



Louisiana Environmental Health Association

The Louisiana Environmental Health Association (LEHA), a state affiliate of the National Environmental Health Association, is dedicated to helping environmental health professionals meet the demands necessary for the effective control of environmental health hazards.



Louisiana Environmental Health Association

In 1947, the Louisiana Association of Sanitarians (LAS) was formed through the efforts of Dr. Ben Freedman, Luther Hortman, Floyd Miller, Graves (Tiny) Grant, A.G. Owens, and Matt Bulliung.

Originally, the LAS served only public health sanitarians.

In the year 1954, John Higgs was our SEVENTH President. Act 371 of 1954, known as the Louisiana Sanitarian Licensing Law, was passed by the Louisiana Legislature, providing for the professional licensing of sanitarians. La. was the Nation's fifth Sanitarian Registration Act in the country.



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In 1957, Jack J. Moisant was our TENTH President. Hurricane Audrey hits Cameron Parish, killing over 500 people. Tremendous effort was put forth by Sanitarians and engineers in the area of drinking water, wastewater treatment, management of livestock, and solid waste disposal.

In 1970, A.M. Bulliung, who was our NINTH President in 1956, repeated as our TWENTY-THIRD President. In that year, the NAS changed its name to the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA).

The LAS also voted to change its name to the Louisiana Environmental Health Association (LEHA), and began accepting non-sanitarian professional environmental health practitioners as non-voting associate members.



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In 1972, Robert McMullen was our TWENTY-FIFTH President.

Lead poisoning prevention programs are started in Orleans Parish.

Charles Gillham of Lake Charles, LAS Past-president (1960), assumes the presidency of NEHA.

In 1980, Lead poisoning programs are extended throughout Louisiana.



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In 1977, Dr. Victor Monsour was our THIRTIETH President , and Margaret Soulie Becnel became the first woman to serve on LEHA's Board of Directors.

The Scholarship Fund Award was instituted as well as the Student Paper Award and the Outstanding Sanitarian Award.

With the assistance of Thomas Schexnayder, an attorney and LEHA member, LEHA became incorporated on May 16 under the laws of the state as a non-profit corporation.



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In 1978, Stephen W. Lam was our THIRTY-FIRST President.

The LEHA President's Award (gavel plaque), the Certificate of Merit Award and the Presidential Citation Award were originated.



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In 1979, our THIRTY-SECOND President was William Barlow.

Martha Scott and Claude Lewis became the first African-Americans to serve on LEHA's Board of Directors.

Act 449 of 1979 was passed by the Louisiana State Legislature, transferring certain environmental health programs under the Dept. of Health & Human Resources to the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Environmental Affairs, effective January 1, 1980.



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In 1981, B.J. McConathy was our THIRTY-FOURTH President.

This year is recognized as the start of the AIDS epidemic in Louisiana.



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The year was 1983 and Clifton Murphy was our THIRTY-SIXTH president.

The LEHA active membership voted to accept non-sanitarian environmental health professionals as active, voting members. This change opened the doors for all environmental professionals to join an organization which could speak as one unified voice.

Act 97 of 1983 was passed by the state legislature which created the Department of Environmental Quality, effective February 1, 1984.



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The year was 1984 and James J. Balsamo, Jr. served again as our THIRTY-SEVENTH President.

The Outstanding Environmental Professional Award was instituted as an equivalent award to the existing Outstanding Registered Sanitarian Award to honor the contributions of non-sanitarian environmental health professionals.

John Koury, Sr. was the first recipient of this award.



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The year was 1985 and Ben Potier was our THIRTY-EIGHTH President.

In 1986, Pat Bedenbaugh was our THIRTY-NINTH and first woman President of LEHA.



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The year was 1996 and Jodi Miller was our FORTY-NINTH President.

The Red Tide is in Louisiana waters, a phenomenon where certain phytoplankton species contain reddish pigments and "bloom" causing the water to appear red. Some red tide blooms produce potent neurotoxins that can be transferred through the food chain.

Most significant for this year are the passings of Dr. Ben Freedman, M.D., M.P.H., author of the "Sanitarians Handbook", an internationally-recognized guide for Sanitarians' ; and

Frank L. Dautriel, who served as President of LEHA in 1976 and Treasurer for 17 years. Frank was instrumental in developing the scholarship program to its present success. No other name appears as prominently in the Association's records than does the name of Frank L. Dautriel.



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The year is 1998 and Claude Lewis was our FIFTY-FIRST President.

Claude was the first African American President of LEHA.



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In 2004, Walter G. Pichon, III was our 57th President. In this year, Representative N.J. Damico and Senator Heulette “Clo” Fontenot, the Louisiana State Legislature proclaimed April 26, 2004, as National Sanitarian/ Environmental Specialist Day in Louisiana.

Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco also issued this proclamation:



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Louisiana Environmental Health Association

LEHA supports and promotes:

Continuing professional development through annual conferences, seminars, and other appropriate educational forums;

Participation in public affairs which render enhanced public health and environmental protection in the community;

General welfare of the professional sanitarian and environmental professional in the state of Louisiana and the nation.



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LEHA awards two \$1000.00 educational scholarships each year in order to encourage outstanding students in the environmental and health fields.

Named in honor of our 39th President, The Frank L. Dautriel Memorial Scholarship Fund is awarded to one undergraduate and one graduate student each year.



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LEHA also encourages younger students to become interested in the environmental health field by awarding monetary gifts to middle school and high school students for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place state science fair projects which best demonstrate environmental health.

The Envirothon at the ULL Ag Center in Cade, where High School students train and compete in multi-disciplinary, environmental problem-solving areas, such as soil/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current environmental issue.

Another project held each year which we support is:

The Household Hazardous Waste Day & Paint Swap In Baton Rouge



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Each January, LEHA holds an environmental health education conference, which consists of a one-day workshop with a field trip, along with a 2-day conference.



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In 2006, the conference theme is:

“La Louisiane’ : Environmental Restoration in Progress”

Topics will include a presentation from CDR Susan McCracken, Commissioned Corps Liaison, US Public Health-Div. of Indian Health Services for the South and Eastern part of the US, Nashville, Tennessee

And other informative Environmental Health topics.