



Director's Message

All the top stars, movies and directors now have their Oscar gold; but closer to home, our Environmental Health (EH) division proudly presents the winners in the annual [Award of Excellence](#) program.

EH issued the 2019 Award of Excellence last month to 3,239 Orange County food facilities to recognize local businesses for their outstanding food safety and sanitation practices during 2018.

This annual recognition was created to provide an incentive for retail food businesses that

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Sara Moskowitz is Helping Young Adults to Write the Story of Their Lives

"Every client has a story," says **Sara Moskowitz**, Behavioral Health Clinician I. And helping clients take control of their own stories is what inspires and motivates her the most. Sara may be a clinician, but sometimes she thinks of her work as helping young adults write their own stories. It's part co-author, editor and producer. For her, nothing is more rewarding than helping her clients discover their identity and purpose in life—and bearing witness to the

breakthroughs that get them closer to where they want to be. "It's amazing to be part of the narrative—to be granted the trust and privilege of being allowed into their lives, to help them recover and get to where they want to be. That's a huge honor."

For the past year and a half, Sara has been helping 18-to-26 year olds in the Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Program in the Assertive Community

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Director's Message

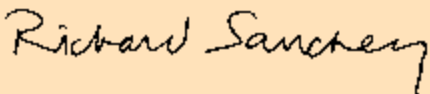
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consistently meet or exceed health and safety standards for food facility operations. In 1999, the first year of the program, 584 food establishments received the recognition. With increased outreach and improved compliance with food safety laws, the number of recipients has grown significantly since its inception.

Included in the Award of Excellence program are food facilities such as restaurants, catering establishments, meat/seafood markets, retail bakeries, supermarkets, supermarket/bakery combinations, and public and private schools with food production service.

And while Hollywood honors are given out yearly to one person or group, the Award of Excellence can be earned by any food facility operator every year. To see if your favorite venue is among our honorees, click [here](#).

Sincerely,



Richard Sanchez, Director

Minding and Mending

“If we can solve and address the issues of mental health, we’re going to solve a lot of other things and have a really health community here in Orange County,” that’s how Board of Supervisors [Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett](#), Fifth District, described the seriousness of children’s mental health before a crowd of providers, educators, parents and even students. She organized a forum on the issue, at Mission Hospital, to bring attention to some of the findings in the 24th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County. The forum included a panel discussion featuring students and included ideas generated by those in attendance. Chairwoman Bartlett released a summary of those ideas which you can read by clicking [here](#).

Dr. Jeffrey Nagel, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Deputy Agency Director, told the group of the importance of paying attention on children’s mental health and illness, “Mental illness is one of the leading causes of premature death.” He said that for children and young people, “Suicide is the number two cause of death for youth up to age 25.”

Dr. Nagel said mental illness affects almost all of us, “Whether it’s personally, or through a family member or a friend.” He said that while the Conditions of Children report highlights some positive outcomes with

our youth, mental health outcomes were identified in the report as an area needing improvement. He said it is critical for the community stakeholders to ask, “What are we doing to prevent mental illness and what are the effective early interventions we have implemented or can implement?”

The Conditions of Children Report addresses some of the precursors which lead to young people being hospitalized for mental health reasons such as chronic sadness/hopelessness and disconnectedness. Dr. Nagel said the strategies now being used to address children’s mental health start as early as preschool age. The evidence-based programs implemented by the Health Care Agency (HCA) address some of the precursors mentioned in the report. He also highlighted the [Be Well OC](#) initiative, which he told the crowd, “Is a coalition involving private-public partners, faith communities, universities and health plans where we’re looking at developing ‘world-class’ mental health and how to deliver that to Orange County.” Be Well OC is an inclusive coalition that seeks to improve behavioral health care in Orange County.

For more on the Conditions of Children report click [here](#).

Children's Mental Health



“The fact we are all gathered here and talking about mental health is a great thing.”

- Dr. Jeffrey Nagel,

Deputy Agency Director, Behavioral Health Services

New Role for Emergency Medical Services Doctor

“Performance is excellent, morale is high.”

That’s the assessment of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division according to new EMS Medical Director, **Dr. Carl Schultz**. After serving as Associate EMS Medical Director for a year-and-a-half, Dr. Schultz takes over for recently retired **Dr. Sam Stratton**. Dr. Schultz says he has “inherited the perfect position” and things are humming very well. “Don’t expect any radical changes in the near future. It would be one thing if there was a lot of discontent or poor performance, none of which is the case.”

Dr. Schultz says that since nothing’s broken, his immediate goals include gaining an understanding of the issues he’s already familiar with, but from his new and “slightly different” perspective. He also wants to push through on projects, some of which are already in the works. “I plan to look at what the evolving opportunities are within the field of EMS and perhaps look at ways to implement some new processes. We’re working on some pilot projects which I think will bear fruit and I would like to see



“Just really glad to be here, grateful to Dr. Stratton who I thought did an outstanding job and I’m very grateful for this opportunity.”

Dr. Carl Schultz, EMS Medical Director

those taken from the pilot status to implementation.”

One of those pilot projects is called "Pit Crew Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation" (CPR). Dr. Schultz describes it as having first responders handle CPR calls kind of

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

HazMat Team Now in a "Busy Cycle"

"Since the first of the year, we've been getting calls almost every day, or so it seems," that's life these days for the Health Care Agency (HCA) Environmental Health Hazardous Materials Team. Supervising Hazardous Materials Specialist **Jennifer Negro** who oversees the [Health HazMat Team](#). "It goes in cycles, but we've been getting a lot of calls for drug labs, which we call 'Clandestine labs'." Also, the Health Hazmat Team specialists have already responded this year to a 'suspicious package' call at the Santa Ana Courthouse and to a plane crash in Yorba Linda. "We have broad capabilities and expertise to handle a variety of hazmat incidents," says Jennifer. The Health HazMat Team deploys specialists with biological, radiological and chemical expertise

who immediately assess each and every situation. When the team is not responding to an incident, the specialists are in specialized training with our law enforcement partners and fire services personnel. The Health HazMat Team is a part of the Joint Hazards Assessment Team (JHAT) where the specialist participate in routine training drills and exercises with Orange County Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT), OC Hazardous Devices Section, (Bomb Squad), Civil Support Teams, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the fire departments. "These drills and exercises are important to help familiarize all agencies with each other's capabilities which makes responding to real emergencies seamless," says Jennifer.

Photos and Incident Reports courtesy: Health HazMat Team.



INCIDENT REPORTS

"White Powder"/Suspicious Package at Santa Ana Courthouse

January 17, 2019

Santa Ana Courthouse received a suspicious package. The Bomb Squad, Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA), the FBI and our Health Hazmat Team responded to the incident. This received a lot of media attention because of the location. Our role in suspicious packages is to conduct hazard detection as part of the threat assessment. In this incident, our specialists transported the package to our Public Health Lab for biological screening. The investigation is on-going with law enforcement.

Mobile Drug Lab at 91 Freeway in Fullerton

January 28, 2019

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) conducted a vehicle stop after a report of a vehicle leaking unknown fluid. Upon investigation, clandestine drug-making equipment was found with flammable liquids leaking out of the bed of the truck. Our County clandestine lab response group, which includes our Health Hazmat Team, responded to the incident. Our specialists suited up in personal protective equipment and assisted our law enforcement partners to mitigate the hazard. Because it was on a busy street, we couldn't really move it because it wasn't safe to do so with chemical leakage and a flammable atmosphere. It was processed by our regional narcotics suppression team. Our crime lab comes out and takes samples and finger prints. During this whole process, HCA is monitoring for volatiles. In this incident, residents in a nearby housing tract were told to shelter in place due to the possible flammability factor. Another part of the HCA's job is to protect public health in situations like this.

Plane Crash in Yorba Linda

February 3, 2019

A private plane crashed into a Yorba Linda neighborhood. Multiple agencies including the OCFA and the Health Hazmat Team responded to the incident. The Health Hazmat Team's role was to make sure the aviation fuel was properly cleaned up and kept from entering any storm drains. The Health Hazmat Team also helps residents with assistance on registered hazardous waste haulers to help with clean-up of the contamination.

Counterfeit Prescription Pills Operation in Huntington Beach

February 6, 2019

Federal law enforcement served a search warrant at a commercial property for clandestine drug manufacturing. The operation was an illegal marijuana extraction lab and a pill press operation for counterfeit prescription drugs. The Health Hazmat Team along with OCSD and the OC Crime Lab, dismantled the illegal lab operations.

"Our specialists follow County-wide response protocols, but each call is different so our specialists must be flexible and ready to adapt to last minute changes. A typical day for our specialists may range from responding to a clandestine drug lab to investigating illegal dumping of chemicals."

Jennifer Negro,
Supervising Hazardous
Materials Specialist



Prepping for

THE

This is a drill: On January 30th a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck along the San Andreas Fault. Most Orange County cities felt strong to severe shaking and the strongest being felt in north Orange County. A 7.0 magnitude aftershock occurred at 9:33 a.m. on January 30th in the same area and a 7.2 magnitude aftershock occurred near San Bernardino at 1:30 p.m. yesterday afternoon. More significant aftershocks are expected.

That was the scripted scenario played out for personnel from the Health Care Agency (HCA) and other County of Orange agencies/departments as they worked through dozens of pretend life and death situations at the [OC Emergency Operations Center \(EOC\)](#) on January 31st. Even though the quake and aftershocks were a drill, there's something to be learned says **Mike Steinkraus**, Disaster Preparedness & Response Chief, [Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\)](#), "Every drill we do brings new challenges and learning which ultimately leads to better understanding of the job and being better prepared."

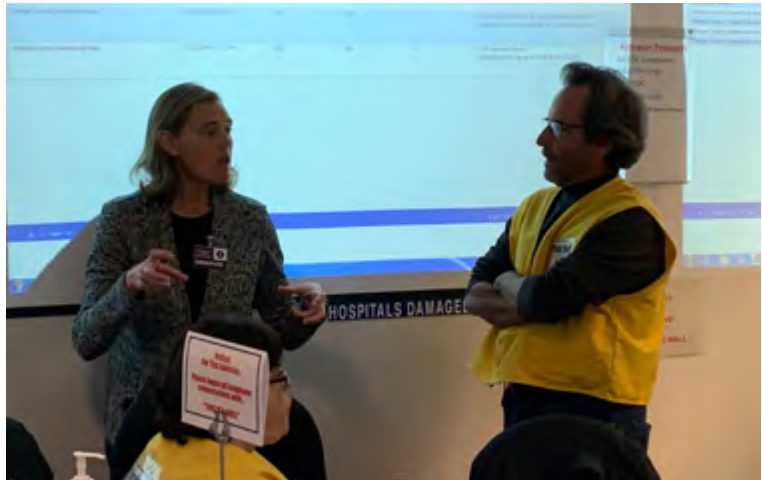
Mike served as the Health Care Branch Director. (For his job responsibilities click [here](#).) He says the drill, as well as real events, "Always pulls us into working with other groups/positions in the EOC. Having an EOC (central command and control facility) ensures having the continuity of operation by having the representation of other agencies all present in one location. This helps with situational awareness, decision-making, ordering and placement of resources."

Even though taking part in a drill is a time commitment, Mike says it pays off when the call comes in for a real emergency, "At the beginning of real events, it is overwhelming. Lots of information coming in and it is not always accurate. Without a clear picture of the situation, it is hard to make good decisions. We rely on good and accurate situational awareness to make the proper decision. This can sometimes delay resources getting to the proper place and assuming we had enough resources to go around. With that said it is important that everyone take preparedness seriously. There is a lot we can do to prepare our home, work place, and family for the Big One. As County employees we have an obligation (read the back of your ID card) and for some a duty to respond. Knowing that your family at home is well prepared will help with obligation and or duty."

EOC officials say trainings are regularly scheduled as the County of Orange strives to be a leader in emergency management and uses its trainings to identify any gaps there might be in the emergency system and to fix them.



"We appreciate that Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is included in these types of exercises as the importance of stabilizing the community from an emotional wellbeing perspective is sometimes over looked, yet a very integral part of the recovery efforts," **Nicole Garcia**, LMFT - Service Chief II AOABH Crisis Assessment Services, BHS Disaster Response & Supporting Survivors



"Communication is key during a disaster," **Dr. Eric Handler**, MD, MPH - County Health Officer
(with **Dr. Nichole Quick**, Deputy Health Officer)

BIG ONE™



The EOC can be staffed with 150 personnel from various County agencies.

Vest colors indicate positions such as: Yellow: Management, Safety, Liaison, Public Information; Red: Operations, Including HCA; Blue: Planning & Intelligence; Orange: Logistics; Green: Finance



“You’re going to feel stress today. That’s what it is about. It’s about grace under pressure, being strong, calm and kind and working together in a simulated environment so that we can go to work at it during the real time.” **Mike Steinkraus**, Disaster Preparedness & Response Chief, EMS



“I thought it was great all positions had a check list, it told you exactly what you needed to do. This was my first time, our positions were self-explanatory as far as what to do. It was impressive to have different County groups together. We could reach across the table and say ‘Hey should we do this?’ Very impressive and good to know how well organized our County is, in case of a disaster,” **Jennifer Negro**, Supervising Hazardous Materials Specialist



“The earthquake scenario provided a great opportunity for HCA to exercise how different programs coordinate with each other to support the County medical & health system.” **Tammi McConnell**, MSN, RN, EMS Division Manager

5 Things You Need to Know About:

RECENT

1 The Board of Supervisors (BOS) declared a local emergency because of the recent storms. The BOS requested the Governor declare a State of Emergency and seek a Presidential Declaration of Emergency in and for Orange County. In order to qualify for [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) assistance, the County of Orange must have more than \$11 million in damage to public infrastructure. There's still about a month to go in the winter rain season according to the [California Department of Water Resources \(DWR\)](#).

2 The snowpack and total precipitation are 'well above average' says DWR which recently announced they are [increasing allocations](#) of water for contracting water districts. The groundwater supply in Orange County is at 65% capacity says the [Orange County Water District \(OCWD\)](#), that's up 4% from the same period last year. Despite the recent rains, more than half of OC remains 'abnormally dry' according to the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#) which updates its website on Thursdays.

3 The rain has created sinkholes around Southern California including one at [Dana Point's famous 'waterfall'](#) in early February. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has a [map](#) of the US showing where sinkholes are most common and advises homeowners that insurance plans in California do not cover damage or destruction from sinkholes. For more on warning signs and what to check for the possibility of sinkholes click [here](#).

New EMS Director at the Wheel

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like the way a pit crew handles race cars. But instead of changing tires and pumping gas, the CPR "pit crews" are changing their responses and pumping chest compressions during a call, "It's literally like when you go to NASCAR, each person in the pit crew has a specific role and it's timed, it's a disciplined process, that's the same concept with this, so instead of people coming up and saying, 'you do this, you do that,' they're all assigned roles, they have specific goals to meet, they rotate around so they don't get fatigued. It's a very professional way of doing this." He says the CPR pit crew concept is being tested by the Huntington Beach Fire Department (HBFD) which is also reviewing a couple of devices to do chest compressions as part of the pilot program. The au-

tomatic chest compressors provide better accuracy than a person who is doing compressions, and, as Dr. Schultz points out, the devices will not get tired the way a person does. In addition to testing devices that do compressions automatically, the HBFD is also using mechanical tools that give real time information on how well CPR is being performed by personnel, "These devices actually measure the compression and give you both the depth and the rate as you're doing it in real time, and that gives you positive or negative feedback." Dr. Schultz says the pilot project is still early on.

Meantime Dr. Schultz has moved into his new office. He has a fairly big model of a space shuttle on display and says if he had had 20/20 vision he might have become

IT STORMS

4 The rain water that isn't absorbed into the ground can be a threat to your health. **Anthony Martinez**, Program Manager with Environmental Health (EH) says storm water increases the level of pathogenic bacteria and viruses from plant and animal waste, chemicals, mud and trash that are carried into storm drains, creeks and rivers which ultimately flow to the beaches and oceans. Beach conditions can always be found at

[OCBeachInfo](#).

5 It's not all bad news says Anthony. Rain captured at Prado Dam is slowly released during dry periods to replenish the groundwater supply under Orange County, which provides 70% of the drinking water in north OC. The heavy flows during winter also deposit sand near the mouths of rivers and creeks which helps replenish sand on the beaches.

an astronaut or pilot instead of pursuing medicine. His predecessor Dr. Stratton points out Dr. Schultz is world-renown as an expert in Disaster Medicine with an expertise that includes all forms of weapons of mass destruction. That said, Dr. Schultz could only watch helplessly as his Pittsburgh Steelers missed out on the playoffs this year. Dr. Schultz says he was a long-time Rams fan until they moved. And while he says it's nice to have the Rams back, he got married during their absence and his wife is an avid Steelers fan – as evidenced by the memorabilia decorating their home.

Welcome to our winning HCA team, Dr. Schultz!



Cast Your Ballot for

PUBLIC HEALTH

To celebrate Public Health Week, Public Health Services is having a showcase for programs to share how they're building a healthier future through quality improvement or technology and you're cordially invited to the event.

Different Public Health programs will display how they're implementing quality improvement or new technology to improve health in Orange County. The contestants are preparing their presentations under the theme for this year's Public Health Week, which is: "Creating the Healthiest Nation: For science. For action. For health."

Those attending the showcase will be allowed to vote on the displays. There will be prizes for the winning programs which will be announced in the May newsletter.

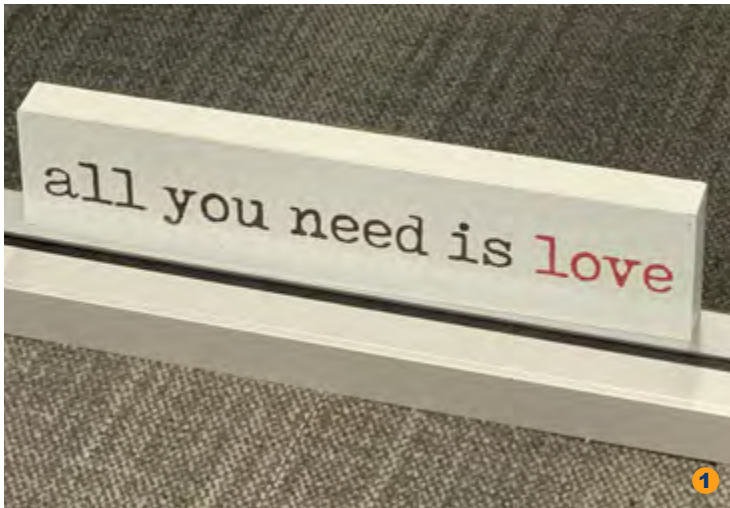
Mark your calendar, the showcase is set for:

Wednesday, April 3, 2019
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Public Health Learning Center
1725 W. 17th Street
Building 1729 E. ■ Santa Ana

For more information on the showcase click [here](#).

Showing the

IMPACT NEW FA



One of the newest clinics in Behavioral Health Services (BHS) was highlighted during a tour for a representative of Fourth District, Supervisor Doug Chaffee. Staff at the north region [Children and Youth Behavioral Health \(CYBH\)](#) clinic in Brea provided the tour of their new facility which they moved into this past September.

"We provide outpatient mental health services for young people up to age 22," says **Veronica De Fernandez**, Marriage and Family Therapist II, Service Chief II. She said the services include Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression, anxiety and psychotic symptoms, "We help them if they're having some sort of impairments, for example they're not doing well in school, or they're suicidal or they're constantly in the hospital. We help them improve and we help them decrease their symptoms with individual therapy, family therapy, medications and case management. We serve the whole family, not just the kids. So we try to help them improve in their living skills."

There are 20 clinical staff members, who serve close to 400 clients at the clinic says Veronica. The tour was given to Supervisor Chaffee's Deputy Chief of Staff Al Jabbar and allowed him to meet some of the clinicians and see the facility. The new clinic is making a difference says Veronica, "I think it's very important to know



of a FACILITY

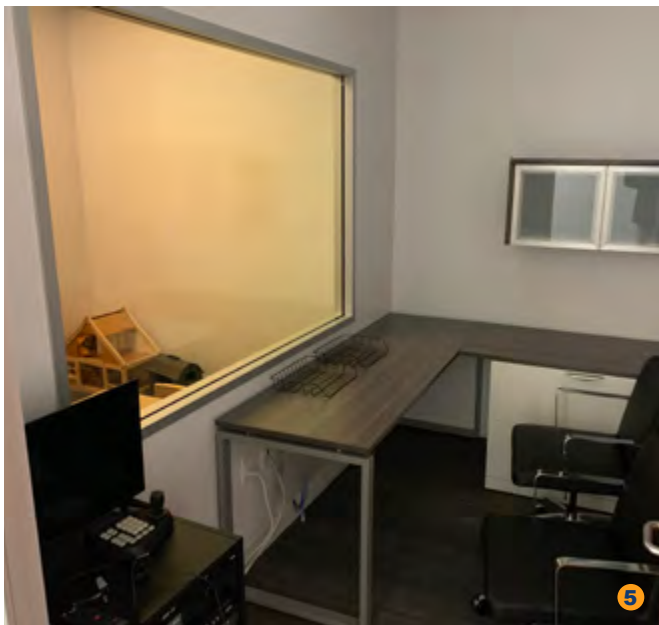
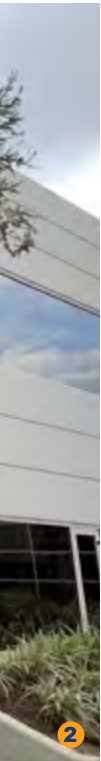


County clients and County employees can have a beautiful place to work and to provide services. I have to say most of our clients find this to be very uplifting, they're happy to be here. Just being in a nice environment, I think is very helpful to provide the services we want to provide and see clients improve in their mental health." As CYBH management puts it, having such a welcoming atmosphere that is clean and feels fresh, contributes to the goal of providing environments that reflect evidenced-based treatments.

The impact of the state-of-the-art facility is echoed by **Dr. Nathan Lopez**, Program Manager II, CYBH, who welcomed the visit by staff representing the County's newest supervisor, "It's one way of understanding the clients that we serve, the population we serve, and that we have locations throughout the county, including the north region of Orange County and to showcase our newest location. It's one of our nicest locations and we feel the clients that we serve should have a place where they feel comfortable and that is inviting and refreshing."

The Brea Clinic wasn't the only facility BHS managers were able to show Supervisor Chaffee's staff. The tour of north County/County-contracted facilities featured stops and details at [Telecare Full Service Partnership](#) and [Hope House](#), both in Anaheim.

1. "In our clinic part of our goals are to help our clients heal emotionally and physically. This quote is a way to express hope and remind our clients that love is part of the healing process and that they can find love everywhere. In healing... all they need is love," **Veronica De Fernandez**, Marriage and Family Therapist II, Service Chief II. 2. CYBH Clinic, 120 S. State Street in Brea. Serves close to 400 clients. 3. Lobby area in CYBH Brea Clinic. 4. Left to right: **Dr. Nathan Lopez**, Program Manager II, CYBH; **Brett O'Brien**, Director, CYBH; **Veronica De Fernandez**, Marriage and Family Therapist II, Service Chief II; **Al Jabbar**, Supervisor Chaffee's staff and **Annette Mugrditchian**, Chief of Operations, BHS. 5. Observation room in CYBH Brea Clinic. 6. "**Never Stop Exploring** is not only for our clients but for our clinicians too. As a Service Chief, I want to keep motivating my therapists and clients and encourage them to dream big and reach for the stars," **Veronica De Fernandez**





New Food Laws from

KITCHENS to SIDEWALKS

Top OC Health Care Agency (HCA) management, including Environmental Health (EH) Director **Liza Frias**, brought together dozens of city managers (or their representatives) from throughout Orange County to hear the latest on how new laws might impact the cities and updates on related legislation that's now being considered in Sacramento.

EH managers went into detail on the new laws, effective January 1, 2019, and outlined the pending legislation, and also answered a range of questions from the city leaders. (Links to the laws, can be found by the pictures.) EH Director Frias shared that the goal of the meeting was to seek their input, "We thought it would be a really good opportunity to get your feedback on how we can collaborate with cities on these laws and pending legislation which will impact both the County and your city."

The first item on the menu was the new requirements



for sidewalk vendors under Senate Bill (SB) 946. **Bao-An Huynh**, Program Manager for the Food and Pool Safety Section said food vendors in the county will still be required to get a permit through EH, "These vendors need to meet health and safety requirements of the California Retail Food Code and obtain a health



1. For more on Sidewalk Vendors click: [SB 946](#). 2. For more on Limited Service Charitable Feeding Operations click: [AB 2178](#). 3. For more on California Retail Food Code (Includes catering and host facility) click: [AB 2524](#). 4. For more on Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations click: [AB 626](#) and [AB 377](#).

SEWALK VENDORS



permit to operate.” He also told city leaders they need to look at what, if any, ordinances they have for sidewalk vendors, “If your city does not have an ordinance already, essentially the sidewalk vendors can be there. If you do have an ordinance, the law says your ordinance has to be ‘substantially compliant’ with the current regu-

lations to be effective. So it’s up to you to look at your ordinance to see if it meets what this bill states.”

Next was a discussion on Assembly Bill (AB) 626, the Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations Law,

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For Health

March is National Nutrition Month®! This annual nutrition education and information campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Eating right doesn't have to be complicated. Start out by including more fruits and vegetables with your meals and you are on your way to eating healthier. Try this colorful vegetable packed salad that is low cost and easy to make. For additional ways to enjoy more fruits and vegetables, click [here](#).



ZESTY ASIAN CHICKEN SALAD

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 3** boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and chilled
- 3** green onions, sliced
- 1½ cups** small broccoli florets
- 2** medium carrots, peeled and cut into strips
- 1** red bell pepper, cut into strips
- 2 cups** shredded cabbage
- ½ cup** fat-free Asian or sesame salad dressing
- ¼ cup** 100% orange juice
- ¼ cup** chopped fresh cilantro



Directions:

- Cut chicken breasts into small strips and place in a medium bowl with onions, broccoli, carrots, bell peppers and cabbage.
- In a small bowl, stir together dressing and juice. Pour over salad and toss well to coat. Stir in cilantro. Serve at room temperature.
- Makes 4 servings - 1 cup per serving.

or “MEHKO.” Under MEHKO, people can earn up to \$50,000 a year preparing food in their homes and selling it. According to EH managers, “With this new type of food facility it is important that we partner on the implementation, since this new food operation may impact residential communities.” Related to MEHKO is another bill under discussion in Sacramento, AB 377. This bill was introduced to address implementation concerns with AB 626. You can find the latest on its status by clicking AB 377 on [page 13](#).

City leaders were also told the County now has a way to permit public catering events, under AB 2524, at breweries, wineries or other commercial buildings or locations (as approved by the Local Enforcement Agency). **Stephanie Wilkins-Singleton**, Program Manager, Food and Pool Safety Section, says in order to get permitted under AB 2524, caterers and the owner of the facility where they set up, both need health permits, “This is called a host facility permit which allows them to have a caterer sell and serve food. The caterers also need to submit to EH an operational plan and procedures. Limitation placed on a host facility permit would include the following: no food storage, utensil storage or equipment storage at any time.”

When it comes to permits though, they are not required for all charitable feeding organizations under AB 2178. “The law makes it easier for non-profit organizations to meet essential food safety requirements without having to go through the full permit and plan check process as is required of all other commercial food establishments in the State of California,” says Stephanie. She says, the County is now in the process of identifying local non-profit organizations which would benefit from

the new law, “We are working with our partners to see how best to implement the law with as little disruption to those organizations as possible. We’re working with OC Food Bank and Second Harvest to identify all the local charitable feeding sites that are currently providing food to the needy in our jurisdiction.” But she says organizations which are preparing meals from scratch at their home base, would still need to go through the plan check and permitting approval process and obtain a health permit.

It wasn’t all food on the agenda as EH Program Managers **Darwin Cheng** and **Anthony Martinez** outlined their program responsibilities and their collaboration opportunities with cities. Darwin, with the Hazardous Materials Surveillance Section, said his team is ready to help cities in a variety of areas including regulation of micro-blading which is regulated under the body art program, and 24/7 emergency response capabilities. Those include hazmat releases, drug lab investigations as well as medical waste cases.

Meantime Anthony, with the Site Mitigation, Water Quality and Solid Waste Sections, said they work to promote a safe environment for all County residents, workers and visitors. He said this is done by directing the cleanup of contaminated properties; by protecting and monitoring the quality of drinking water, groundwater and the ocean; and, by inspecting solid waste facilities to ensure they have minimal impacts on the environment and human health. He also said the programs provide current and timely information to the public so people are aware of our projects and the hazards that we work to eliminate.

Treatment (PACT) team in the Fullerton clinic. Sara says people in this age group are “incredibly vulnerable,” and she’s grateful to have the opportunity to work with them. “They need more guidance than anybody. Often, once they turn 18, a lot of family members set them free. Or they may have had a history where they didn’t get much support or guidance. So this age range is pretty critical. Clients may need guidance to help them where they want to go.”

Sara says one of the keys to success is the ability to relate to her clients—something she draws from her own personal experience. “I was lost at that age. I actually dropped out of high school because of depression and anxiety. You don’t know why you’re experiencing it at the time; it can be confusing. I think that experience has been key to empathizing and connecting with my clients.”

Sara says she was able to turn her life around thanks to support and encouragement from her parents and peers. “I would see my classmates going off and doing great things, and I wanted a better life for myself. I knew if I didn’t push myself I would look back and deeply regret wasting all this time.”

Sara says her life now is “full of joy” with her husband Thomas, two-year old daughter Matilda and a career

she loves. And her life experiences give her credibility when she encourages her clients to find their purpose. “It’s not going to happen overnight. Consistency is key and it’s been so worth it to me. It’s been a struggle a few years in, I wanted to quit so many times; but because of consistency I have everything I ever wanted.”

In addition to the value of consistency, Sara also values collaboration—with clients and with peers alike. Sara says her colleagues are “incredible” and that they make “a great team.” Co-workers say Sara “shines and excels as a clinician and teammate.”

The consistency and collaboration, combine to create success according to Sara who defines that as, “seeing less and less of her clients.” What she means by that is, her clients have been able to move on to a new chapter in their lives, “Over time, they’re doing great things; they’re going to school; they’re working. It’s a wild ride seeing your client come in, some with multiple hospitalizations and being completely hopeless, to maybe a year later with a full-time job, maybe getting their own apartment.” It’s not the end, but a new beginning says Sara who emphasizes, that success and all its possibilities come about because clients saw it was possible to write their own story.



MISSION

In partnership with the community, protect and promote the health and safety of individuals and families in Orange County through:

- Assessment and planning
- Prevention and education
- Treatment and care



Connect with Us



The **What’s Up** newsletter is created and distributed monthly by HCA Communications. Please call (714) 834-2178 with any suggestions or comments.