with the appropriate NSF voluntary

standards and used them to justify equipment selection and placement. Consequently, he was responsible for assisting local health departments to incorporate these new crafted guidelines into their food service inspection program. Subsequently, as local Health Officer, he incorporated the mandate for equipment listed under these voluntary standards into his local restaurant ordinance.

Professional Publications

Although the column ended after five years, we have neither lost our penchant nor predilection to play with our professional sanitarian's toys. We still try to acquire the latest portable instruments and use them (as well as abuse them) during our consulting field work – Bob Powitz

- Dr. Powitz was the first to co-edit and publish a quarterly magazine for campus and school safety professionals. *Current Topics*, published by the campus Safety Association addressed timely topics in environmental health, safety and security. This quarterly magazine was the first of its kind to collect relevant articles on school safety and health issues for distribution throughout the United States and Canada.
- He also initiated, and is the co-author of "Tools for Environmental Health", a regular and permanent column in the *Journal of Environmental Health*. Together with his colleague, James J. Balsamo, Jr., he introduced new technologies and portable instrumentation to the Sanitarian Profession. The column, first published in April 1997, established several new and innovative methods for calibration and validation of field instrumentation, in addition to presenting new and unique uses of commonly used tools. He also initiated several hands- on instrumentation workshops for the National Environmental Health Association's Annual Educational Conference and several affiliate association conferences.
- Since 1996, Dr. Powitz has been the author of a regular feature that appears six times a year in *Corrections Managers' Report* The column, entitled "The Corrections Advisor" is the only publication in the Correctional Industry devoted entirely to current issues in environmental health and safety of incarcerated persons. Through this column, he was able to establish several new standards, including self-inspection, criteria for out-of-order cells, rating living space, security lighting in living areas, and, barbershop sanitation. ·
- Dr. Powitz has authored several articles for the Clean Room industry on control of biological contaminants, biological safety and the selection and use of disinfectants and sanitizers. He has also conducted numerous tutorials over the past five years on issues relating to the sanitary sciences in clean room applications for the pharmaceutical, medical device, bio- processing, and, food industries. His tutorials and publications have introduced public health concepts, particularly environmental health, safety and sanitation, into the art of ultra-clean manufacturing.
- Since 2003, Dr. Powitz has authored "the Sanitarians File" in the publication "Food Safety Magazine", to discuss areas of interest in improving food safety and sanitation and applicable

prevention techniques. In addition, he also serves on the Editorial Board of this magazine.

- Since establishing his practice as a Forensic Sanitarian, Dr. Powitz has given numerous talks to lawyer and insurance groups where he introduces the art of forensic environmental health and safety to their profession. In doing so, he raised the awareness of using a Sanitarian in public health litigation support activities and established a new title and function for fellow professionals who serve as expert witnesses.
- Joining with many other leaders in the public health field, Dr. Powitz served on the Subject Matter Expert Panel, which led to the publication of the pivotal Environmental Health Competency Project in 2001.

Active Involvement and Contributions to NEHA and Affiliate Association Activities

A lot of kids are discouraged when they get into public health because they don't do anything but inspect. And then it's only one thing, whether it's the lead program, radon, restaurants, or septic tanks. If that was all I had to do, I don't know whether I would have stayed in the regulatory community very long. – Bob Powitz

Dr. Robert Powitz began his active involvement and decades-long relationship with the National Environmental Health Association in his post-doctoral year. As a research associate at NEHA Headquarters, he worked on a role delineation model for Sanitarians, verified the KSAs for the profession and defined the job-ladder based upon technician/technologist role within the profession.



On a local level, Bob began serving in the New Jersey affiliate, then called the New Jersey Association of Sanitarians (now the New Jersey Environmental Health Association), when Secretary in 1969-1970.

Since 1978, Bob has served as a reviewer for the Journal of Environmental Health (JEH). He also initiated, and was the co-author of "Tools for Environmental Health", a regular column on portable instrumentation that appeared in the JEH, for which he won the Harry Bliss Journal Technical Editor's Award in 1999. The authors tried to pattern the articles similar to Consumer Reports; the good, bad and the ugly were discussed —without incurring the wrath of those who may have been panned. Interestingly, as a result of these evaluations, several companies incorporated the changes suggested over the years into their instruments' designs. The "Best of the Best" tools for the food safety inspection series is one of the most requested resources that Dr. Powitz receives from other Sanitarians. In addition, this series was incorporated into an instrumentation workshop which was conducted for a number of years at AEC preconference programs.

Bob is a valuable and well-received speaker, who has shared his expertise and mentored many professionals during NEHA Annual Education Conference. He has given of his time to present “Instrumentation Workshop for Environmental Health Professionals at three NEHA Annual Education Conferences. He was invited to give a two day workshop entitled “Instrumentation for Environmental Assessment” for the Navy Environmental Health Conference. Bob also presented a one day workshop for NEHA entitled “Environmental Consulting in the Private Sector”. More recently, he provided an Environmental Health Master Class on Isolation and Quarantine at the AEC. Always connected to his first affiliate, NJEHA, his recent presentations include “How to Become a Consultant”, “the History of the Sanitarian,” and “21 Days of Fear and Loathing: The Art and Science of Quarantine” Never satisfied just to attend a conference, he is known to actively participate, share, present and encourage other professionals to do the same. He has presented and moderated in many different technical sections and his active participation in the conference goes back several decades.

As mentioned in previously in this nomination, Bob Powitz has created an extensive collection of environmental health skills modules, that have been presented at either a NEHA AEC or as part of an affiliate program. He continues to take these presentations to NEHA affiliates and other organizations upon request.

Dr. Powitz combined his interest in antiques and Sanitarian History by curating a traveling exhibition of historic artifacts, ephemera and tools used by the Sanitarian profession for display at affiliate and other group meetings. The New Jersey Environmental Health Association hosted this exhibit in 2015 to rave reviews, and has resulted in further requests for displays of the Sanitarian tools.

For many years, Bob has served as Section Chair, then Technical Advisor to NEHA in the area of Institutional Health.

Also, as mentioned earlier, Bob has been an active and vocal champion for mentoring activities for students and new professionals at the AEC.

He continues to improve his knowledge of public and environmental health by attending the NEHA Annual Educational Conference for decades, and attends many affiliate conferences when his schedule allows.

Other Public Health Activities

The answers we have found only serve to raise a whole set of new questions. In some ways we feel we are as confused as ever, but we sincerely believe we are confused on a higher level and about more important things. – Bob Powitz

In his extensive catalogue of work, Robert W. Powitz’s career illustrates the role of the Sanitarian both inside and outside of a public health department. Highlights of his involvement outside of a health department include:

During his career which spans 50-years, Dr. Powitz has worked with community interest groups, the

legal profession; the water purification, semiconductor, pharmaceutical, food and healthcare industries, in addition to his public service. His strengths are in the technical aspects of public and environmental health, versus that of administration and finance. Consequently, he is often summoned to participate on various committees and panels as an expert in his field, and brings to the table an ability to translate technical issues into layman's terminology.

Panels, Committees, and Commissions

- In 1996, he was appointed to the Town of Old Saybrook Water Pollution Commission as one of its original members. The Committee was charged to develop a program to comply with a consent decree issued against the town of Old Saybrook by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. For the past five-years, he has provided the Town with technical assistance. He was instrumental in closing the town septage lagoons and submitting a regional sewer-avoidance plan that included alternative technologies, ground water monitoring and small community-based water treatment plants.
- Dr. Powitz has served as part-time health director for the Town of Westbrook, Connecticut, a shoreline community with numerous seasonal dwellings and an economic base in tourism. During his tenure, he has increased staffing and enacted strict enforcement of sub-surface, sewage disposal codes, regulations and standards as part of a sewer avoidance project. He has also been aggressive in improving the shellfish-bed protection program, food service sanitation and playground safety. Most recently, he has spearheaded a project that is aiding the community to dealing with an abandoned and heavily contaminated industrial property.
- Dr. Powitz served on numerous panels and multi-disciplinary committees as an expert in environmental health and safety, to evaluate living conditions in correctional, mental health and other long-term facilities. Because of these collaborative efforts, consent decrees were averted in the states of Illinois, Pennsylvania and Vermont. Existing consent decrees were adjudicated or modified in Alabama, District of Columbia, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and South Dakota. Within the past year, Dr was also asked to serve as an expert witness by the U.S. Department of Justice, to assist in its jail and prison litigation activities.

Standards and Procedures

- He has been an active participant with several National Sanitation Foundation standards committees. He currently is on the Council of Public Health Consultants; Chairman of the NSF Joint Committee on Plastics, and serves on the NSF Joint Committee for Drinking Water Treatment Units as a representative of the National Environmental Health Association. He was part of the original committees to develop standards for Ultraviolet Light Decontamination Units, and Flexible Membrane Liners. He currently also serves on the NSF Joint Committee on Biohazard Cabinetry.

- Several years ago, he prevailed on Dr. Nina McClellan, who was the President of NSF, to establish the Biohazard Cabinet Field Certifier Accreditation Program and he helped draft the first policy and procedures document that made this program possible. The success and acceptance of this program has dramatically improved the quality and standards of the businesses involved in field certification of biological safety cabinetry, and enhanced the professionalism of their

accredited personnel. Moreover, it has resulted in enhanced safety of the clinician and researcher, particularly where this equipment is used as a primary barrier against contagion.

- Dr. Powitz is the only Environmental Health representative currently serving on the Underwriter Laboratories Consumer Advisory Council. He has been on the Council for the past eleven years. The Council serves as an advisory body to review standards of consumer goods and provide comment on ergonomics, ease of operation for the physically impaired, and, prevention of unintentional injuries. He is also an active member of the Child Safety Committee, and serves on the following standards committees: Safety for Household Electric Ranges UL858, and, Infrared Thermometers Intended for Food Safety UL2333.
- He is a member of the American Society for Quality and teaches the use and application of ANSI/ASQ Z1.4-1993 standard: *Sampling Procedures for Inspection by Attributes* to audit teams in the corrections, food service and clean room industries. He has also uses this Standard to draft FDA pre-validation sanitation and housekeeping protocols.
- Since 1980, Dr. Powitz has used and interpreted the CDC/NIH Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories recommended advisory standards in his role as Biological Safety Officer for Wayne State University, Henry Ford Hospital, and, the USDA Plum Island Animal Disease Center. At Plum Island, he used these standards to rewrite the Biological Safety Manual and establish scientifically sound protocols for visitors and goods entering and leaving the Island's high containment laboratory.

Addition Professional Writing

- Dr. Powitz brings his Sanitarian writings to other professions. He is published in trade and professional journals such as the Journal of Air and Waste Management Association, Ultra Pure Water and American Society of Civil Engineers. In addition, he authored a regular column in American Jails between 2004 and 2007, writes for the Corrections Managers' Report, all focusing on topical issues in public and environmental health and safety specific to each journal's specific professional lens.

Correctional Public Health

- Dr. Powitz is one of only a few private consultants in biosafety, ultra-pure water and correctional / jail environmental health. He works for both plaintiffs and defendants in various cases.

- He has served as an expert witness on correctional public health on behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and in the following jurisdictions: First, Second, Third, Fourth, Sixth and eleventh Federal Circuit Courts of Appeals; the states of Alabama, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island,

South Dakota and Vermont; and the cities of Baltimore, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia and Washington DC.

Employment History

When I first started as a state sanitarian in the mid 1960s, my professional efforts, as those of my colleagues, were largely centered on the dairy, meat, poultry and egg, and seafood producers. Among other things, we monitored pasteurization at dairy plants; reviewed retort temperature logs at canneries; checked meats for fat content and adulteration; took water samples and conducted sanitary surveys of shellfish beds; graded eggs at egg breakers; and looked for insect infestations in stored granary products. – Bob Powitz

Robert W. Powitz' extensive and wide-ranging career as a Sanitarian spans 50-years. A copy of his curriculum vitae can be found in Appendix VII.

Education History

When you fall in love with a profession, you want to do everything you possibly can in it. So what I eventually did was overeducate myself. – Bob Powitz

Robert W. Powitz' education spans a number of well-respected academic institutions. A listing of his education can be found in Appendix VIII.

Reference Letters

"We really need to rethink a lot of what we do. And how we do it." – Bob Powitz

Many professionals provided letters of reference, in support of Dr. Powitz' Walter S. Mangold nomination. Ten of these letters are in Appendix IX. These include:

Nationally recognized leaders in the field:

1. Larry Gordon, Mangold Award Recipient, MS, MPH, DHL
2. James J. Balsamo, Jr., MS, MPH, MHA, RS, CP-FS, CHMM, Past-President NEHA
3. Stan Hazan, NSF

Additional reference letters:

4. Ron Grimes, RS, MPH, DAAS, Past-President NEHA
5. Jim Hunter, Senior Project Engineer Labconco
6. CAPT John Leffel, REHS, MPH, Senior Advisor NPS, Office of Public Health
7. Gary P. Noonan, RS, MPA, DLAAS, American Academy of Sanitarians
8. John P. Shanahan, Vice President/Co-Founder, GenEon Technologies
9. Stephen R. Tackitt, RS, MPH, DAAS, Past-President NEHA
10. Barbara VanRenterghem, Ph.D., Editorial Director, Food Safety Magazine

Some highlights from these letters of recommendation:

Stephen R. Tackitt RS, MPH, DAAS

Dr. Powitz is all about the sanitarian as a professional within the field of Environmental Health. He desires and seeks the highest standards, improved practices and utilization of the most advances equipment by sanitarians. His support of the highest ethical conduct by the sanitarian is unequalled. To that end, he has been a leader in the support of the students within Environmental Health curriculums.

The curriculum vita of Dr. Powitz is both extensive and broad. Many might be satisfied with half of his accomplishments but not Bob. He is like the Duracell battery bunny – he just keeps going and going. Dr. Powitz also gives back to the profession in unseen ways.

CAPT John Leffel, REHS, MPH

I have worked with [Bob] on committee topics very closely. He is in my opinion one of the top performers and highly knowledgeable practitioners of environmental and public health. He is expertly versed on a varied number of topics and is routinely sought as a subject matter expert.

Larry Gordon, MS, MPH, DHL Mangold Award recipient

I knew and worked with Walter Mangold and have no doubt he would be pleased for Bob Powitz to receive the prestigious Mangold Award. Bob is truly Mr. Sanitarian and fully embodies all the professional qualities of a real Sanitarian. I know of no one in the current Sanitarian field of practice who exceeds Bob in professionalism as a Sanitarian. ...Bob Powitz would add considerable luster to the Mangold Award.

Stan S. Hazan, MPH

Bob is neither afraid nor shy about challenging the status quo in environmental health, including what we do or how we do it. He often serves as a catalyst to initiate dialog on an EH issue that attracts others into the conversation, per his articles in NEHA Journal or industry trade association magazines. His leadership in this regard is valuable and it has served to elevate the profile of the profession.

James J. Balsamo, Jr., MS, MPH, MHA, RS, CP-FS, CHMM, CHSP, CSP, DLAAS

Bob was always thinking of innovative ideas and products and how to use them to assist environmental health professionals in their work activities. He would have a spurious synaptic discharge one evening and by the next day had developed a cogent and well thought out plan to execute his idea. When he came up with these ideas, I would always tell him as Stan Laurel would say to Oliver Hardy, "this is another fine mess you've gotten us into." Bob always looks at issues through a different prism than most people. .. He is an intelligent, motivated and well respected Professional Sanitarian who raises the level of professionalism in all environmental health practitioners with whom he comes in contact.

Ron Grimes, RS, MPH, DAAS

I was rising through the ranks at my health department. Bob encouraged (insisted) that I should submit an application and paper for peer review to become a member of the AAS. I was aware of the AAS/NEHA sponsorship of student scholarships but really had no idea how much behind the scenes work was being done until I actually was accepted as a Diplomate. Bob took me under his wing as he did with many young Diplomates in the AAS.

Dr. Powitz was also very active in keeping the profession of Sanitarian as an active term. When everyone else was moving toward the more popular term of Environmental Health professional, Dr. Powitz was the one who successfully pointing out that the only professional designation under the state professional classifications was "sanitarian".

Barbara VanRenterghem, Ph.D., Food Safety Magazine:

Not only has [Bob] served as a mentor for others seeking input about sanitation issues through his writing and suggestions for article topics to cover in the magazine, but he has always delivered cutting-edge content on sanitation to the food industry as a whole.

Jim Hunter, Senior Project Engineer, Labconco Corporation:

I met Dr. Powitz (Bob) in the early 1980's as a graduate student, where he became my advisor. While working for him as a student in Wayne State University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety, Bob admonished me to learn and understand more than just what my textbooks and lectures had taught me; Paraphrasing what he once told me: "Be more than just a technician, become a technologist." It is a lesson that has served me well; I would not have the career nor the accomplishments I have earned without it.

John P. Shanahan, Vice President/Co-, GenEon Technologies:

Dr. Powitz provides the best example of an advocate for honesty in execution of proper procedures and habits in the environmental space. Dr. Powitz has a unique commitment to helping the customer not only understand the policies of public health but the "why" these procedures and steps must be taken. Where so many professionals succumb to the trend of the day or shift from accepted documented procedures, Dr. Powitz steadfastly teaches, educates and training in the practices that the user can relate to, understand and have results from. This consistency of professional behavior sets Dr. Powitz apart from all others in his commitment to education coupled with results.

Gary P. Noonan, RS, MPA, DLAAS:

In looking at past recipients of the award I feel that Bob has distinguished himself by the work that he is done both Locally and Nationally and the many people that he has influenced over the years as a supervisor, teacher and mentor qualify him for this prestigious award.

Miscellaneous

*I've never been afraid to be the kid who tells the emperor his ass is showing.
And by gosh, it was a lot of fun! – Bob Powitz*

In addition to being “Mr. Sanitarian,” there are other parts to Bob Powitz’ life that helps give you a picture of the total person. Highlights of his “extra-curricular” work are below.

RW Powitz became a member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks on February 27, 1969. His sponsor was Richard Goslow, Health Officer of West Caldwell and a member of Livingston Lodge #1855. In 1978, Bob was the organizer of a handicap scout troop #325 in Ann Arbor Michigan as an officer in the Ann Arbor Lodge #325. They won most events at the Jamborees!

When Bob moved to CT, he joined the Westbrook Lodge #1784 (2,000 members) and became its Exalted Ruler in 2000-2001. For the past 21 years, he’s been the chairman of the Red Cross Blood drive at the Lodge. The Lodge runs 6 drives a year and collects on the average of 100 pints of whole blood at each drive. Once a year, he holds a dedicated drive, collecting blood in the name of a childhood leukemia patient or heart transplant recipient ... among others.



Westbrook Elks Lodge #1784

Receives Blood Drive Collection Center Award from American Red Cross

Photograph and story by Richard Siedzik Westbrook Elks public relations

Pictured are from left to right Robert W. Powitz lodge member and PER and ARC volunteer; Glenn Vallee Exalted Ruler Lodge 1784, Steve Levinson ARC and Brian Young ARC and lodge member.

With a partner, he started Terry Plum's in 1994. The partner moved to TN in 1999, and he has run Terry Plum's on his own since then. Terry Plum's is a fully licensed firearms dealership that specializes in antique and vintage military firearms and conducting appraisals. Terry Plum's is also used for antique sales at two antiques malls where he displays railroad, military, marine, construction and barn kerosene lanterns; antique watches and firearms; fine art and vintage prints, and, antique scientific equipment.



Terry Plum's also has active involvement with political affairs, youth shooting sports activities including safety instruction as well as conservation land acquisition.

As part of Dr. Powitz' activities in antiques, he managed to amass a sizeable collection of Public Health materials of historic significance including books (many are first-edition), prints, engravings, letter and quarantine placards, as well as historical journals including vol 1, No 1 of The Sanitarian and the APHA Sanitarian dating to 1870; Health inspector and sanitarian badges; antique and vintage field equipment used by sanitarians; antique water purification devices and various unique items and ephemera including a Crumbine brick, etc. The collection is available to any environmental health related organization (NEHA, AFDO) for display at their conferences at no charge. All items are thoroughly researched and he serves as docent.



He regularly give talks to high school, Rotary, parent/teacher and literary groups on various environmental health topics including awareness of disease prevention, the professional sanitarian and role of health departments and industry in maintaining a healthy environment.

Finally, he is a partner in the Essex Automobile Club, LLC, an organization of antique, classic and special interest automobile owners. They hold one major show a year and two 'gatherings' where the entire proceeds benefit our local women's shelter.



The 1935 Ford model. And the 1942 Sanitarian model.