



## THE 2011 WALTER F. SNYDER AWARD

### For Achievement in Advancing Environmental Health

Presented to:

**GARY P. NOONAN, RS, MPA, DLAAS**

Gary Noonan, CAPT USPHS (Ret.) is being honored for a distinguished 38 year career marked by significant public-health achievements, both in the United States and abroad. During his career Mr. Noonan made significant contributions to the field of environmental health at the local, tribal, federal and international levels.

Mr. Noonan began his career as a sanitarian with the Jefferson County Health Department (Colorado) in 1973. In 1978 he accepted a commission as a Lieutenant, Sanitarian officer in the United States Public Health Service and was assigned to the Indian Health Service (IHS) as District Sanitarian in Minot, North Dakota.

As District Sanitarian for the IHS, then LT Noonan worked with Native Americans on three North Dakota reservations conducting training of tribal members in the maintenance and operation of water and wastewater systems serving approximately 8,000 people.

As Chief of the Protective Equipment Section of NIOSH's Protective Technology Branch (1984-8 and 1990-3) and Acting Chief of the Injury Prevention Research Branch in NIOSH's Division of Safety Research (1988-90), CAPT Noonan conducted research in the areas of respiratory self-contained breathing apparatus and respiratory-protection equipment. He designed and conducted research activities of six Workplace Protection Factor (WPF) studies, testing hundreds of respirators under actual use conditions. This being the first research conducted under actual-use conditions, WPF studies changed the way NIOSH tested and certified respirators, leading to the development of better-fitting respirators for hundreds of thousands of workers.

As Section Chief at NIOSH, CAPT Noonan conceived and directed Project Fire Smoke, investigating respirator use during actual firefighting conditions in five major cities. During an 18-month period, CAPT Noonan and his team followed firefighters into burning structures observing respirator use and monitoring pressure- and conducting air-sampling. The Project showed firefighters were exposed to a variety of

contaminants due to poor fitting and poor performing respirators and that respirator facepieces were frequently removed in order to communicate. These findings prompted changes in National Fire Protection Association consensus standards, prompting manufacturers to increase respirator flow rates and design more vocally transparent speaking diaphragms, ensuring safer respirators for the nation's more than 500,000 firefighters.

Gary's involvement in the consensus standards process, includes the National Fire Protection Association's Technical Committee on Fire Service Protective Clothing and Equipment and his work on the "Standard on Open Circuit Self Contained Breathing Apparatus for Fire Fighters" and more recently on a number of ANSI and ASTM standards on lead testing and XRF instruments. Gary has been a member of the NSF Council of Public Health Consultants since 2005 and chaired the Council in 2010.

Kevan Lawlor, NSF International President and CEO expressed, "Gary Noonan's work and pioneering research in respirator standards and his leadership and contributions on the NSF Council of Public Health Consultants are greatly appreciated. Gary has career achievements that reflect the principles expressed by Walter F. Snyder and the public health mission of NSF International. The successes he has accomplished have advanced environmental health making him an outstanding selection for this year's Walter F. Snyder Award."

As Senior Environmental Health Scientist at the LPP Branch (1993-2000), CAPT Noonan guided the Branch's groundbreaking activities in Russia, Egypt, China, Chile, Mexico and Peru. Responding to the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission agreements, he designed and implemented the environmental sampling portion of pediatric blood-lead evaluation studies in Russia and trained Russian scientists in environmental sampling and analysis during a six-month time period. His findings prompted the Russian government to begin testing blood-lead levels and develop a lead-poisoning-prevention strategy that has removed lead hazards from thousands of environments where children live and play.

In Egypt in 1996-97, CAPT Noonan planned and conducted environmental sampling identifying contaminated flour as the source of an outbreak of lead poisoning. His work prompted the remediation of as many as 8,000 flour mills in Egypt, removing a dangerous hazard from the Egyptian population's primary food source.

From 1993-2000, CAPT Noonan trained 120 scientists in China, Chile, Mexico and Peru to identify sources of lead contamination and to control the contamination. This training resulted in national policies, programs and interventions to prevent childhood lead poisoning.

As Chief of LPPB from 2000 to 2002, CAPT Noonan oversaw projects that screened 140,000+ children for lead, and prompted environmental investigations that resulted in the cleanup of thousands of sites in the U.S., Mexico and Indonesia. Gary designed and directed a watershed study in Chicago that initiated a new, more proactive "high-intensity targeted screening" (HITS) approach to lead-poisoning prevention. Instead of waiting for children to come to clinics for screening, scientists went door-to-door in Chicago neighborhoods where the age of housing and socio-economic status of residents suggested that lead hazards might exist. The HITS method found higher-than-average blood-lead levels among children in targeted inner-city areas. With this data he secured an agreement from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to give these areas preferential treatment in the awarding of grants for lead cleanup. CDC still uses the HITS methodology to find pockets of lead hazards in the United States. methodology to find pockets

of lead hazards in the United States.

The Indonesia study provided third-party data convincing government officials to mandate the incremental decrease of lead in gasoline. CAPT Noonan's Mexico work prompted actions resulting in reducing lead exposure among its 900,000 residents.

Since July 2002, Mr. Noonan has served as the Associate Division Director for Emergency Response, coordinating the Division's epidemiologic response to chemical and radiological terrorism and natural disasters ; Mr. Noonan was a key individual in the CDC response to the formaldehyde in trailers used after the hurricanes of 2006.

"In the spirit of what this award stands for, Gary has always made it easy for people to work with him and with each other. To be sure, Gary brings expertise and considered thinking to his work. But he also finds ways to excite people and make everyone feel as if they are a part of the team. Our association is delighted that Gary has won this award. His many friends in NEHA will undoubtedly be moved to see their good friend Gary recognized in this very special way" notes Nelson Fabian, the Executive Director and CEO of NEHA.

### Walter F. Snyder

Executive Director, National Sanitation Foundation (Now NSF International), 1944 - 1965

For ten years, Walter F. Snyder directed the environmental health program for the City of Toledo, Ohio. Through his studies and first-hand experience, he was convinced that progress on countless vital problems of public health could best be resolved by bringing representatives of government, industry and user groups together on neutral ground where they could discuss their differences and reconcile their viewpoints.

In 1944, Walter F. Snyder resigned from his position in Toledo and returned to the University of Michigan to help found the National Sanitation Foundation at the School of Public Health. He served as Executive Director until his death in 1965.



The Walter F. Snyder Award is presented by NSF International and the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) to a recipient who has achieved peer recognition for outstanding accomplishment in the fields of health and the environment... for notable contributions to public health and the quality of life, for demonstrated capacity to work with all interests in solving environmental health problems, for knowledge and proficiency in utilizing voluntary standards to obtain environmental health objectives, and for leadership in securing action toward advancement of environmental health goals.

#### *The Past Recipients of the Walter F. Snyder Award*

1971 Callis A. Atkins	1987 George A. Kupfer	1995 Leonard F. Rice
1972 Ralph C. Pickard	1988 Mark D. Hollis	1996 Robert M. Brown
1973 William A. Broadway	1989 Boyd T. Marsh	1997 J. Roy Hickman
1974 James J. Jump	1990 Harvey F. Collins	1998 Chris J. Wiant
1975 Charles L. Senn	1991 Trenton G. Davis	1999 Khalil H. Mancy
1977 Charles C. Johnson, Jr.	1992 Robert Galvan	2000 Friedrich K. Kaefenstein
1978 Larry J. Gordon	1993 Amer El-Ahraf	2001 Robert W. Powitz
1979 John G. Todd	1994 Nelson E. Fabian	2002 Gayle J. Smith
1980 Ray B. Watts		2004 Peter D. Thornton
1981 Charles H. Gillham		2005 John B. Conway
1982 Emil T. Chanlett		2006 Arthur L. Banks
1983 John R. Bagby, Jr.		2007 Wilfried Kreisel
1984 William Nix Anderson		2008 Craig A. Shepherd
1985 William G. Walter		2009 Terrance B. Gratton
1986 Albert H. Brunwasser		2010 James J. Balsamo, Jr.

