

Gary Evans, Co-worker Recognition Category

Gary is a military veteran of 23 years and a 16-year employee with DEC with 11 years in SPAR Industry Preparedness Program. Gary's extensive knowledge of statutes and regulations was instrumental in his 2007 discovery of a member of industry operating tank truck loading facilities with noncompliant secondary containment areas, resulting in a \$1.7 million settlement. His tenacious drive and stellar performance in the execution of his duties serve as a model of excellence to all co-workers. During a recent high-turnover year, Gary has stepped up and personally trained and education all new personnel earning accolades all around. Gary's integrity, ethics, and personal regard for others are evident in his interactions with his co-workers, other government agencies, industry and the public.

Lisa, Griswold, Co-worker Recognition Category

Lisa is an exemplary co-worker in the Spill Prevention and Response Industry Preparedness Program who does not hesitate to help in time of need. In 2013, Lisa assisted the Prevention and Emergency Response Program (PERP) in a number of significant tasks in addition to her regular duties. Not only does Lisa help out with great positive can-do attitude, she does it efficiently and manages her time ensuring that her work with both PERP and IPP are covered. She has great esprit de corps.

Melanie Hollon, Co-worker Recognition Category

Melanie is a model of excellence to internal and external customers alike. Prior to last fall, Melanie had been the sole Food Safety and Sanitation contact in Soldotna since 2012. She conducted over 330 inspections and complaint responses during her short tenure. She tackled many obstacles to achieve her level of KSA's including 14 intensive FDA off-site training courses and over 50 online classes. Now she is training a new hire and developing an efficient team to support the FSS program on the Kenai. Melanie's spirit personifies the mission of protecting public health at regulated food, seafood and public facilities. She shines by her eagerness to learn, gain confidence and to be a role model to her co-workers.

Jacqueline Knue, Co-worker Recognition Category

Jackie serves as a role model to the Environmental Health Lab on a daily basis. Her positive attitude and hardworking nature make her enjoyable to work with. She is passionate about her work and the quality of the results. Jackie has worked to formalize the FDA audit checklist for the HPLC/PCOX method of testing Paralytic Shellfish Toxin in shellfish to move from the mouse bioassay towards the more detailed toxin profile of the chemistry method. She is a certified dairy analyst and has improved efficiencies in this area of the lab as well. Jackie is a natural leader and has moved into the role of Chemistry Supervisor after acting for four months.

Ken Smith, Co-worker Recognition Category

Ken Smith leads the Operator Training and Certification Program team. The mission of this program spans both the Division of Water, which the program is a part of, and the Division of Environmental Health. Ken has been a key player in building relationships between the two divisions on operator

certification issues. Ken's dedication to his work is inspiring and his mentorship ability beyond reproach. Ken is always available to answer questions and assist co-workers with tasks even with his substantial workload. Due to his vast knowledge of the water/wastewater industry and support of the certification program, Ken was recently elected the Water Division Director on the board of Directors for the Association of Boards of Certification. The public health of Alaskans is foremost in Ken's mind by ensuring that all water and wastewater systems are being properly operated and maintained.

Zeena Siddeek, Co-worker Recognition Category

Zeena is an excellent leader and mentor. She values her team and their input; this reduces costly errors in permits and re-work. Due to these qualities and the help she provides permittees and permit engineers, the department has not had to revoke and reissue any major permit under her watch. An example is the Savant Alaska permit for their Badami stationary source. This was a legacy stationary source that Savant bought from BPXA. There were a number of Best Available Control Technology issues that required institutional knowledge that the new owners did not have. Zeena provided valuable guidance to the permitting engineer and the new owners.

Tamar Stephens, Co-worker Recognition Category (Posthumous)

Tamar Stephens was an Environmental Program Specialist with DEC's Contaminated Sites Program from 1995-2013. The program suffered a great loss when she passed away unexpectedly in March 2013. Tamar had a wealth of experience working with rural communities, and with cross-cultural, subsistence and tribal-rights issues. She valued education and was a great teacher, mentoring fellow-employees and developing trainings that continue to be used as core references for the program. Tamar was dedicated to the mission of DEC, traveling frequently to remote communities for public meetings and site visits. She was in her element speaking one-on-one with individuals concerned about the impacts of contaminants and educating them about the science and technology surrounding complex issues. She is greatly missed.

Beth Verrelli, Co-worker Recognition Category

Beth has provided outstanding support to the Municipal Grants and Loans Program in the Division of Water for over 20 years. She has mentored many new employees resulting in competent, technically trained staff from the level of College Interns to Program Managers. Beth has consistency taken the lead to provide procedural and guideline updates, review and critique of technical correspondence and provide communities with expert assistance. Beth is highly respected by her co-workers and the communities that she serves; she is committed to doing what it takes to ensure their needs are met.

Shell Drilling Rig Kulluk Grounding Incident Response Team, Crisis Responder Category

Steve Russell, Dale Gardner, John Brown, John Engles, Dennis Harwood, Camille Stephens, Sarah Moore, Gary Folley, Richard Moriarty, Mike Downs, Ashley Adamczak, Ty Keltner, Larry Iwamoto, Shannon Miller, Alan Wien, Young Ha, Jonathan Schick, Cheyenne Sanchez, Cassidy Kearney, Gay Harpole, Don Fritz, Jade Gamble, John Kotula, Timothy Hoffman, Robert Bowers, Brad Dunker, Clark Cox, Jusdi McDonald, Richard Vanderhoek

On December 27, 2012, Shell's Arctic drilling rig Kulluk broke free of its tow. Following several failed attempts to recover the non-self-propelled rig and successful evacuation of its crew, the Kulluk grounded on Sitkalidak Island on December 31 with 139,000 gallons of diesel and 12,000 gallons of other oils on board. A command post was established consisting of Shell, DEC and the US Coast Guard. This Unified Command managed the incident round-the-clock working 12-16 hour shifts and missing time with family through the holidays. DEC staff brought skills, knowledge and a commitment to ensure the protection of Alaskan's and the environment. On January 7, 2013, the Kulluk was safely refloated from Sitkalidak Island, towed to a safe harbor and eventually to Dutch Harbor. Not a drop of oil was spilled.

Nattinee Nipataruedi, Customer Service Excellence Category

Nattinee (Natt) keeps the lifeblood that is the data management system of the Division of Air Permitting Program pumping and delivering information to both State Air Quality staff and EPA. This information is essential for the timely delivery of permits and compliance by the Air Permitting Team. Hundreds of permits each with dozens of conditions, encompassing myriads of individual documents are stored in AirTools. This is the system that Natt maintains. The data must be accurate, secure and current. With an always positive outlook, Natt calmly navigates through deadlines, limited funding and training others to use the database. Natt's "let's get it done" attitude, sense of humor and technical expertise are a unique combination and perfect for the challenges she addresses daily. She is a vital part of the team.

Marion Kinter, Customer Service Excellence Category

Marian has served as a Micro/Network Technician tracking license inventory, IT related procurement, network and server support and supporting the IT Help Desk in Juneau. She successfully processed 6,137 IT Help Desk tickets, 2200 more than any other DEC helpdesk person during that time. Marion can often be found with her cart moving or replacing our computer equipment ensuring work stations for everyone. Her attention to detail is unsurpassed; she always leaves a work area cleaner than when she came to it. Examples of Marion's above and beyond service: *"Last year when one of my key employees was home for an extended period of time during a critical time of the year, Marion offered her own time to go personally to the employee's home for remote IT setup."* *"Marion anticipates our IT electrical and data needs and provides solutions before we know we have a problem. She remembers our IT plans for cubicle spaces when we don't"*. Marion just retired and will be greatly missed.

Claudi Thompson, Customer Service Excellence Category

Claudi is an Environmental Program Tech in Fairbanks Air Quality. She is tasked with intake and initial investigation of most public air quality complaints in an area with particularly difficult air quality issues. Claudie provides excellent customer service responding to complaints from nuisance smoke from wood and home-heating devices while balancing other workload demands. Many individuals are very upset, but her calm manner and ability to listen have diffused many potentially volatile situations. Her investigations and advisory letters have led to changes in burning practices or made a convincing case

for willing individuals to participate in the borough's wood stove exchange program. Claudi is often tapped to answer specialized, difficult questions, which she does cheerfully and as though she had just been waiting to field such a request.

Juneau Air Permit Program Compliance Team, Customer Service Excellence Team Category

Jason Olds, Amy Hemenway, James Plosay

The Division of Air Permits, Program Compliance Section is responsible for ensuring the conditions of air quality permits are adhered to by the owner/operators as well as for investigating complains and for advising permittees about requirements needed for their facilities. The operations have short, seasonal, tight schedules and it is crucial that for the financial stability and ongoing public works success provided by these operations that they receive swift efficient service from knowledgeable state regulators. This team was sensitive to the schedule of the companies, performing the permit revisions during the off-season to minimize the impact and allow time for the operation reps to fully understand the conditions. Using their own and coworkers' experiences to make rational simplifications of the rewritten permit where possible, efficiencies were realized and costs kept low while maintaining environmental standards. This team is a stellar example of how to reach this type of goal.

Fine Particulate Matter Air Quality Regulations Outreach, Customer Service Excellence Team Category

Gary Mendivil, Barbara Trost, Karin Landsberg, Robin Wagner, Cindy Williams, Sean Egan, Brandon Brefczynski, Cindy Heil, Ty Keltner, Joan Hardesty, Deanna Huff, Rusty Gesin, Christopher Bryant, Scott Sloane, Tera Ollila, Ali Hamade, Brian Yablon, Claire Fishwick

In 2009 the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) was declared an air quality nonattainment area for fine particulate matter (PM2.5). Studies show that the primary cause is smoke from home heating. Solutions for the issue are highly sensitized and controversial. In September, the Air Quality Division kicked off its public comment period on a regulations package that will serve as part of the state's role in addressing FNSB air quality. The outreach for this went well beyond state requirements because of the complex issue. The goal was to not only get feedback on the regulations but to more broadly educate residents about the pollution problem, potential solutions, home energy programs and the larger planning effort. The team displayed extraordinary professionalism, respect and courtesy to the public in difficult situations at the four open houses and four public hearings, working significant time outside of work hours. Given the emotionally charged issue, the team provided exceptional service to the public in gathering their feedback in a balanced professional, civil and empathetic manner.

Operator Certification Team, Customer Service Excellence Team Category

Ken Smith, Martin Suzuki, Galen Heffern

The Operator Certification and Training Program is tasked with certifying operators of more than 900 water and wastewater systems across the state and ensuring that the residents and visitors of the state can rely upon these sanitation systems for safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal. Operators face many challenges including insufficient funding, harsh weather conditions, and complex

regulatory requirements. The Op Cert team is composed of innovative individuals who strive to improve internal processes to better serve their customers, developing personal connections and creatively solving problems. Recently, the Committee Chair of the Governor's Water and Wastewater Advisory Board, Mark Buggins, made the following statement: *"The board feels that the current Op Cert group is doing a fantastic job. They are proactive and make suggestions/changes that greatly benefit the operators in Alaska."*

Rusty Gesin, Exceptional Performance Individual Category

Rusty is an essential cog in the permitting team in the Division of Air Quality and the main business analyst for the Air Permits Program. She has originated a multitude of air permit systems as well as being a vital team member for the Air Tools Data Program, the Emission Inventory and the Air Permit fee structures. Rusty wears so many hats for the program that it is difficult to find a part of the program in which she doesn't play an important role. This last year, Rusty took on a great deal of additional responsibility as part of the team that developed an interactive portal for permittees to communicate with the primary Air database. The new system had to be secure, intuitive and accurate and encompass of the potential situations a permittee might encounter. Rusty then helped train permittees on how to use the system and at the same time took over the position of compliance manager while a co-worker was on family leave. The combined workload was a daunting task that Rusty was only able to manage due to her excellent work ethic and extensive air permits knowledge.

Scott Faber, Exceptional Performance Individual Category

Scott is a permit writer in the Division of Air Quality's Air Permit program which is responsible for managing stationary discharges of air pollution through a permit and compliance program. Effective permit writing can make the difference in thousands of dollars annually for the department and also for the permittees. In the past year, Scott took the lead in developing proposed revisions for incorporating federal requirements into Title V permits to increase efficiency in issuing permits. Scott takes on a very large load of Title V permit renewals, and assists less experienced staff with patience and humor. His leadership in this area is substantial and his expertise thorough. Scott is hard-working and dedicated; Air Permits is lucky to have him on the team.

Tom Straugh, Exceptional Performance Individual Category

On the night of Saturday May 25, 2013, the Juneau DEC building suffered a power outage. The event took place during an upgrade of the heating and conditioning system causing the entire air system to catastrophically fail and temperatures to rapidly climb to over 90 degrees. IT Specialist Tom Straugh received notice that there was an issue in the server room and that the temperature had risen to a critical level. DEC has considerable financial investment in the servers and the information they contain is vital to running the Department and meeting the needs of the public. Tom came to the office immediately to make sure the servers and other equipment were not compromised. He spent the remainder of the Memorial Day weekend in the office under high temperatures and worked in the server room which by then was over 100 degrees. When the workweek began, DEC staff were dismissed

due to the intense heat but Tom sweated it out all week in the server room to tend the equipment. He shut down some equipment and brought in mobile air conditioners. At one point, buckets of ice with fans were used to cool the server room. He set up remote monitoring and watched the server room temperatures from home after business hours. Without Tom's selfless actions, the state would have lost this equipment leaving DEC unable to fulfill its mission and duty. Replacing this equipment would have been expensive and a failure at this year-end time would have been crippling. Thank you Tom!

Trisha Bower, Exceptional Performance Individual Category

Trisha is a marvel of productivity in permitting, inspections and community assistance in the Solid Waste Program. A program focus for the last five years has been on improving management and operations of Class III landfills in rural Alaska. Trisha has tenaciously pursued the program's objective since her start date in 2010. The performance measure has improved from 44% in FY2011 to 46% now and Trisha is responsible for about 2/3 of this significant accomplishment. One reason that Trisha is so successful is her availability to her assigned communities, helping them find and obtain grant funding, meet with them at conferences, and help them coordinate the needs of the landfill with those of other local projects. In 2013, Trisha set a record for inspections; she either led or participated in inspections at 41 different rural landfills, more than double her previous maximum. This required scheduling much travel and field time, often nudging into her weekend. Her level of service is unparalleled and does much to further the goals of the Solid Waste Program in Alaska.

Air Quality Electronic Comment Submission Team, Exceptional Performance Team Category

Scott Dodson, Kent Thomas, Cindy Heil, Alice Edwards

In September 2013, the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) launched a new online service for "Electronic Comment Submission" that was identified and outlined out as a needed tool to assist staff in handling the potential hundreds of comments expected for an upcoming regulations packet. This was developed from a conceptual idea into reality by a team of four individuals. The form provides the public a web-based form with clearly focused areas to comment upon and a way to include attachments. From initial conception to full rollout, the electronic comment submission form was completed in 21 days. The elegant and simplistic nature highlights the creative and innovative use of technology that will assist in streamlining staff efforts in receiving and managing comments and preparing responses. The highly controversial PM2.5 regulations package was the form's first use. It worked beautifully and received positive comments itself, various users and reviewers asked to copy the concepts. Truly a team accomplishment – from the conceptual idea developed by Cindy and Alice; to Kent and Scott for finding the technical solutions to bring it to reality. Also, special recognition for Scott regarding how fast he got it into production!

James Baumgartner, Leadership Category

It is not uncommon for an expert in a field to be described as someone who "wrote the book" on a given topic, but in the case of Jim's role in Alaska air permits' compliance regulations, it is a simple statement of fact – Jim did write the book! One might say the Jim has forgotten more air regulatory details than any other manager would ever know, except that Jim rarely ever forgets anything about air regulations.

Jim can quote almost any chapter or section of federal or state air quality regulations, knows the Alaska statute that authorizes it and recalls the year the legislature adopted it. Jim always strives to find a solution to a problem that benefits the greatest number of parties. Jim is an engaged manager who is always available to help with a range of matters from an employee taking their first inspection trip to debating the merits of different air modeling approaches for a planned facility costing millions of dollars with a consortium of private companies. Jim has risen through the ranks of state service to his current position of Section Manager - always humble, dedicated and of unquestioned integrity.

John Kuterbach, Leadership Category

John has been the Air Permits Program Manager in the Division of Air Quality for thirteen years and has overseen a far-flung staff working on a number of important projects, including Usibelli Wishbone Hill Coal, the North Slope LNG compressor plant, and Pebble Mine; many with aggressive permit schedules.

At the same time, John has been tasked with adhering to the USEPA requirements for adopting new regulations, submitting information and providing direction for federal air quality oversight. His technical expertise is unsurpassed, but his true gift lies in how well he is able to teach his staff how to use the knowledge and skills they possess. John demands much from those he supervises but he is quick to support his staff and provide them with training and tools. While John is a tough negotiator and able leader, he is able to identify situations when his subordinates are uniquely positioned to use their talents to act in the Department's best interest. It is an excellent leader who knows how and when to delegate important tasks to other staff members.

DEC staff nominated by other agencies:

Crisis Responder Category

Bob Mattson, SPAR PERP Juneau

John Ebel, SPAR PERP Fairbanks

Bob and John were nominated by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs as part of the team responding to the catastrophic 2013 Spring Flood in Galena and other communities in the Yukon-Koyukuk area.