



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

February 2015

The Making of a Registered Environmental Health Specialist

By Zarha Ruiz

It is high Registered Environmental Health Specialist trainee season for the Environmental Health (EH) Division! Zarha Ruiz, Sacramento County's Registered Environmental Health Specialist Training Coordinator, is currently ushering 7 trainees through the rigorous Sacramento County REHS Training Program: Sothea Chhang, Jenny Choi, Ana Daniels, Steve LePage, Justin Ross, Tom Vohoska and Kelli Williams.

In addition to the 5 candidates working under the EH Division, two Environmental Compliance (EC) employees have joined on as well.

In order to perform Retail Food and Recreational Health Inspections in the state of California, an environmental specialist must take an exam to obtain their REHS license with the California Department of Public Health. In order to be admitted into this exam, a candidate must have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree with 30 semester or 45 quarter units of basic science and complete a 12-18 month training program, which includes 450-600 hours of training in various environmental health disciplines such as Retail Food, Recreational

Health, Water Protection, Liquid Waste, Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste.

Since 2006, the Environmental Health Division's REHS training program has successfully guided 35+ individuals towards their REHS. Each candidate comes to us with different levels of experience, expertise and training and education requirements. Creating a training plan tailored to each individual, scheduling training and ensuring admittance into the exam calls for a tremendous amount of orchestration, planning and constant adjustment. Here at the Environmental Man-

agement Department (EMD) we are incredibly fortunate to have the support of the entire Department through this delicate process, as the trainees are able to obtain their broad spectrum of training right here!

EMD's Environmental Compliance and Environmental Health Divisions work harmoniously and symbiotically to assist the trainees in acquiring the knowledge and training they need to pass their exam.



Tom Vohoska, Jenny Choi, Kelli Williams, Anna Daniels, Justin Ross, Sothea Chhang (not shown, Steve LePage)

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

None of this would be possible without the dedication and commitment of our field staff, who perform and provide the bulk of the field and classroom training for our REHS candidates.

We are extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to train and develop our new employees ourselves, and to have such a considerable hand in shaping the high caliber employee we have the

privilege to work with at EMD.

A special thank you to Jannine Talusik, Sara Cardozo, and EMD Supervisors and Managers who work closely with Zarha to make this all happen. Here's to sustained career development and the constant investment in our own work force!

Groundwater Regulation In California: What's Next For Counties?

Val Siebal, Director, EC Acting Chief Marie Woodin and Supervising Environmental Specialist Cheryl Hawkins attended a course on the implications of the new Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and what that would mean to county agencies who will be responsible for establishing groundwater sustainability agencies and developing policies. The Act laid the foundation for the regulation of California's groundwater statewide for the first time. The class stated that three quarters of the state's residents rely on groundwater for their drinking water.

Attendees were given an overview of the Act which included: creation of Sustainable Groundwater Management Plans, collection of data from the groundwater basin, protection of groundwater rights, and implementation of the Management Plans over time. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has mapped the groundwater basins statewide and assigned the high and medium

water basins as the first priorities for management. Sacramento County has both high and medium basins based on DWR's prioritization map.

In creating Groundwater Sustainability Plans, local agencies are mandated to: identify the basins; identify local agencies and interests; understand the basin conditions including potential problems; engage interested parties; assign authorities; and decide a governance model.

EMD's role will involve its well permitting program and any data EMD has about water quality in our basins. Counties and cities are hastening to understand the roles of all those who use groundwater for irrigation, or private and public use as it relates to the adoption of newly required groundwater sustainability plans. It will be a huge and controversial undertaking.

(See groundwater basin map next page)

EC Division offered two **Underground Storage Tank Workshops** in January. During the workshops, EMD staff assisted each person attending the workshop in submitting their Underground Storage Tank forms electronically through either the EMD web portal or California Environmental Reporting System

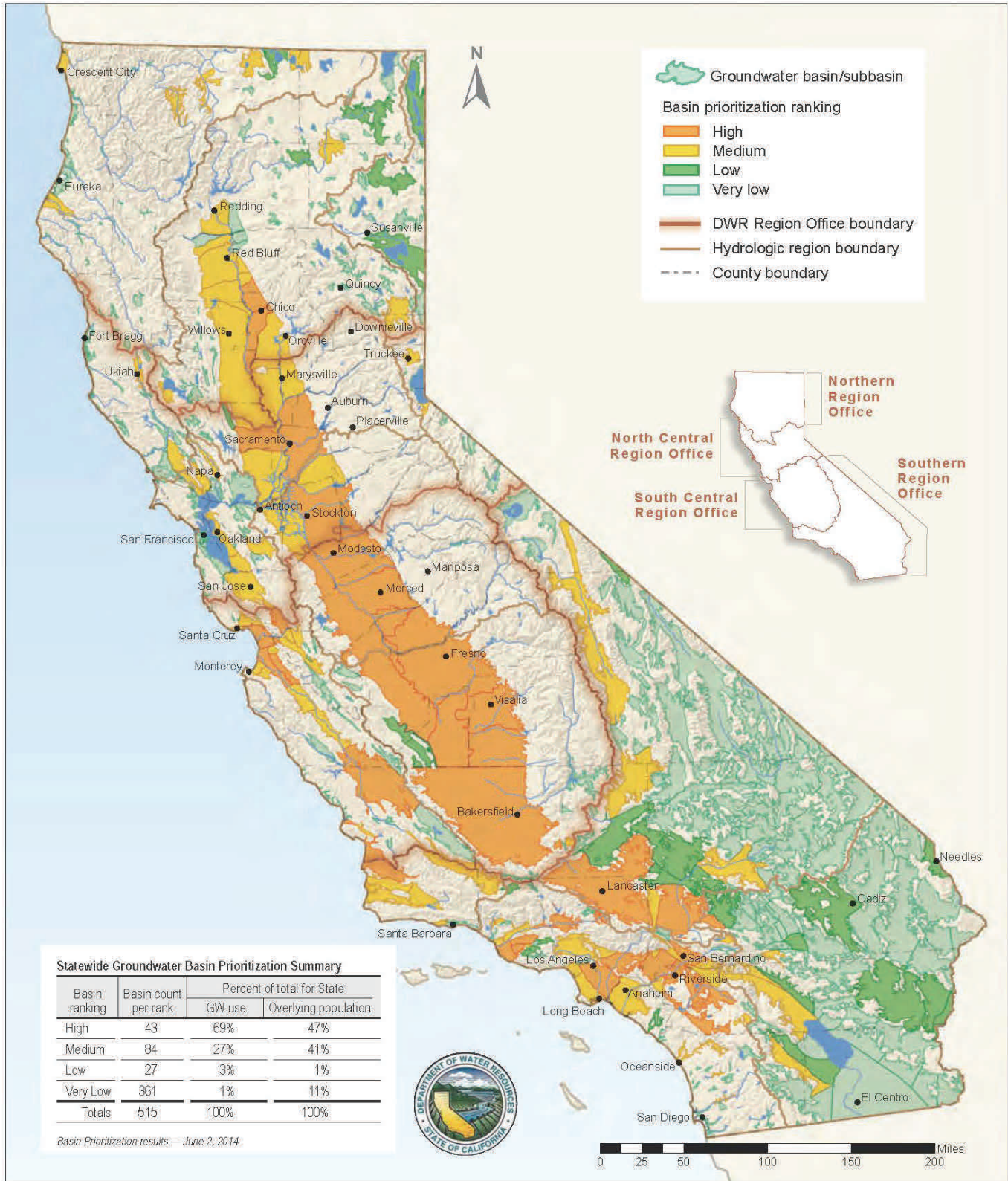
Food Safety Education Classes

There were 4 onsite and 5 off site Food Safety Education classes conducted in January 2015, with a total of 92 participants representing 16 facilities. Five classes were conducted in English, 2 in Spanish, and 2 in Cantonese.

Hazardous Material Plan Workshops

The Environmental Management Department offered 2 Hazardous Material Plan Portal Workshops during January, 2015. There were 8 individuals that attended these workshops, representing 7 businesses. 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.

CASGEM Groundwater Basin Prioritization



February Safety Tip

Noise and Hearing Loss Prevention



According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), occupational hearing loss is one of the most common work-related illnesses in the United States. Approximately 22 million U.S. workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels at work, and an additional 9 million are exposed to toxic chemicals. An estimated \$242 million is spent annually on worker's compensation for hearing loss disability.

NIOSH recommends removing hazardous noise from the workplace whenever possible and using hearing protectors in those situations where dangerous noise exposures have not yet been controlled or eliminated.

How Loud Is Too Loud?

Know which noises can cause damage. Wear ear plugs when you are involved in a loud activity.

110 Decibels

Regular exposure of more than 1 minute risks permanent hearing loss.

100 Decibels

No more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure recommended.

85 Decibels

Prolonged exposure to any noise at or above 85 decibels can cause gradual hearing loss.

How Loud is too Loud?

| Decibels | Sound Source |
|----------|---|
| 150 | Firecracker |
| 120 | Ambulance siren |
| 110 | Chain saw, Rock concert |
| 105 | Personal stereo system at maximum level |
| 100 | Wood shop, Snowmobile |
| 95 | Motorcycle |
| 90 | Power mower |
| 85 | Heavy city traffic |
| 60 | Normal conversation |
| 40 | Refrigerator humming |
| 30 | Whispered voice |
| 0 | Threshold of normal hearing |



National Institute on Deafness and
Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)

| By the Numbers January 2015 | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|
| | | 14-Jan |
| | Food Facility Placards Issued | |
| | A. Green – Pass | 964 |
| | C. Red – Closed | 11 |
| | B. Yellow – Conditional Pass | 57 |
| | Inspections | |
| 1 | Abandoned Wells | 36 |
| 2 | Above Ground Storage Tank | 2 |
| 3 | Body Art | 12 |
| 4 | Food Protection (includes reinspections and food events) | 1378 |
| 5 | Farm Labor Camps | |
| 6 | Public Swimming Pools/Spas | |
| 7 | Solid Waste Facilities (landfills/transfer stations) | 18 |
| 8 | Liquid Waste | 8 |
| 9 | Medical Waste | 16 |
| 10 | Small Water Systems | 2 |
| 11 | Wells | 121 |
| 12 | Businesses/Facilities Generating Hazardous Waste | 43 |
| 13 | Businesses/Facilities Storing Hazardous Materials | 53 |
| 14 | Underground Storage Tank Facilities | 43 |
| 15 | Underground Storage Tank Removal, Installations, Upgrades, Repairs | 11 |
| 16 | Storm Water Non Food Facility | |
| 17 | Waste Tire | 80 |
| 18 | Tobacco Retailer | 13 |
| 19 | Commercial/Multi-Family Recycling | 81 |
| 20 | Refuse Vehicle Inspections/ | 4 |
| 21 | Septic Tank Pumper Trucks | 55 |
| | Total | 1976 |
| | Investigations | |
| 1 | Body Art | 5 |
| 2 | Consumer Complaints | 74 |
| 3 | Food Borne Illness | 13 |
| 4 | Incident Response | 46 |
| 5 | Solid Waste | 1 |
| 6 | Storm Water | 4 |
| 7 | Waste Tire | |
| 8 | Childhood Lead | 2 |
| | Total | 145 |
| | Class Attendance | |
| 1 | Food Safety Education (Food School) | 92 |
| 2 | Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMP) Workshop | 8 |
| 3 | “How To Get A Green Placard For Food Inspection” Workshop | |
| 4 | Underground Storage Forms Workshop | 5 |
| | Total | 105 |
| | Plans, Permits, and Reviews | |
| 1 | Abandoned Wells | 39 |
| 2 | Hazardous Materials Business Plans | 334 |
| 3 | Body Art | |
| 4 | Monitoring Wells/ Water Wells | 75 |
| 5 | Food Facilities | 97 |
| 6 | Public Swimming Pools/Spas | 42 |
| 7 | Underground Storage Tanks Plans and Permit Reviews | 8 |
| 8 | Land Use | 6 |
| 9 | Local Oversight Program | 2 |
| 10 | Cross Connection Permits (Blue Tags) | 1134 |
| | Total | 1737 |
| | Information Management | |
| 1 | Document Pages Imaged | 9093 |