

## Highlights

- ITLA Annual Meeting Notice
- Nominating Committee Report
- Regulatory Update & MWRA Update



# ITLA

*The Newsletter of  
Independent Testing  
Laboratories Association  
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## President's Message

*By Dan Falcone*

We have made it through the National elections and the Holiday celebrations and now we are all back to our usual business. One of the looming issues facing our member laboratories are potential changes in the drinking water regulations for Hexavalent Chrome. The State of California has proposed drinking water standards of Hexavalent Chrome in the parts per trillion concentrations. California has suggested methods that not all our member laboratories can perform because of equipment requirements. The bigger question is: How will the EPA and the other drinking water regulators react to this California standard? Will they jump on the bandwagon and regulate Hexavalent Chrome as California has proposed, or will they take a hands - off approach because they do not have a method of removing the hexavalent Chrome from the drinking water once the

California standards are exceeded. Time will tell, but if history is an indicator, we can expect to have additional and stricter regulations. How each of our member laboratories handles these new regulations can be a lost cause or an opportunity for growth.

Our upcoming ITLA March meeting is our Annual Meeting. We will be electing a Treasurer and Secretary. Attached to the newsletter is the ballot for the two offices. Please vote by completing the ballot and forwarding to Chris Wakefield Nominating Committee Chairman. Please only one vote per laboratory.

[cwakefield@alphalab.com](mailto:cwakefield@alphalab.com)

FAX 508-898-9193

Or by US Mail

Chris Wakefield

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I hope to see you at the March meeting.

## *Annual Meeting*

Wednesday, March 30, 2011, DoubleTree Hotel in Milford, MA.

**Feature Presentation:** "AG Environmental Crime Strike Force" *Andrew Rainer, MA Env'l Police*

## MWRA Items

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

### MWRA Laboratories Pass DEP Audits with New LIMS

Two of MWRA's four certified laboratories successfully passed DEP audits in 2010 with our new LabWare LIMS. This included how we are handling control charts, detection limits, and reporting limit verifications. DEP requirements were incorporated into the LIMS during the design phase. This included the capability to upload bacteria and chemistry results via eDEP.

### Fluoride in MWRA Drinking Water

On January 7, 2011, the US Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a draft assessment and draft recommendations that the fluoride dose be lowered – for our region from 1.0 to 0.7 mg/L - based on the fact that there are now many other sources of fluoride. They indicated that the reduced dose will continue to provide dental protection while reducing the risk of mild dental fluorosis, the barely visible lacy white markings or spots on tooth enamel. There will be a 30 day comment period, and a final recommendation is expected in spring 2011. MWRA will continue its practice of following the guidance of the HHS and will change its fluoride dose once the final recommendation is released.

MWRA maintains a target fluoride level of 1.0 part per million in drinking water as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and several other prominent organizations. The strong position taken by the CDC, one of the world's leading public health institutions, is important to understanding MWRA's addition of fluoride to reduce tooth decay and promote community public health.

CDC recently published a report, Ten Great Public Health Achievements — United States 1900-1999, that listed fluoridation of public water supplies to reduce dental cavities as one of the leading public health achievements of the entire century.

The summary of CDC's views is included in the document: *Achievements in Public Health, 1900 to 1999: Fluoridation to Prevent Dental Cavities*. The CDC is highly regarded for their scientific expertise and objectivity, and it is important to us that their position on fluoridation is unequivocal.

Our approach is reinforced by the views of other organizations with strong public health and medical credentials that also support fluoridation including the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, World Health Organization, and the American Dental Association.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets fluoride standards to guard drinking water safety. For fluoride, 4.0 parts per million is the Maximum Contaminant Level Goal, the level below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

MWRA maintains a target fluoride level of 1.0 ppm, as recommended by the CDC, MDPH, ADA, and WHO, and continuously monitors the levels. MWRA has fluoridated at this level for over 20 years. MWRA is aware that a number of people across the country are raising questions about fluoride in drinking water. MWRA intends to keep an open-minded view on any matters of technical competency, and we will pay close attention to competing viewpoints. But it is doubtful that MWRA's position will change so long as the CDC, MDPH, and others continue to support fluoridation and its benefits.

### Links

[HHS and EPA Announce New Scientific Assessments and Actions on Fluoride \(HHS\)](#)  
[Proposed HHS Recommendation for Fluoride Concentration in Drinking Water for Dental Caries \(HHS\)](#)

[Fluoride Risk Assessment and Relative Source Contribution \(EPA\)](#)

[Fact Sheet: Community Water Fluoridation \(CDC\)](#)  
[Water Science Topics: Fluoride \(AWWA\)](#)

**MWRA's Sewer Treatment Plant and Outfall Continue to Benefit Water Quality, Ecosystems: 2009 Monitoring Data Released** (See [www.mwra.com/01news/2010/120210-outfallmonitoring.html](http://www.mwra.com/01news/2010/120210-outfallmonitoring.html) for graphical content.)

MWRA is pleased to report that test results for 2009

show that the Deer Island Treatment Plant continues to operate as designed, and that discharges through the MWRA Outfall had no unexpected effects on the waters or ecosystems of Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays.

In addition, no impacts of the outfall on the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary were detected. Summaries of effluent results and ambient monitoring results follow.

**Deer Island Effluent Results:** MWRA is required to perform stringent and specific tests on the Deer Island Treatment Plant and its effluent (the wastewater that is discharged through the MWRA outfall). Deer Island effluent continuously met water quality standards in 2009.

**Solids Reduced by Over 90% Since 1990:** The amount of solids in MWRA effluent reached a record low in 2009. Overall, solids discharge levels have been reduced by over 90% since 1990. This means that the Deer Island Treatment Plant has been working effectively to remove particulate matter from the wastewater stream.

**Metals Discharges Remained Low in 2009:** Metals in effluent remained at low levels in 2009. Metals entering the plant have been reduced by industrial pre-treatment, and are further removed during secondary treatment so that the effluent meets stringent limits that protect marine life.

**Almost All Flow Received Full Secondary Treatment:** Deer Island effluent continuously met secondary treatment limits. This indicates that the treatment plant has effectively reduced levels of Total Suspended Solids (TSS) and Carbon Oxygen Demand (cBOD) in wastewater before discharge.

**Pesticide in Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay Flounder Declining:** Levels of the banned pesticide chlordane in flounder fillets have been decreasing throughout the region compared to the 1990s.

**Effects on the Ocean and its Inhabitants:** Researchers test Massachusetts Bay water, sediment and plant/animal communities to ensure that the MWRA outfall's treated effluent does not adversely impact the ocean or its inhabitants. No adverse

impacts to the environment of the bays were detected in 2009.

**Rate of Liver Disease in Flounder Has Declined Since 1991:** In 2009, the rate of early liver disease in flounder remained low compared to 1991-2000, before the new treatment plant came on-line.

**An Abundance of Whales in the Bays:** Healthy whales continue to live in Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays. In 2009 the number and diversity of the zooplankton that whales eat remained normal and typical for the area.

**Animal "Hardbottom" communities are healthy near the outfall:** Near the outfall, abundant animal communities, including cod, lobster and rock crab, are thriving. Normal communities of worms, anthro-pods & mollusks live on the sea floor near the outfall.

**COMPLETE RESULTS.** Results for 2009 are presented in detail in *MWRA's 2009 Outfall Monitoring Overview*. The full report (PDF) is available for [download](#).

#### **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*

### **Laboratory Advisory Committee**

The Lab Advisory Committee met in December and discussed a number of issues.

### **Reporting MDLs and RIs**

As the result of a lab's rejection of data by DEP for showing a diluted MDL, the LAC discussed the current requirements. DEP's position (and apparently EPA's) is that the MDL is just that. That number is hard-wired into forms (and in the eDEP code) and does not allow changes for a dilution. Our statement

was that this was inaccurate (DEP agrees) and “assuming” that DEP personnel would pick up on a comment in the notes that the sample was diluted is making a huge assumption. However, since this apparently has nationwide implications, EPA (probably through the OGWDW) will be asked for verification. It was noted that the other way of addressing this would be to require that all labs add “dilution factor” and “reporting level” columns to all uploaded data (which would also mean that all paper forms would have to be altered).

### **Manganese**

The Safe Drinking Water Act Advisory Committee (SDWAAC) had a discussion of the health effects related to manganese in drinking water. Infants and immune-compromised individuals have the potential for some neurological effects, particularly with infants whose formula has been made with water “high” in manganese. The SDWAAC reviewed occurrence results in MA and are now hoping for some voluntary sampling by PWS’s to gather more data. The current level of concern is 0.3 mg/L. Other states have been addressing this as well.

### **eDEP**

We were informed that the work on the structural changes to the eDEP program was moving along. The stated desire was to have this portion rolled out to the Lab community in January or February. This will be transparent to users but should significantly speed up the processing of data.

We were told that more time is required to do the programming for additional contaminants, (e.g. Enterococcus, etc.) but DEP committed to the LAC that further changes requiring any re-programming would be discussed with the affected lab community prior to finalization.

DEP has been told by EPA that in order to be compliant with the federal systems, there is a need to enhance the security around the entirety of eDEP. Everyone will be required to have a password which DEP will not be able to see (they can now). In addition, everyone will be required to undergo a “two level authentication” which entails providing answers to “secret” questions.

The drumbeat continues regarding mandatory implementation. We have been told that the new Commissioner, Ken Kimmel, seems to have the same intent in terms of encouraging more people to upload electronically. However, they have conceded that they have to do the above work before they can say you must use eDEP.

### **Other**

The Labs were asked about the ability to provide 24 hour a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year coverage. It seems that some Labs do not provide this to their customers. The Labs in attendance indicated emphatically that they provide this coverage to existing customers, but not to the PWS’s who are short-sighted enough not to have this in their contracts. However, we have been asked to survey our member Labs as to their willingness to provide this coverage. Please respond to me if you are interested in providing this coverage. [So far, I know of one.]

On this and other issues, stay tuned!!! We plan to update you at our upcoming meeting with news from the next Lab Advisory Committee meeting. If you know of other regulatory issues or have any other items we should be watching, please contact me or any member of the Executive Committee.

## **Regulatory News**

*Provided by Catalyst Information Resources*

### **EPA Proposes “Method Update Rule” for Water Program**

- EPA has published a pre-publication notice that proposes new methods, or changes to existing methods, that affect 22 EPA methods, 16 Standard Methods methods, 10 ASTM methods, and 8 alternate test procedures in 40 CFR Part 136. The proposed rule also contains a number of clarifications relating to approved methods, sample preservation and holding times, quality control, and method modifications as well as changes to specific sections of the code of federal regulations that relate to NPDES permits for three different industrial categories.
- [www.epa.gov/waterscience/methods/update/](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/methods/update/)

# ITLA Annual Meeting

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011**

**DoubleTree Hotel**

**11 Beaver Street, Milford, MA 01757**

**(508) 478-7010**

**8:30 a.m. Registration & Networking**

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

**9:45 am Possible Agilent Presentation**

*More info to follow.*

**10:45 am Gilson Presentation**

*By Gilson Representative*

- Brief History of Gilson
- Advantages of Liquid Handler approach to Automation
- Details of Hardware/ Software for MA EPH
- Examples of other Systems

**11:30 am Lunch**

**1:00 pm Attorney General Environmental Crime Strike Force**

*By Andrew Rainer, MA Env'l Police*

The Environmental Crimes Strike Force investigates and prosecutes crimes that harm the state's air, land or water, or that pose a significant threat to human health. The Strike Force is an interagency team that includes prosecutors from the Attorney General's Office, officers from the [Massachusetts Environmental Police](#), and investigators, engineers and attorneys from the [Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection \(DEP\)](#). Strike Force partners meet regularly to evaluate whether enforcement against particular environmental violations should be done administratively, civilly or criminally. The most egregious violations are referred for criminal prosecution. The Strike Force

gathers evidence during undercover investigations, carefully builds cases against environmental violators, then takes them to court.

The Strike Force has recently pursued prosecutions for improper disposal of hazardous waste, failure to properly report spills of oil or hazardous waste, failure to properly abate and dispose of asbestos, and exposing workers to unsafe environmental conditions.

Mr. Rainer is Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Bureau. Among his responsibilities, Mr. Rainer is Chief of the Massachusetts Environmental Strike Force, which investigates and prosecutes crimes that harm the state's air, land or water, or that pose a significant threat to human health. The Strike Force is an interagency team that includes prosecutors from the Attorney General's Office, officers from the Massachusetts Environmental Police, and investigators, engineers and attorneys from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

His presentation will include past enforcement actions in the field of pollution to air, soil and water.

**2:00 pm Meeting Adjourns**

# ***Nominating Committee Report***

The offices to be filled in 2011 are Secretary and Treasurer. We are pleased to report that the nominee for Secretary is Nancy Burnett and the nominee for Treasurer is Gregg Yogis. Both are longtime ITLA members and have served the Association for many years in other capacities. If you are members in good standing, you will be asked to vote at the upcoming Annual Meeting. If you are unable to attend, please print this page and fax it to Chris Wakefield at (508) 898-9193. Please add your name and your company name to the bottom of this page. Remember that there is one vote per member lab. Questions should be addressed to Mike Delaney at [mdelaney@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:mdelaney@mwra.state.ma.us).

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# **ITLA**

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## **2011 Ballot for the Election of Officers**

Please - one vote only per member lab or member vendor

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Please vote for one by circling the bullet for each office.

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**Secretary:**

**Treasurer:**

■ **Nancy Burnett**

■ **Gregg Yogis**

■ \_\_\_\_\_ ■ \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_