



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

October 2015

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR....

Shortly after the Butte fire in Calaveras County was contained, the California State Office of Emergency Services put out a mutual aid request for 8 Environmental Health Specialists with Hazmat Incident Response experience to assist Calaveras County Environmental Health specialists with damage assessment of residential homes and outbuildings affected or destroyed by the fire. Calaveras Environmental Health staff were overwhelmed with assessing hazardous material risks for the 475 structures, 343 outbuildings, 45 structures, and 70,868 acres that had been destroyed (cdfdata.fire.ca.gov) over the course of three weeks.

A request for mutual aid is initiated by the county that has experienced a disaster and is in need of assistance. The request is sent to their County Office of Emergency Services (OES) who then forwards the request to the California State OES. Following correct authorization procedures is critical to ensure reimbursement will be made to the county supplying assistance. In this instance, counties that responded to Calaveras' request included San Joaquin County, Los Angeles County, Sacramento County and El Dorado County.



Hazardous Materials at burn site Calaveras County

ments Department's first request for mutual aid assistance by a neighboring county and the approval responses from the Sacramento County OES and Val Siebal, Director, were measured and decisive. Two volunteers from the Environmental Compliance Division were on the way to San Andreas within 48 hours to receive instruction from the Calaveras County Operations Director, Jason Boezter.

Sacramento County's Environmental Specialists, Kevin Smith and Doug Osborn, were paired up with environmental specialists from Calaveras County to



Burned site Butte Fire Calaveras County.

document hazardous materials risks at all the fire affected properties in the Butte fire radius. Types of environmental hazards present after a fire may include asbestos, copper chrome arsenate from treated timber, farm chemicals, gasoline, refrigeration coolant, exposed wells (both active and abandoned), that may pose a danger to humans and animals and compromised septic systems that could potentially

This was the Environmental Manage-

- County Board of Supervisors**
- Phil Serna, 1st District
 - Patrick Kennedy, 2nd District
 - Susan Peters, 3rd District
 - Roberta MacGlashan, 4th District
 - Don Nottoli, 5th District
 - Bradley Hudson, County Executive
 - Paul G. Lake, Chief Deputy County Executive, Countywide Services
 - Val F. Siebal, Director, Environmental Management Department

contaminate groundwater.

The first two volunteers finished their assignments in Calaveras County within 2 weeks. Another mutual aid request was sent out by Calaveras County to assist by overseeing the hazardous material clean up and removal by contractors hired by the California State Department of Toxic Substances

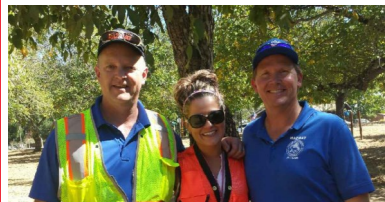
Control. Two Sacramento County Environmental Health Specialists, Kevin Smith and Brion McGinness, were approved to respond to this request. The cleanup will include ground scraping and removal of toxic material such as contaminated ash and soil, refrigerators, damaged storage tanks and remains of cars. Other organizations that were

onsite to provide emergency repair and aid were PG & E, Samaritans Purse and the Red Cross.

Butte Fire Deployment

By Kevin Smith

I received a call from John Elkins, my supervisor, regarding the possibility of two IR Team members being deployed to Calaveras County to do hazard assessments on the



Kevin Smith, Erica Burris, Doug Osborn

burned properties throughout the area in answer to a mutual aid request. My reply was something like “Absolutely”!! After an amazing display of teamwork in getting all the necessary approvals, the very next morning, my coworker Doug Osborn, and I were off Calaveras County Environmental Health in San Andreas, CA.

Upon arrival, we met with Agency Administrator Jason Boetzer, Erica Burris, our old friend (and former EMD employee) and numerous others. We would be joined in the coming days by other outside county staff also supplying aid. A true mutual aid effort. Our mis-

sion was to split up into teams of two, and using Cal Fire maps, visit all properties in Calaveras County which had been affected by the fire. We were to assess these properties for hazards, whether that meant hazardous materials/wastes, burned septic systems, compromised water wells or any other hazards.

What we observed is hard to describe in these few short paragraphs. Areas of complete devastation. Home after burned-out home reduced to piles of ashes and tin roofs. Once incredible, scenic properties, now barren landscapes of charred trees and concrete foundations. Seeing so many burned homes, and in some cases being at the property when the owners were seeing it for the first time was very emotional, but we had to persevere and just continue on with our assigned mission.

Everyone we met had a story about where they were, when they got evacuated, what they saw, and how they got out. We talked to people who had stayed and fought the fire with 100 foot walls of flame around them and to people who

had only minutes to flee from their



property. Everyone had a story, and we listened to many.

For 12 straight days I went up into the backroads of Calaveras County. We developed a very good system for assessing the properties, and were able to complete 12 to 15 assessments per day. Not too bad when you consider most all of the road signs and address numbers had burned. We completed a checklist for each property we visited, and noted all visible hazards. The data collected by the teams would be compiled and given to the State for the next phase of cleanup.

This was an incredibly rewarding experience for me, both personally and professionally. I made some real friends down there and got to know Calaveras County very well.

Butte Fire Mutual Aid

Response by Doug Osborn

On September 19, 2015 I responded to a Mutual Aid request for Calaveras County due to the devastating



Kevin Smith and Doug Osborn

fire known as the Butte Fire. The fire started on September 9th in Amador

County and entered Calaveras County near Boston Yale Ranch. From there the fire moved swiftly through many local communities.

The most profound thing I heard was from the Fire Chief of Mokelumne Hill, or “Moke Hill,” as locals call it. The town of Mokelumne Hill was spared from this fire due mostly in part to a fire break made about three years ago that slowed the fires advance to the town. During the Town Hall on Wednesday September 30th, he stated that, in Mokelumne Hill, “It’s not over. We got lucky. Our neighbors were not. We still have extremely dry conditions and 100 years of fuel. Get out there and help your neighbors if

you can.”

Our job was to assess burned properties for hazards related to Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste. Two people made up each team. We were paired with someone from Calaveras County who knew their way around. Once on-site we would document the address and assessor’s parcel number (APN) and note the hazards. Hazards included gas and propane cylinders, automobiles, fuel storage containers, lead acid batteries, burned tires, paint cans, aerosol cans and the like. We would also photo-document each site.

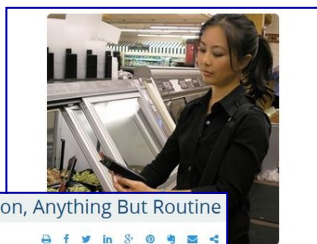
If we came across any residents we would identify ourselves and explain the cleanup options for their property. Because a Public Health Emergency was declared by the County Public Health Officer a minimum cleanup standard must be met before residents can rebuild. To aid with the cleanup, the Dept. of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and Cal Recycle will clean up the property to the required clean up standard at no cost to the property owner. Residents that want to “go-it-alone” may do so but

must still meet the minimum cleanup standard and must provide documentation where the ash, hazardous materials and hazardous waste was disposed of.



Exposed well

I can say with confidence that the human spirit is alive and well in Calaveras County. The best part of this experience was meeting with the people of Calaveras County. County Staff were welcoming, residents were friendly despite losing everything they had, volunteer’s energy was boundless and the sense of pride in the community prevailed over adversity. Sure there is more hard work to come but I have no doubt in my mind that Calaveras County will recover from this emergency, rebuild what was lost and become a stronger community than they already are.



Restaurant Inspection, Anything But Routine

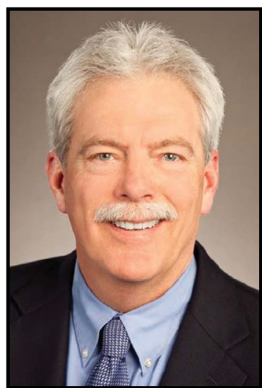


The University of Washington (UW) School of

Public Health in Seattle Washington has asked permission to use photos of Environmental Specialist Shirley Fong, taken by Elena Drobenyuk, in a webinar they are producing. UW is known for its prestigious and rigorous School of Public Health. Thanks to Shirley and Elena for the top notch photos that will be used to train other health professionals. And, thank you to **Brenda Bongiorno**, EMD’s Public Information Officer for her excellent EMD news coverage and inclusion of these pictures and article in the Sacramento County News which is widely read and was spotted by staff at the University of Washington, Seattle.

JOHN ROGERS RETIRES AFTER 33 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FIELD

John Rogers retires this month from the Environmental Management Department (EMD)



after 33 years of extraordinary service in the field of environmental health. He has served as the Environmental Health Division Chief of EMD since 2006 and has held an active leadership role in developing guidelines for the implementation of new California laws pertaining to the disclosure of nutritional information at chain restaurants, the artificial transfat ban, cottage food and food handler cards.

John grew up in southern California in urban Orange County. His father's company had season tickets to the Dodgers so John spent many a summer evening watching them play at Dodger stadium. He's still a big Dodgers fan although, when pressed, will concede a fondness for the Giants.

He received his bachelors degree in biology from Northern Arizona University (NAU) and his master's degree in biology from Humboldt State University. John met his wife-to-be in chemistry class at NAU where they were both part of a small study group (who says studying has to be tedious?) and they have two terrific grown children. His first post graduate job was with a private company in San Diego as a biologist doing marine research but a change in profession led him to Mendocino County in Northern California in 1982. He obtained his Registered Environmental Health Specialist license in 1984 and he has been impacting the environmental health field ever since. John has intentionally passed on his passion to encourage and educate those in the environmental health field to understand the global picture of food sustainability, food safety and access to safe foods.

John plans on spending some quality time with family and friends, hiking, skiing, playing tennis, traveling and practicing yoga. EMD wishes John all the best and will miss him greatly.

Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) received the **California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Merit Award** for an innovative program to identify and properly close abandoned water wells which are a hazard and a potential source of groundwater contamination. This program uses a database management system with integrated GIS mapping along with public outreach to identify and properly address abandoned wells that pose a threat to groundwater quality and are a falling-in hazard to people and animals. As of June 2015, more than 770 abandoned wells have been identified.

Example of GIS Map



EC Division offered 2 **Underground Storage Tank Workshops** in September. During the workshops, EMD staff assisted 4 people in submitting their Underground Storage Tank forms electronically through either the EMD web portal or the California Environmental Reporting System.

Food Safety Education Classes

There were 5 onsite and 2 off site Food Safety Education classes conducted in September 2015, with a total of 93 participants representing 21 facilities. Three classes were conducted in English and 3 in Spanish and 1 in Cantonese.

Hazardous Material Plan Workshops

The Environmental Management Department offered 2 Hazardous Material Plan Portal Workshops during September, 2015. There were 8 individuals that attended these workshops. During the workshops, EMD staff provided regulated businesses an overview of the electronic reporting process and also assisted each person with the process of submitting their Hazardous Waste Plans electronically. Hazardous Waste Plans are mandated by the California Environmental Protection Agency to be electronically submitted, effective January 1, 2013. EMD continues to assist consumers who need instruction filing their plans electronically.

October Work Safety Tip



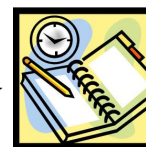
Stress Management

What Is Job Stress? Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury.

The concept of job stress is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When a challenge is met, we feel relaxed and satisfied. Thus, challenge is an important ingredient for healthy and productive work. The importance of challenge in our work lives is probably what people are referring to when they say "a little bit of stress is good for you."

Steps You Can Take

Start a stress journal. A stress journal can help you identify the regular stressors in your life and the way you deal with them. Each time you feel stressed, keep track of it in your journal. By identifying the sources of your stress it is easier to make some changes to reduce that stress.



Engage socially. This applies to both introvert and extrovert personality types. Whether it is in a group or one on one; social engagement is the quickest, most efficient way to rein in stress and avoid overreacting to internal or external events that you perceive as threatening.



Avoid unnecessary stress. It's not healthy to avoid a stressful situation that needs to be addressed, but you may be surprised by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate. Learn what your stressors are and work to change the situation or your reaction.

Alter the situation. If you can't avoid a situation, try to alter it. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

Adapt to the stressor. How you think can have a profound effect on your stress levels. Each time you think a negative thought about yourself, your body reacts as if it were in the throes of a tension-filled situation. Lower your stress by changing your attitude toward stressful situations.



Accept the things you can't change. Many sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change all stressors; such as the death of a loved one, serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

Make time for fun and relaxation. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you will be in a better place to handle life's stressors.



Adopt a healthy lifestyle. In addition to regular exercise, there are other healthy lifestyle choices that can increase your resistance to stress. These include eating a healthy diet, reducing caffeine and sugar, avoiding alcohol and drugs, and ensuring you get enough sleep.

By the Numbers September 2015	
	Sep-15
Food Facility Placards Issued	
A. Green – Pass	1360
C. Red – Closed	27
B. Yellow – Conditional Pass	87
Inspections	
Abandoned Wells	32
Above Ground Storage Tank	5
Body Art	
Food Protection (includes reinspections and food events)	1812
Farm Labor Camps	
Public Swimming Pools/Spas	16
Solid Waste Facilities (landfills/transfer stations)	29
Liquid Waste	26
Medical Waste	5
Small Water Systems	10
Wells and Monitoring Wells	165
Businesses/Facilities Generating Hazardous Waste	67
Businesses/Facilities Storing Hazardous Materials	72
Underground Storage Tank Facilities	34
Underground Storage Tank Removal, Installations, Upgrades, Repairs	12
Storm Water Non Food Facility	59
Waste Tire	92
Tobacco Retailer	25
Commercial/Multi-Family Recycling	12
Refuse Vehicle Inspections/	
Septic Tank Pumper Trucks	2
Total	2475
Investigations	
Body Art	2
Consumer Complaints	100
Food Borne Illness	18
Incident Response	42
Solid Waste	0
Storm Water	1
Waste Tire	0
Childhood Lead	1
Total	164
Class Attendance	
Food Safety Education (Food School)	93
Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMP) Workshop	8
“How To Get A Green Placard For Food Inspection” Workshop Online also.	0
Underground Storage Forms Workshop	4
Total	105
Plans, Permits, and Reviews	
Abandoned Wells	34
Hazardous Materials Business Plans	254
Body Art	3
Monitoring Wells/ Water Wells	88
Food Facilities	123
Public Swimming Pools/Spas	55
Underground Storage Tanks Plans and Permit Reviews	6
Land Use	11
Local Oversight Program	1
Cross Connection Permits (Blue Tags)	1572
Total	2147
Imaging	
Document Pages Imaged	11160