



Secretary – Treasurer  
Alexander A. Ondis  
4625 Wards Chapel Rd.  
Owings Mills, MD 21117

Phone: 410 655-5026

ALONDIS@COMCAST.NET

[casafdo.org](http://casafdo.org)

President  
Jeffery Lewis  
Prince Georges County Health Dept.

9201 Basil Ct. Ste 318  
Largo, 20774  
Phone: 301-783883-7693

[jalewis@co.pg.md.us](mailto:jalewis@co.pg.md.us)

**BALTIMORE CONFERENCE**  
OF  
CENTRAL ATLANTIC STATES ASSOCIATION  
OF  
FOOD and DRUG OFFICIALS

*SKIP*

*ACK*

*NEWSLETTER OF THE BALTIMORE*

*CONFERENCE OF CASA*

*WINTER 2013*

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## *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

It's been a great year for CASA Baltimore Conference training, and I'm sure that the current and future Board will be working to continue at this level. It has been an honor to be your President for the past year, and after the changing of the guard in Spring of 2014, I will strive to keep contributing whatever I can to this wonderful organization. Like a few of you, I am looking at retirement in the next few years; this has started me looking at the future of environmental health and what challenges our younger members might be facing in the next five years. These are the things that come to mind when I look at the possible trends:

- An increase in regulatory oversight on the federal level with lack of funding and political will on the local level. There will be some states that will align their activities with federal agencies, but in many other jurisdictions - due to budget or ideological reasons - environmental health will be forced to do with fewer resources and less authority.
- A re-alignment of priorities in local health departments (especially in more populous areas) that may change how Environmental Health Specialist positions are utilized and funded. Initiatives like improving health through diet, and regulating or banning things like trans-fats oils, sodium, HFCS, and other unhealthy food ingredients associated with chronic illnesses may require a health inspector to go beyond the goal of preventing acute food-borne illnesses and enforce life-style choices. These initiatives tend to be grant-funded.
- Global warming: a variety of concerns have been raised by scientists about the impact of climate warming and public health. Beyond the issues of extreme weather causing disasters and the stresses on public services, there is the possibility that prevalence of certain vector-borne and water-borne illnesses will shift from one geographical region to another, or that these areas may expand. The basic task of public sanitation that environmental health workers in developed countries have not had to focus on for years, may have to be re-introduced.

Of course, these opinions are my own and do not reflect those of CASA, or the jurisdiction I work for.

Jeffrey Lewis, President

## FOOD IRRADIATION

### Why Irradiate Food?

Irradiation can serve many purposes.

- **Prevention of Foodborne Illness** – irradiation can be used to effectively eliminate organisms that cause foodborne illness, such as *Salmonella* and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*).
- **Preservation** – irradiation can be used to destroy or inactivate organisms that cause spoilage and decomposition and extend the shelf life of foods.
- **Control of Insects** – irradiation can be used to destroy insects in or on tropical fruits imported into the United States. Irradiation also decreases the need for other pest-control practices that may harm the fruit.
- **Delay of Sprouting and Ripening** – irradiation can be used to inhibit sprouting (e.g., potatoes) and delay ripening of fruit to increase longevity.
- **Sterilization** – irradiation can be used to sterilize foods, which can then be stored for years without refrigeration. Sterilized foods are useful in hospitals for patients with severely impaired immune systems, such as patients with AIDS or undergoing chemotherapy. Foods that are sterilized by irradiation are exposed to substantially higher levels of treatment than those approved for general use.

### Debunking Irradiation Myths

Irradiation does not make foods radioactive, compromise nutritional quality, or noticeably change the taste, texture, or appearance of food. In fact, any changes made by irradiation are so minimal that it is not easy to tell if a food has been irradiated.

***How Is Food Irradiated?* There are three sources of radiation approved for use on foods, and Gamma rays are one of the sources.**

- **Gamma rays** are emitted from radioactive forms of the element cobalt (Cobalt 60) or of the element cesium (Cesium 137).

Gamma radiation is used routinely to sterilize medical, dental and household products.

**Is Irradiated Food Safe to Eat?** FDA has evaluated the safety of irradiated food for more than thirty years and has found the process to be safe. The World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have also endorsed the safety of irradiated food. Beef, Pork, Poultry, Molluscan Shellfish (e.g., oysters, clams, mussels, and scallops), Shell Eggs, Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, Lettuce, Spinach, and Spices and Seasonings have been approved for Irradiation by FDA.

### **Save the Date**

WE WILL HOLD OUR 324<sup>th</sup> QUARTERLY MEETING

On

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2014

At

CLUB MEADE (FORMERLY FT. MEADE OFFICERS CLUB)

Program is being developed

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

All CASA 2013 memberships expire on **December 31, 2013**. Renewal can be made either by completing the **Renewal** form (attached for your convenience), and mailing it along with a payment, to the **CASA Treasurer**, or by mailing it to "CASA, Attn: Lisa Staley, P.O. Box 1793, Westminster, MD 21158" or by paying for membership at our next quarterly meeting on 3/13/2014.

The Renewal form is found on CASA Web-Site, [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org), click on "Renew/Join".

Renewal and Payment may also be done on-line at this this web site.

### **"CASA Membership Dues Information**

**and Application”**

Please complete today and return to:

Megan Lauff, FDA, US Custom House, 200 Chestnut St., Room 900  
Philadelphia PA 19106

DUES INFORMATION

- Regulatory \$15 Annual Dues
- Associate \$35 Annual Dues
- Retired \$10 Annual Dues

(Make checks payable to CASA – FID#56-6136694)

Local Conference Membership is included with payment of dues in all categories: check appropriate conference below:

- Baltimore  Philadelphia
- New York  Pittsburgh
- Niagara Frontier  Susquehanna
- Northeastern N.Y.  Virginia

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E. MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Form may also be mailed to CASA, ATTN: Lisa Staley, PO. Box 1793, Westminster, MD 21158

**NOTE**-----You can pay for your membership on-line, through Pay Pal, **ONLY** if you are joining or renewing your membership at the CASA website, [casafdo.org](http://casafdo.org)