



## **THE 2016 WALTER F. SNYDER AWARD**

for Achievement in Advancing Environmental Health

Presented by NSF International and the National Environmental Health Association to

**STEPHEN R. TACKITT, RS, MPH, DAAS**

Stephen R. Tackitt, RS, MPH, DAAS, is the 2016 recipient of the distinguished Walter F. Snyder award in recognition of more than 40 years of significant and lasting contributions to environmental and public health through leadership, education, public service and work on consensus national standards. The award honors NSF International's co-founder and first executive director Walter F. Snyder.

Mr. Tackitt has led many public health initiatives. He retired in 2012 from the Barry-Eaton District Health Department in Charlotte, Michigan, where he served as Health Officer. In that role, he provided leadership, promoted public health efforts locally and nationally, and developed novel community-based initiatives. This effort included establishing a low-income dental clinic, securing a WISEWOMAN program to promote healthy lifestyles for underinsured women and instituting an inspection policy for septic systems at the time of property sale or transfer.

Prior to that, Mr. Tackitt served as the Director of the Environmental Health Division of the Wayne County Health Department. There he provided team development and leadership to enhance programs and explore new avenues to reduce environmental health incidents. During a time of statewide budget cuts to public health services, he brought a business perspective into a governmental setting, networking with other governmental and community organizations to maintain services. He also led the effort to revise Wayne County's sanitary code, which included pioneering several environmental and public health initiatives such as a voluntary smoke-free program in restaurants, a law for clean indoor air in schools and government buildings, and body art regulations. He developed the body art guidelines in collaboration with artists, based on a model ordinance NEHA had developed.

He also served as a stakeholder in revising several editions of the Michigan Food Code and was influential in gaining consensus among food processors and restaurants for regulating food service managers and in developing new legislation for cottage food. In collaboration with Wayne State University, he was instrumental in planning and conducting the first household hazardous waste collection day in Michigan. This and subsequent collection day events served as a model for other health departments and community groups.

Preceding his position in Wayne County, Mr. Tackitt served as a regional manager for NSF International, where he was responsible for expansion of NSF's audit and certification programs, customer service, staff training and budget development.

Before that, Mr. Tackitt was Deputy Director and then Director of Environmental Health Services at the Macomb County Health Department where he implemented a new system of employee training, evaluation and recognition. He also oversaw the design and implementation of a revised administrative hearing system. Earlier in his career, he worked as a sanitarian for the Wayne County Health Department.

Mr. Tackitt served as president and region 6 vice president of NEHA, and as president of the Michigan Environmental Health Association and the Michigan Association for Local Environmental Health Administrators (MALEHA). He was chair of the National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators and the Michigan Health Professional Recovery Committee, and treasurer for the Michigan Association for Local Public Health.

He was elected chair of two NSF International joint committees for national standards on food service equipment and recreational water products. He has received many awards including the LaRue L. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award, the MALEHA Distinguished Service Award and the Davis Calvin Wagner Award. Mr. Tackitt has been a Diplomate of the American Academy of Sanitarians for over 10 years. He served six terms (18 years) on the NSF International Council of Public Health Consultants, including acting as chair, and is now an emeritus member.

Mr. Tackitt also taught environmental health as an adjunct faculty member at Oakland University and Michigan State University (MSU), and as a guest lecturer at the University of Michigan and Wayne State University. He developed and taught the first environmental health course when MSU instituted its Master of Public Health program.

“Steve Tackitt’s accomplishments reflect the principles expressed by Walter F. Snyder and the public health mission of NSF International,” says Kevan P. Lawlor, NSF International President and CEO. “His extensive experience and knowledge of environmental health and his commitment to education demonstrate a strong dedication to the promotion of public health. As chair of several NSF/ANSI standards committees, his collaboration and interpersonal skills were instrumental in successfully advancing standards development through the consensus process.”

“Steve’s innovative and collaborative leadership style, including his NEHA leadership role, establish him as a highly regarded and respected leader in the environmental health community. His commitment to the profession is a model for future leaders in public health, and his enthusiasm and ability to build consensus attest to an exceptional, memorable and rewarding career,” says David T. Dyjack, Dr.PH, CIH, 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 annually by NSF International and the National Environmental Health Association to a recipient who has achieved peer recognition for outstanding accomplishment in the field of environmental health, for notable contributions to public health and the quality of life, for work with all interests in solving environmental health problems, for utilizing voluntary consensus standards to attain 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	1989 Boyd T. Marsh	1998 Chris J. Wiant
1972 Ralph C. Pickard	1990 Harvey F. Collins	1999 Khalil H. Mancy
1973 William A. Broadway	1991 Trenton G. Davis	2000 Friedrich K. Kaefenstein
1974 James J. Jump	1992 Robert Galvan	2001 Robert W. Powitz
1975 Charles L. Senn	1993 Amer El-Ahraf	2002 Gayle J. Smith
1977 Charles C. Johnson, Jr.	1994 Nelson E. Fabian	2004 Peter D. Thornton
1978 Larry J. Gordon	1995 Leonard F. Rice	2005 John B. Conway
1979 John G. Todd	1996 Robert M. Brown	2006 Arthur L. Banks
1980 Ray B. Watts	1997 J. Roy Hickman	2007 Wilfried Kreisel
1981 Charles H. Gillham		2008 Craig A. Shepherd
1982 Emil T. Chanlett		2009 Terrance B. Gratton
1983 John R. Bagby, Jr.		2010 James J. Balsamo, Jr.
1984 William Nix Anderson		2011 Gary P. Noonan
1985 William G. Walter		2012 Harry E. Grenawitzke
1986 Albert H. Brunwasser		2013 Vincent J. Radke
1987 George A. Kupfer		2014 Priscilla Oliver
1988 Mark D. Hollis		2015 Ron Grimes



For more information on the Walter F. Snyder Award program, please visit [www.nsf.org/info/wfs](http://www.nsf.org/info/wfs).