

## Highlights

- ITLA Quarterly Meeting Notice
- Regulatory Update
- MWRA Update



# ITLA

*The Newsletter of  
Independent Testing  
Laboratories Association  
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## **Message from the President**

*By Kevin Braga*

The much anticipated and heralded ITLA website is up and running. Please take the opportunity to visit the website [www.itla-ma.org](http://www.itla-ma.org) at your earliest convenience and let us know what you think. We are interested in both positive and negative responses, and are always looking for ideas on how we might improve the new site.

We are planning a new training seminar for trouble shooting gas chromatography for some time at the beginning of the new year. Please stay tuned.

As many of you are aware, we are offering two Mass Spectra Interpretation seminars in the upcoming weeks. There will be one course for basic skills followed by a second course on the intermediate level. Participants can register for either course. Registration is due as soon as possible.

We are excited to announce that Paul Zambella of the MA State Police Crime Lab will give a presentation at our September meeting.

Many of you remember the outstanding presentation that we had several years ago from the University of Rhode Island crime lab. Paul Zambella has a BS in Biology and a Master's in Forensic Chemistry. He has investigated more than 400 crime scenes, including several high-profile cases, and provided court testimony for over 300 cases. He has worked as a forensic scientist for the MA State Police Crime Laboratory for 31 years and has been an instructor of forensic science at Northeastern University for 27 years.

During the past few years, ITLA has instituted a policy of only allowing two members from any member laboratory to attend our quarterly and annual meetings. Due to the vast array of presentation and vendors, we have opened up our quarterly meeting to allow four representatives from any member laboratory for no additional cost. The policy will remain the same for the annual meeting, however. The member laboratory will be billed for any additional staff after the first two representatives attend the

## **Quarterly Meeting**

Wednesday, September 19, 2007, Sturbridge Host Hotel in Sturbridge, MA

**Feature Presentation: "Determining Whodunnit with Forensic Science"**

*Mr. Paul Zambella, MA State Police Crime Lab See page 4 for agenda*

meeting. The additional cost is only \$30.00 per person to cover the cost of refreshments.

ITLA's bylaws are being revised and will be available at the annual meeting in March for a vote by the membership. The proposed changes will be available to the membership in early December.

Finally, I will be completing my term as president of the ITLA in March 2008. Chris Wakefield will be filling my position as president. The organization is looking for someone who is willing to fill the role of Vice-President and then to take over the helm in two years. If anyone is interested or would like to be involved in the search committee, please contact Dan Falcone at your earliest convenience.

As always, the Executive Committee invites the input of all of our members on future speakers, training courses, and vendors. I look forward to seeing all of you at our next meeting on September 19, 2007 at the Sturbridge Host Hotel in Sturbridge, MA, and I thank all of you for your continued support.

## **MWRA Items**

*By Mike Delaney, [mdelaney@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:mdelaney@mwra.state.ma.us)*

### **Experiments Show Cyanide Can Form In Drinking Water Samples During Preservation And Storage**

Since MWRA started using ozone as its primary drinking water disinfectant in July 2005 there have been several samples with low, but detectable concentrations of cyanide. Based on previous wastewater experience, MWRA suspected that these might have been false positives. A series of bench-scale and on-site experiments have demonstrated conclusively that cyanide can form *in the sample container* during preservation and storage. MWRA has submitted its results for publication in Environmental Science and Technology and has applied to DEP for certification for cyanide by MICRO DIST®. We have also requested approval for stabilizing sampling in MICRO DIST® tubes on-site to avoid false cyanide formation.

**Take a sip! America's best tap water: Salt Lake City's is the winner, followed by Boston and Columbia, S.C.**

Two professional wine tasters ranked MWRA's tap water second on NBC's Today Show in July. They remarked that the MWRA water "has a purity — it's straight down the middle" and "It's very crisp and appealing". So, drink up! The complete story is here: <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/19865855/>

### **MWRA Delivers Annual Water Quality Report**

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority has begun mailing its Annual Water Quality Report to every household in the service area. The report, required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, updates consumers on last year's water quality results. MWRA takes up to 500 samples each week and, of the 120 possible contaminants tested for, MWRA met every standard. In addition, the MWRA system was again below the Lead Action Level.

Since the start-up of the John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant in July 2005, water quality has continued to improve and the plant is operating even better than expected. According to MWRA executive director Frederick A. Laskey, "Ozone provides better disinfection, allows us to use less chlorine, and has made the water taste better." The report also includes tips on how to reduce the risk of lead exposure in your home. Community-specific inserts also provide information about municipal water systems. MWRA is now working on projects to provide much-needed redundancy and storage to parts of the water system.

Laskey also notes that, thanks to water conservation efforts by the agency and its customers, water usage in the MWRA service area has decreased by over 100 million gallons a day since the late 1980s.

MWRA distributes the report to over 800,000 homes in 40 cities and towns. The report is also available online at [www.mwra.com](http://www.mwra.com).

### **Update on MWRA LIMS and TRAC.IS:**

Inflection Point Solutions continues to work on MWRA's new Pretreatment Information Management System. The commercial, off-the-shelf system, which will be modified to address MWRA's unique needs, will provide enhanced data management capabilities to MWRA's Toxic Reduction and Control section. MWRA expects the new system to be fully operational in the spring of 2008.

The New LIMS contract was put out to bid and three firms have responded with qualification packages. They will give product demonstrations in August and we expect to award the contract in October. The current LIMS and TRAC.IS have been in use for over fourteen years and are in need of updates due to changes in computer technology.

### TRAC “eSMART”

We continue to receive laboratory data electronically using the web-based “e-SMART” program. Labs access e-SMART using a PIN provided by MWRA. The program accepts either data files in a specific format, or on-line data entry. Chains of custody are scanned and submitted as PDF files. So far, over 20 labs are using e-SMART. To find out more about e-SMART contact Alice Chang at 617-305-5621 or [Alice.Chang@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:Alice.Chang@mwra.state.ma.us). The new TRAC information system will continue to allow web-based submittal of self-monitoring reports but there are likely to be some changes. We will notify laboratories and permitted users well in advance of modifications that may affect them.

Labs currently using e-SMART are reminded of the following: If the chain of custody form is missing, or is missing vital information, including the permit number, the sample location number, or the effluent flow information, TRAC will return the report for correction and resubmission.

calendar

#### September 19, 2007

ITLA Quarterly Meeting  
Sturbridge Host Hotel  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

#### October 31, 2007

Executive Board Meeting  
Bugaboo Creek Restaurant

#### December 12, 2007

TBD  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

#### January 30, 2008

Executive Board Meeting  
Bugaboo Creek Restaurant

### e-SMART File Format Specification

To better assist labs that choose to use a LIMS system to submit data, TRAC modified e-SMART's File Format Specification that labs can access using the e-SMART Help function. The specifications include: a data file overview, formatting instructions, a sample file, instructions for checking the file format, & a dictionary of MWRA test codes and components.

### Visit our web page for more information

Check us out at [www.mwra.com](http://www.mwra.com). We have a wealth of information for both the public and for experts on our water and wastewater activities. This includes monthly updates on drinking water quality testing, information on lead, our most recent Consumer Confidence Report, and many technical reports associated with the Deer Island Treatment Plant and our extensive Harbor and Outfall Monitoring program.

## Regulatory Update

By Bob Bentley, [bob@h2otest.net](mailto:bob@h2otest.net)

**Lab Regulation Revisions:** As you know, the laboratory regulation revisions were published in proposed form for public comment in April. DEP has received comments and is in the process of responding to these. The proposed regulations then go into a multi-layer review process. The Lab Certification Office could not give a time line for final publication at our meeting in June.

**eDEP:** The implementation of eDEP is moving along. A few labs are participating to some extent, but comments heard from the end users is that the report they see is cumbersome at 39 columns wide! DEP is looking into this issue. We have been told that they are trying to find the money.

**Laboratory Certification Renewals:** ITLA has asked the Lab Certification Office to accept our annual renewals electronically. Since so many of the forms are boilerplate, it seems that this would be much more efficient for labs as well as the LCO. They are looking into this.

We will be able to update you at our upcoming meeting with news from the September Lab Advisory Committee meeting. If you know of other regulatory

# ITLA Quarterly Meeting

**Wednesday, September 19, 2007**  
**Sturbridge Host Hotel & Convention Cntr**  
**366 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA**  
**Phone: (508) 347-7393**

## **9:00 a.m. Committee Reports**

Secretary	Technical
Newsletter	Lab Advisory
Election	Membership
Ethics	Treasurer
Regulatory	By-laws

## **9:15 a.m. Regulatory/Lab Advisory Committee Report**

*By Bob Bentley, Analytical Balance*

## **9:45 a.m. HTA Autosamplers**

*Ted Palashis, Overbrook Scientific*

Overbrook Scientific is the sole North American distributor of the HTA Autosampler line that includes the HT200H Headspace Sampler, the HT250D Duet Liquid and Headspace Sampler and the HT300A Liquid GC autosampler.

Overbrook Scientific would like to introduce the HTA line to ITLA in particular, the HT200H Headspace Sampler and HT250D Duet Liquid and Headspace Sampler as a means of using headspace for quality control and sample screening.

Complex sample matrices, which would

otherwise require sample extraction or preparation, or be difficult to analyze directly, are ideal candidates for headspace since they can be placed directly in a vial with little or no preparation. This saves both time and money. The use of Headspace in prescreening samples for EPA method 8260 will be discussed in detail.

Overbrook Scientific located in Boston, MA offers a wide range of new & refurbished analytical instrumentation services and support and maintains contact with thousands of labs worldwide.

## **10:45 am Break**

## **11:00 am Determining Whodunnit with Forensic Science**

*By Paul Zambella, MA State Police Crime Lab*

Paul Zambella has a BS in Biology and a Master's in Forensic Chemistry. He has investigated more than 400 crime scenes, including several high-profile cases, and provided court testimony for over 300 cases. He has worked as a forensic scientist for the MA State Police Crime Laboratory for 31 years and has been an instructor of forensic science at Northeastern University for 27 years.

## **Reg. Update From Page 3**

plan to have further discussion about this at upcoming meeting. If you cannot make the meeting but have comments or thoughts, please send them to me.

If you know of other regulatory issues, please contact me or any member of the Executive Committee.

## **Food for Thought**

The only people you should want to get "even" with are those who have helped you. John Honeyfield

I'm not convinced that the world is in any worse shape than it ever was. It's just that in this age of almost instantaneous communication, we bear the weight of problems our forefathers only read about after they were solved. Burton Hillis, Columnist