



2026 CHEAC Annual Meeting Workshop Session Biographies

16 Million Pounds of Lithium and a Sea of Mud: Environmental Health Leadership During Complex Emergencies

Marni Flagg, MPH, REHS, Assistant Bureau Chief

Marni Flagg, MPH, REHS, is the Assistant Bureau Chief for the Environmental Health Bureau at the Monterey County Health Department. With more than 17 years of experience in environmental health, she has worked across multiple program areas and now oversees a broad portfolio of environmental health services, emergency response, and organizational development. Marni is passionate about developing future leaders, improving public health systems, and fostering collaboration through mentorship, training, and innovation.

Ric Encarnacion, Bureau Chief

Ric Encarnacion began his Environmental Health career in 1993 while serving in the U.S. Navy as a Hospital Corpsman/Preventive Medicine Technician. After active duty, he joined the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health and earned his Registration as an Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) in 1999. He moved to Monterey County in 2012 as Assistant Director and became Director of Environmental Health in 2020. Ric is an active supporter of the REHS profession, serving in leadership roles with statewide associations such as the California Environmental Health Association (CEHA) and the California Conference for Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH). He earned his MPH from San Diego State University Graduate School of Public Health in 2005, completed US CDC's Environmental Public Health Leadership Institute (EPHLI) program in 2011, and graduated from the Centers for Homeland Defense and Security Executive Leaders Program (ELP) in 2024.