

## NEHA SECOND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PROFILES

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is governed by a corporate board of directors who oversee the affairs of the association. The board is made up of two groups: national officers and regional vice-presidents. NEHA elects its national officers through a ballot that goes to all active and life members prior to the annual conference. Among other things, the ballot features the election for the position of NEHA second vice-president. The person elected to this position begins a 5-year commitment to NEHA that involves advancing each year to a different national office, eventually to become NEHA's president.

Election policy specifies that candidate profiles for the second vice-president be limited to 800 words in total length. If a candidate's profile exceeds that limit, the policy requires that the profile is terminated at the last sentence before the 800-word limit is exceeded. In addition, the submitted profiles have not been grammatically edited, but presented as submitted and within the 800-word limitation. This year, NEHA presents two candidates for the office of second vice-president. The candidates are listed alphabetically.



### Thomas J. Butts, MSc, REHS

Tom Butts believes it is important to assure support for and recognition of environmental health practitioners and the key role they play in protecting communities from adverse health impacts. He will encourage an active role for environmental health professionals as evidence-based policy advocates. Additionally, he believes

NEHA must seek ways to engage with newer staff to translate their enthusiasm, skills and abilities into program and systems improvements in our environmental health practice and while working to address climate change.

Tom earned a BS in Environmental Health from Colorado State University and a MSc in Environmental Science & Engineering from Colorado School of Mines. He started his 32+ year career Tri-County Health Department as an environmental health specialist conducting a wide range of EH activities. Tri-County is the local public health agency that serves 3 counties and over 1.5 million people surrounding Denver.

Tom then spent 15 years working with hazardous waste generators, spill response, household chemical collection programs and local oversight of hazardous waste cleanups.

In 2002, Tom was selected to lead the agencies new emergency preparedness and response program where he played a key role in developing agency and regional response plans with staff and local and state agencies. Environmental health staff play key roles in all hazard's incident management and during response and recovery from natural disasters and other events. Tom served as the NEHA Terrorism and All-Hazard Preparedness Technical Section Co-chair 2003-2005

Tom served as Director of Environmental Health beginning in 2008 for over 4 years managing programs including: food safety, child care, recreational waters, onsite wastewater treatment, vector control, body art, land use planning and a variety of solid and hazardous waste activities (~55 staff and \$6M budget). In this position Tom actively worked with local agency peers across the state and with key state staff on program issues of both local and statewide interest to environmental public health. These efforts led to statute changes for food safety and onsite wastewater management programs. Tom served the Colorado Directors of Environmental Health (CDEH) as Vice-President, President and the CDEH representative to the Colorado Association of Local Public Health Offi-

cial, respectively (2008-2013) working to represent both urban and rural perspectives in local, state and national forums.

Tom was involved several health impact assessments (HIA) where the goal was to address health impacts while informing policy or land use decisions. Tools like this will be important to environmental health professionals as we work to address sustainability, health equity and built environment issues.

One effort of key interest was serving on the technical advisory committee for Colorado's Environmental Public Health Tracking system as it has developed from a very limited environmental health data visualization tool to a more functional resource for local environmental health staff and leadership across the state.

This data is now accessible as communities complete their community health assessment and develop community/public health improvement plans. It is very important that environmental health data is a key element of these efforts.

Prior to his retirement in 2017, he served as Deputy Director for nearly 5 years overseeing and guiding the Directors of the Office of Human Resources, Division of Administration & Finance, Division of Environmental Health, and Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response. He enthusiastically supported the development of an agency strategic plan and managed that process. He also actively participated in the development of the documentation package for accreditation (PHAB) and participated in the site visit resulting agency accreditation.

Tom currently works on environmental health programs as a consultant and as an hourly employee for two local health agencies in Colorado and was appointed to the Colorado State Board of Health in March of 2019.

Tom welcomed the opportunity to actively participate on the NACCHO Environmental Health Committee for 4 years (2014-2018) engaging on Environmental Public Health Tracking, working to identify best practices, emerging issue and contributing to the revisions of a number of NACCHO position papers.

Tom served as a regional representative, treasurer and then president of the Colorado Environmental Health Association (CEHA) and has been recognized with their Milton M. Miller award, CEHA's highest, in recognition of contributions and distinguished service in advancing the Environmental Health profession.

Through CEHA, Tom has worked with the accredited EH Program at Colorado State University and selects EH oriented state

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science fair winners each year. These activities and the interaction with students are always inspiring.

Environmental health professionals have more contact with the community than any other element of the public health system and we need to capitalize on those contacts and the community members (regulated community, local agency contacts, the public at large) that we interact with to demonstrate the value of our work.

Please support Tom Butts for Second Vice President in 2020 and see me on LinkedIn.



### **Timothy Murphy, PhD, REHS, DAAS**

I have been a member of NEHA for over 35 years and it has been an influence on my career since my undergraduate degree at Ferris State College! I look forward to the opportunity to influence NEHA's growth and positive development by serving in a leadership role.

Statement of Intent – I seek your support and vote for the office of Second Vice President (2nd VP) of the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). As NEHA is the premier professional organization for environmental health practitioners. I will strive to

bring a fresh perspective to enhance our strategic direction, and to accomplish our shared objectives for NEHA.

My Vision of how I see the future in the areas of strategic direction, the REHS credential and membership in NEHA includes the following: A revitalized strategic direction that is supported by current and new initiatives and future membership, an improved national and international recognition of NEHA based upon our work to advance the science and policies of environmental health, a more diverse Environmental Health workforce including students, faculty, practitioners, and leaders, increased communication and cooperation with other environmental/occupational health and safety organizations.

Regarding the REHS credential, our premier credential – Increases awareness of the importance and value of the REHS credential among policy makers and the general public throughout the nation, working with policy makers to create policy that improves the competencies of the environmental public health workforce, and ensuring the certification maintenance program is a value-added process.

Regarding Membership – Working with organizations to increase the number of college and university EH majors and student /faculty diversity, working with the NEHA Board to create student activities/mentorship programs that are value-added. Thus, increasing the number of new NEHA members, increase membership in American Academy of Sanitarians (AAS). 🐼



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