**About NEHA**

National Environmental Health Association

***“...to advance the environmental health and protection professional  
for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all.”***

NEHA’s Origin  
  
The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) had its origins in the state of California where it was incorporated in 1937. The original impetus behind the creation of a national professional society for environmental health practitioners was the desire by professionals of that day to establish a standard of excellence for this developing profession. This standard, which has come to be known as the Registered Environmental Health Specialist or Registered Sanitarian credential, signifies that an environmental health professional has mastered a body of knowledge (which is verified through the passing of an examination), and has acquired sufficient experience, to satisfactorily perform work responsibilities in the environmental health field. The pioneers of the association believed that such a credential was necessary if the environmental health field was to grow and take shape as a legitimate and widely respected profession.

NEHA’s Mission  
  
Drawing on the original effort that led to the creation of NEHA, the association today stands as a strong professional society with over 4,500 members across the nation. Clearly NEHA’s mission, “to advance the environmental health and protection professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all” is as relevant today as it was when the organization was founded.  
  
Advancement has been defined by NEHA in terms of both education and motivation. The basis for the association’s activities is the belief that the professional who is educated and motivated is the professional who will make the greatest contribution to the healthful environmental goals which we all seek. Accordingly, great emphasis is placed on providing, through each of NEHA’s programs, both an educational as well as a motivational opportunity. At NEHA’s conferences, for example, tremendous attention is paid to developing a quality educational program that not only imparts knowledge to the attendee but, also, through the very quality of the presentations, inspires the attendee to do more upon returning to his or her job.

NEHA Strategic Directions  
  
Several years ago, NEHA’s board decided to adopt a rather unique approach to envisioning the association’s future and determining the association’s priorities. It made the bold move of stepping out of the classical process of strategic planning. By focusing on directions and not destinations, we keep our association on the balls of its feet – ready to change course at a moment’s notice should circumstances in our business environment indicate that such a change is appropriate. This mindset and way of operating represents the extra commitment that NEHA makes to insure that the association remains relevant to the profession and to the NEHA membership. Our strategic directions include 1) Training and Education; 2) Credentialing; 3) Advocacy; and 4) Organizational Capacity.

NEHA’s Programs and Services  
In pursuit of its mission, NEHA offers a variety of programs. Expanding beyond its original credential, today the association has seven national [credential programs](http://www.neha.org/credential/index.shtml) (see \* list below). NEHA also produces the[Annual Educational Conference (AEC) & Exhibition](http://www.neha2012aec.org/), and a number of technical workshops each year. In addition, NEHA publishes the widely-respected and peer-reviewed [*Journal of Environmental Health*](http://www.neha.org/JEH/index.shtml), serves as a “one stop shop” for publications in virtually every area of the environmental health field through its [online bookstore](https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=neha&WebCode=Books), posts job openings on its online [JobCenter](http://www.neha.org/job_center.html), provides networking and committee participation opportunities, develops positions on timely and serious environmental health concerns, and provides several other services, serving as a constant resource for the environmental health professional.