

NEHA General Environmental Health Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What should environmental public health practitioners focus on to prevent communicable diseases?**
 - A. Restricting movement in communities**
 - B. Monitoring and regulating establishments**
 - C. Increasing the availability of fast food**
 - D. Reducing waste management costs**
- 2. True or False: Documenting all observations is an unnecessary step in an investigation.**
 - A. True**
 - B. False**
 - C. This depends on the investigation**
 - D. Only if electronic records are kept**
- 3. Which of the following is a health risk associated with lead exposure?**
 - A. Neurological damage**
 - B. Cardiovascular disease**
 - C. Liver failure**
 - D. Respiratory issues**
- 4. Which activity can undermine biodiversity?**
 - A. Conservation efforts**
 - B. Ecological restoration**
 - C. Urbanization**
 - D. Organic farming practices**
- 5. The assemblage of large numbers of people in a limited area requires that certain minimum facilities be provided. Some guidelines to assist in the preparation for mass gatherings include:**
 - A. A plan showing area of site and location in relation to towns within 20 miles**
 - B. Refuse storage and disposal**
 - C. Noise control**
 - D. All the above**

- 6. Which of the following is a common consequence of eutrophication in aquatic systems?**
- A. Increased biodiversity**
 - B. Decreased oxygen levels**
 - C. Improved water clarity**
 - D. Enhanced fish populations**
- 7. What is the primary source of mercury pollution in waterways?**
- A. Agricultural runoff**
 - B. Industrial emissions, particularly from coal burning**
 - C. Household waste disposal**
 - D. Oil spills**
- 8. The process of comprehensive community planning includes all of the following except _____.**
- A. A statement of goals and objectives**
 - B. Public information and community action**
 - C. Surrounding area politics**
 - D. Basic studies, mapping, and data analysis**
- 9. Which of the following is a defining characteristic of Stage 1 of the demographic transition?**
- A. High technological advancements**
 - B. Low birth and death rates**
 - C. High fertility and mortality rates**
 - D. Stable population growth**
- 10. Which author wrote The Jungle, influencing the first Food and Drug Act in the US in 1906?**
- A. Thomas Malthus**
 - B. Upton Sinclair**
 - C. Lemuel Shattuck**
 - D. Paul Ehrlich**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. A**
- 4. C**
- 5. D**
- 6. B**
- 7. B**
- 8. C**
- 9. C**
- 10. B**

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Explanations

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1. What should environmental public health practitioners focus on to prevent communicable diseases?

- A. Restricting movement in communities**
- B. Monitoring and regulating establishments**
- C. Increasing the availability of fast food**
- D. Reducing waste management costs**

Monitoring and regulating establishments is crucial for environmental public health practitioners in the prevention of communicable diseases. This focus involves ensuring that businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and commercial kitchens adhere to health standards that mitigate the risks of disease transmission. Practitioners assess hygiene practices, food handling, water supply safety, and pest control measures, all of which are essential components of preventing outbreaks. By regulating these establishments, public health officials can identify potential hazards before they lead to significant health issues. Regular inspections and the enforcement of health codes help maintain a sanitary environment that reduces the spread of communicable diseases, ultimately protecting community health. In contrast, options that involve restricting movement in communities or increasing the availability of fast food do not effectively address the necessary preventive measures required for communicable diseases. Reducing waste management costs, while important for other environmental health aspects, does not specifically target the prevention of disease transmission. Therefore, the emphasis on monitoring and regulating establishments highlights a proactive approach to safeguarding public health through established regulations.

2. True or False: Documenting all observations is an unnecessary step in an investigation.

- A. True**
- B. False**
- C. This depends on the investigation**
- D. Only if electronic records are kept**

Documenting all observations during an investigation is a critical step in ensuring accuracy and thoroughness. It provides a comprehensive record of what was observed, which is essential for analyzing the situation, identifying trends, and drawing conclusions. This documentation serves multiple purposes: it allows investigators to track the process, enhances the credibility of the findings, and provides valuable information for future reference or legal proceedings. Without careful documentation, vital details could be overlooked or forgotten, leading to incomplete assessments or misinterpretations. Effective record-keeping also facilitates communication among team members and stakeholders, ensuring that everyone has access to the same information and understands the context of the investigation. Overall, documentation is not only necessary but is a foundational aspect of conducting a thorough and scientifically valid investigation.

3. Which of the following is a health risk associated with lead exposure?

- A. Neurological damage**
- B. Cardiovascular disease**
- C. Liver failure**
- D. Respiratory issues**

Lead exposure is particularly hazardous due to its known impact on the neurological system. The correct answer highlights the significant risks lead poses to brain health, especially in children, who are more vulnerable. Chronic exposure to lead can lead to a range of neurological impairments, including decreased IQ, attention deficits, and behavioral problems. In adults, lead exposure can also contribute to cognitive decline and other neurological issues. While cardiovascular disease, liver failure, and respiratory issues can be health concerns associated with various environmental toxins, they are not the primary effects linked specifically to lead exposure. Cardiovascular disease may have a broader set of risk factors and isn't a direct consequence of lead; similarly, liver failure and respiratory problems arise from different environmental or health-related exposures. Thus, neurological damage remains the primary and most significant health risk tied to lead exposure.

4. Which activity can undermine biodiversity?

- A. Conservation efforts**
- B. Ecological restoration**
- C. Urbanization**
- D. Organic farming practices**

Urbanization significantly undermines biodiversity primarily because it involves the transformation of natural habitats into urban areas for residential, commercial, and industrial use. This process typically leads to habitat destruction, fragmentation, and degradation, severely impacting local flora and fauna. As cities expand, the natural ecosystems get altered, and many species are unable to adapt to these changes, leading to decreased populations or even extinction. In contrast, conservation efforts, ecological restoration, and organic farming practices are aimed at protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Conservation efforts work to preserve existing natural habitats and the species that inhabit them, whereas ecological restoration seeks to recover degraded ecosystems to a state that is both functional and supports biodiversity. Organic farming practices are designed to promote sustainable agricultural methods that can enhance biodiversity by avoiding harmful chemicals and supporting a more natural ecosystem. Thus, urbanization stands out as the activity that directly contributes to the loss of biodiversity through habitat loss and environmental changes that are largely detrimental to wildlife and plant species.

5. The assemblage of large numbers of people in a limited area requires that certain minimum facilities be provided. Some guidelines to assist in the preparation for mass gatherings include:

- A. A plan showing area of site and location in relation to towns within 20 miles**
- B. Refuse storage and disposal**
- C. Noise control**
- D. All the above**

For mass gatherings, it is essential to have comprehensive planning to ensure the health and safety of attendees. An effective plan must encompass various elements that address the unique needs and challenges presented by large crowds in limited areas. This includes having a detailed map of the site and its location in relation to nearby towns to facilitate logistics, emergency response, and coordination with local services. Having this information allows event planners to understand accessibility, potential overcrowding, and operational efficiency. Refuse storage and disposal is another critical aspect. Large gatherings generate significant waste, and without proper waste management strategies in place, the event could lead to environmental issues, health risks from unsanitary conditions, and complaints from attendees. Adequate refuse facilities ensure that waste is disposed of properly, maintaining sanitary conditions throughout the event. Noise control is also an important consideration, especially when events are held in close proximity to residential areas or public spaces. Implementing noise control measures helps to minimize disturbances, ensuring that the event does not negatively affect surrounding communities and adheres to local regulations regarding noise levels. Combining all these guidelines—site planning, refuse management, and noise control—provides a comprehensive framework for safely and effectively managing mass gatherings, thereby justifying the inclusion of all aspects as necessary components of

6. Which of the following is a common consequence of eutrophication in aquatic systems?

- A. Increased biodiversity**
- B. Decreased oxygen levels**
- C. Improved water clarity**
- D. Enhanced fish populations**

Eutrophication refers to the excessive enrichment of water bodies with nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, often due to runoff from agricultural or urban areas. This nutrient overload stimulates the rapid growth of algae, leading to algal blooms. One of the most significant consequences of this phenomenon is the depletion of oxygen levels in the water. As algae die and decompose, the decomposition process consumes oxygen in the water, which can lead to hypoxic (low oxygen) conditions. These conditions are detrimental to aquatic life, as many species, including fish and invertebrates, require sufficient oxygen to survive. Thus, decreased oxygen levels is a direct and common consequence of eutrophication in aquatic systems. In contrast, increased biodiversity and enhanced fish populations are generally not outcomes associated with eutrophication; rather, the opposite tends to occur, as low oxygen levels can lead to fish kills and a decline in species diversity. Improved water clarity is also unlikely because algal blooms typically decrease visibility in the water rather than enhance it.

7. What is the primary source of mercury pollution in waterways?

- A. Agricultural runoff**
- B. Industrial emissions, particularly from coal burning**
- C. Household waste disposal**
- D. Oil spills**

The primary source of mercury pollution in waterways is largely attributed to industrial emissions, particularly from coal burning. When coal is burned for energy, it releases mercury into the atmosphere. This mercury can then settle into water bodies through precipitation or atmospheric deposition. Once in the water, mercury can undergo chemical transformations and bioaccumulate in aquatic organisms, leading to elevated levels in the food chain and posing significant health risks to both wildlife and humans. The emphasis on coal burning is important as it represents a significant contributor to global mercury emissions. In contrast, while agricultural runoff, household waste disposal, and oil spills can lead to various forms of pollution, they are not the primary contributors to mercury levels in waterways. Agricultural runoff may introduce pesticides and fertilizers but is not linked to mercury. Household waste generally does not contain notable amounts of mercury, and while oil spills can harm aquatic environments, they do not significantly introduce mercury into the water. Hence, the connection between coal burning and mercury pollution establishes industrial emissions as the primary source in this context.

8. The process of comprehensive community planning includes all of the following except _____.

- A. A statement of goals and objectives**
- B. Public information and community action**
- C. Surrounding area politics**
- D. Basic studies, mapping, and data analysis**

Comprehensive community planning aims to create a structured approach to development and resource management that incorporates various community aspects. The essential elements of this process typically include a statement of goals and objectives, which outlines what the community aims to achieve. Public information and community action are crucial for engaging residents and ensuring their participation in the planning process, fostering transparency and collaboration. Additionally, basic studies, mapping, and data analysis form the foundation of informed decision-making by providing necessary insights into community needs, resources, and potential challenges. Surrounding area politics, while it may influence the planning process, is not a fundamental component of comprehensive community planning itself. The focus of this process is on systematically addressing the community's needs and aspirations through strategic planning rather than on political dynamics or considerations that may exist outside the community's immediate concerns. This distinction underscores the emphasis on community-driven efforts rather than external political influences.

9. Which of the following is a defining characteristic of Stage 1 of the demographic transition?

- A. High technological advancements**
- B. Low birth and death rates**
- C. High fertility and mortality rates**
- D. Stable population growth**

Stage 1 of the demographic transition is characterized by high fertility and mortality rates. This stage typically reflects a pre-industrial society where both the birth rate and death rate are elevated. Communities in this stage often face challenges such as limited access to healthcare, high prevalence of disease, and insufficient sanitation, leading to high mortality rates. At the same time, high fertility rates are sustained as families tend to have more children, partly due to the lack of family planning and the need for labor in agricultural societies. The combination of these high birth and death rates results in a relatively stable population size, as the number of births is balanced by the number of deaths. As societies progress through the demographic transition, they usually move into Stage 2, where improvements in healthcare and living conditions lead to reduced mortality rates while birth rates remain high, resulting in population growth.

10. Which author wrote *The Jungle*, influencing the first Food and Drug Act in the US in 1906?

- A. Thomas Malthus**
- B. Upton Sinclair**
- C. Lemuel Shattuck**
- D. Paul Ehrlich**

Upton Sinclair authored "*The Jungle*," a novel published in 1906 that vividly depicted the unsanitary and inhumane conditions of the meatpacking industry in Chicago. The graphic descriptions of the processing of meat and the associated health hazards shocked the public and prompted widespread concern about food safety and public health. This outcry played a pivotal role in raising awareness and led to significant reforms in food safety regulations, ultimately resulting in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act in the same year. Sinclair's work is crucial in understanding how literature can influence public policy and legislative actions regarding health and safety standards in the food industry.