

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND PROVIDERS: A PARTNERSHIP

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Environmental Laboratory Certification Program  
(ELCP)

Environmental Measurement Symposium  
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# Back in the Stone Age

The Year, 1974

- ❖ Safe Drinking Water Act - Public Law 93-523, 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress, S. 433
- ❖ To amend the Public Health Service Act to assure that the public is provided with safe drinking water, and for other purposes

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# Back in the Stone Age (*continued*)

- ❖ Specified contaminants which may have adverse effects on human health
- ❖ Contained criteria and procedures to assure a safe supply of drinking water

# Back in the Stone Age *(continued)*

- ❖ 1979 – Certification of Drinking Water laboratories
- ❖ 1986 – Certification of Environmental laboratories
- ❖ 1993 – Dr. Charles Hartwig, from the Florida Department of Health participated in the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) focus group

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# Into the Renaissance...



- ❖ 1999 - Florida becomes an Accrediting Authority for the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAC)
- ❖ ELCP had a staff of 15
- ❖ Assessment checklist changed from method specific to NELAC Chapter 5 checklists

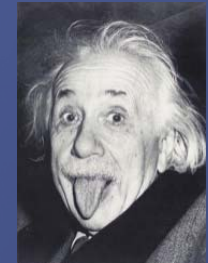
# Into the Renaissance (*continued*)

- ❖ 2011 - Laws of Florida reviewed, reports suggested privatization, outsource of inspections
- ❖ ELCP list of laboratories due for assessments started to back up

# Into the Renaissance (*continued*)

- ❖ 2012 – House Bill 1263 mandated contracting. ELCP announces requirement to contract assessments to third party providers
  - ❖ Changes in ELCP staff (currently six)
    - ❖ Retirements and job security

# To The Age of Enlightenment



- ❖ Currently ELCP has seven approved providers:
  - ❖ A2LA – American Association for Laboratory Accreditation
  - ❖ Analytical Excellence, Inc
  - ❖ ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board / Laboratory Accreditation Bureau
  - ❖ NV5/Dade Moeller
  - ❖ Shepherd Technical Services
  - ❖ Wade Consulting and Solutions
  - ❖ Wales Scientific Solutions, LLC
- ❖ Two pending approval providers

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# ELCP and Providers: The Contract



- ❖ Included in the task list:
  - ❖ Complete assessor technologies table
  - ❖ Determine needs to conduct the assessment completely - Confirm with ELCP that submitted laboratory applications are ready to be assessed

## ELCP and Providers: The Contract (*continued*)

- ❖ Develop assessment schedules and submit them to ELCP prior to the assessment
- ❖ Permit designated ELCP staff to observe any assessments performed
- ❖ Conduct assessments to determine compliance with applicable provisions of Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 64E-1

# ELCP and Providers: The Contract (*continued*)

- ❖ Issue assessment reports, documenting deficiencies, linked by reference to the NELAC/The NELAC Institute (TNI) Standards  
- send electronic copies to ELCP
- ❖ Instruct laboratories to submit a proposed plan of correction for each deficiency identified in the assessment report

# ELCP and Providers: The Contract (*continued*)

- ❖ Review the proposed corrective actions and submit recommendations to the laboratory and ELCP
- ❖ Supply all checklists gathered and used for all *Cryptosporidium*/*Giardia* assessments



# ELCP and Providers: The Contract (*continued*)

- ❖ Submit itemized report of recommendations to ELCP with final certification recommendations
- ❖ Supply material gathered and used during the assessment within seven days of a request by ELCP

# The Key - Communication



ELCP...

- ❖ Sends previous assessments, Proficiency Test reports, applications and other related information to providers before new assessments
- ❖ Reviews assessment reports from providers
- ❖ Performs contract oversight to evaluate providers compliance and performance
- ❖ Informs providers of situations or issues related to the scheduled laboratories

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# Is this partnership working?

- ❖ Benefits for the state of Florida and the public:
  - ❖ Knowledge and expertise from experienced providers
  - ❖ Different backgrounds bring more ideas
  - ❖ Multiple providers have alleviated the number of laboratories assessments in backlog
  - ❖ Reduces costs to the state of Florida
    - ❖ Travel expenses, overhead and personnel

# Is this partnership working? *(continued)*

- ❖ ELCP staff of six
  - ❖ Has more availability to perform the administrative duties at the office
  - ❖ Has more time to assist clients
  - ❖ ELCP attends follow-up and surveillance assessments
  - ❖ ELCP has 366 laboratories



# What about laboratories?

- ❖ Flexibility to select providers and the schedule date
- ❖ Added assessments expenses
- ❖ ELCP reviewing data packages
- ❖ Travel expenses can be shared with nearby laboratories for the same provider

# What about laboratories?

- ❖ Laboratories can get quotes from multiple providers to select which best meets their needs
- ❖ Competition among providers decreases prices and offers higher quality of service
- ❖ Multiple providers = more availability for assessments
- ❖ After five years outsourcing to providers, laboratories are responsive and have adjusted well to the contract process

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# Notes

- ❖ Contracting providers was a solution that works for the state of Florida
- ❖ Success and trust in the quality of service delivered by providers, starts with a comprehensive selection process
- ❖ Oversight of the third party providers is critical
- ❖ Constant communication and mutual understanding make the partnership work

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## And More Notes...

- ❖ Providers' assessments follow the state of Florida contract, rules and regulations
- ❖ Room for improvement:
  - ❖ Frequent meetings between ELCP and providers
  - ❖ Cooperation to achieve efficiency
  - ❖ Develop strategies, share development plans
  - ❖ Open attitude





They always say time changes  
things, but you actually  
have to change them yourself.

Andy Warhol

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# Questions?

Thank you for your attention!

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# My Appreciation to...

- ❖ Steve (el Jefe) Arms
  - ❖ Presentation “*Florida Environmental Laboratory Certification: A look at the Past, Present, and Future*” (Florida Society of Environmental Analyst) October 29, 2015
- ❖ Florida ELCP’s great team of providers, their comments, suggestions and hard work!