

Highlights

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ITLA

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President's Message

By Dan Falcone

Hello ITLA Members,

I have some disappointing news to bring to our membership. Alpha Analytical Labs has decided to no longer be a member of the ITLA.

With this decision Greg Yogis, the ITLA Treasurer for the last 3 years, will no longer be the ITLA Treasurer.

Greg has been a true asset to the ITLA over his tenure as Treasurer. I want to personally thank Greg for his efforts on behalf of the ITLA.

With these changes the ITLA executive board has revamped the election process. The new candidates for election are:

- Dan Falcone, TestAmerica— President
- Nancy Burnett, Microbac— Vice President
- Alan Ford, RI Analytical— Secretary
- Paul Hobart, TestAmerica— Treasurer

A 2012 ITLA Ballot will be sent to

all ITLA members and a 2012 Ballot can be found in this Newsletter.

I hope to see all of you at the ITLA Annual Meeting on March 28th.

MWRA Items

By Mike Delaney

[\(mike.delaney@mwra.state.ma.us\)](mailto:mike.delaney@mwra.state.ma.us)

MWRA Featured by the State

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recently published their [Annual Financial Report](#) which spotlights the Boston Harbor Walk and Deer Island, including the following: "Today, Deer Island is home to a state of the art wastewater treatment facility. Begun as a court-ordered facility, the Deer Island plant is the centerpiece of the Boston Harbor Project. A gem in the eyes of environmentalists and water-quality activists, this secondary treatment facility serves as a model for engineers and public works professionals around the world. The 140-foot-high, 3-million-gallon egg-shaped digester tanks have even been hailed as an architectural marvel.

As one of the largest electricity

Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday., March 28, 2012, Marriott Courtyard in Marlborough, MA. **Feature Presentation:**
"Hydrolic Fracturing" *Tim Erikson, Moody & Associates*

users in the Northeast, Deer Island has embarked upon an ambitious goal of generating 30% renewable energy by 2020. Two 190-foot high wind turbines were installed on Deer Island in August, 2009 and generate over 2 million kW hours per year. Roof mounted photovoltaic system, lighting improvements, as well as methane from the sludge digestion process to create heat for the facility are just some of renewable fuels used on Deer Island."

No Concern about Mercury in MWRA Drinking Water

You may have heard or read in recent news articles that there is health advisory regarding consumption of some fish due to the potential for mercury contamination. While the advisory includes fish caught in most large water bodies including the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs, there is no health concern for the drinking water provided by MWRA.

MWRA very rarely detects any mercury, even with ultra-sensitive tests 20 times more sensitive than EPA requires. Over the past decade, only three samples out of almost 250 detected any trace of mercury in the water. When mercury is detected, the levels found are just above the detection limit of 10 nanograms per liter (or parts per trillion). The levels found, between 10 and 14 parts per trillion, are about 1/200th of the drinking water standard of 2 parts per billion.

Very simply, the data shows very few detections at extremely low levels. In fact, these very low levels would be considered non-detectable under EPA's drinking water quality reporting regulations.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has included the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs on the state list of impaired water bodies due to the fact that historical samples of larger predator fish contained elevated levels of mercury and because the Department of Public Health has issued a fish consumption health advisory.

The fate of mercury on large water bodies such as Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs is complex. Most large water bodies, even pristine lakes in far northern Maine and Canada, have elevated mercury levels in large predator fish, due to long term regional atmospheric deposition from coal burning power

plants and trash incinerators. Mercury bio-accumulates from algae, to small fish to larger fish, and can be found in large fish even when mercury levels are so low that no mercury can be found in the water itself.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health provides the following advisory:

"Children younger than 12 years, pregnant women, and nursing women should not consume fish except for lake trout less than 24 inches long and salmon. All other people should not eat smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, or lake trout greater than 24 inches long; may eat unlimited amounts of salmon and lake trout less than 24 inches long; and should limit consumption of all other Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoir fish species to one five-ounce meal per week."

For more information about mercury in the environment from Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) & Department of Public Health (DPH), visit:

- DEP: <http://www.mass.gov/dep/toxics/stypes/envnment.htm>
- DPH: <http://www.mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories>

MWRA to Begin Restoration of Wachusett Reservoir Earthen Dams—Work Will Require the Removal of Trees

When the Wachusett Reservoir was constructed at the turn of the last century, the earthen dams - or dikes - were intended to remain free of trees and shrubs in order to ensure their integrity. However, since the 1930s, trees have become established on the north and south dikes of the reservoir.

Periodic dam safety inspections have concluded that trees growing on the earthen dams are a regulatory deficiency under the most recent State Office of Dam Safety regulations. The blowdown or death of trees on the dam could create conditions where water from the reservoir could penetrate root voids and ultimately lead to dam failure.

Tree growth and underbrush also prohibit proper dam safety inspections so that any problems with the earthen dike may not be noticed at an early stage.

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority is about to begin a project to clear trees, stumps and

underbrush at the south dike to address this important issue.

The work will include cutting and removal of approximately 1,600 trees on the south dike ranging in size from saplings up to 32 inches diameter, with the majority of trees in the 10-inch to 20-inch range. Most of the trees are white pines and are located on the upstream, crest and downstream slope of the dike. In some areas, stands of these trees are diseased.

Trees susceptible to Asian Longhorn Beetle infestation will be cut and chipped on-site in accordance with federal and state requirements. Evergreens will be cut and chipped and, depending on size, some will be removed in whole logs. After tree cutting and stumping the earthen dike will be graded and stabilized with grass cover. Once the grass is well established, the dike will be maintained by seasonal cutting.

MWRA will solicit bids for the work over the winter. Tree removal will occur in spring 2012, followed closely by stump pulling and site restoration. MWRA anticipates the work will be completed by June 30, 2012.

Tree growth on the north dike of the Wachusett Reservoir will be addressed in a future contract. Updates will be posted on www.mwra.com as the work progresses.



1904 Photo - Wachusett Reservoir, South Dike, from Carville's Hill

Visit our Web Page for More Information

Check us out at 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

eDEP

The “system failure” which we wrote about in the last newsletter (in late November) was explained as not a crash of eDEP but a crash of ePublic which is DEP’s mother ship for DEP IT and data storage. We were assured that all aspects of eDEP were backed up and running in a relatively short time frame.

Many of you know that in early February, uploading was fine, but you could not look at reports for over a week. Although it did not impact the laboratory upload process, it did impact our clients, because they were not able to do things such as developing their statistical analysis (I am told) for DEP compliance purposes. This week’s long outage continues to renew our nagging concern about the reliability of the “system.” We will discuss this at the upcoming LAC meeting.

Manganese

We were told at the December LAC meeting that Manganese was essentially on hold and that it had been sent back to ORS for a “peer review.” We were recently surprised to find out that the Southeast Region of DEP was sending out notices of Manganese non-compliance to small Public Water Supplies. ITLA has asked for clarification from the Department as to their intent.

DEP Infrastructure

We were told that some significant changes were about to happen in DEP. The expectation was for a major realignment of several programs. As of this writing, however, nothing seems to have occurred.

ITLA Annual Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

Marriott Courtyard
75 Felton Street, Marlborough, MA 01752
(508) 480-0015

8:30 a.m. Coffee and Networking

9:00 a.m. Committee Reports

- **Regulatory**
- **Ethics**
- **Finance**

9:45 a.m. Advantages to Automating the 1664 Method

By Joe Boyd, Environmental Express

Hexane Extractable Material (HEM) is a method-defined analyte determined by the procedures set forth in EPA Method 1664. This presentation will discuss what a method-defined analyte is and the modifications that can be made to Method 1664 by the lab. The two techniques for performing this analysis, Liquid-Liquid Extraction (LLE) & Solid Phase Extraction (SPE) will also be examined. The presentation will address advantages and pitfalls both extraction techniques present and give reasons for the use of SPE over LLE.

Solid Phase Extraction can be performed both manually and with the use of an automated system. Pros and cons to performing the 1664 Method both ways and why some laboratories prefer one way over another will be addressed in the presentation. Advantages of automation will be discussed as will how the SPE-XPress from Environmental Express has solved technique difficulties of SPE for the 1664 Method and put to rest the fears of automation versus manual techniques.

Regulatory Update Continued: On this and other issues, stay tuned!!! We plan to update you at our upcoming meeting with news from the March 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.

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. ITLA Roundtable Discussion

What are the important Issues Facing the ITLA Membership?

11:00 a.m. Hydraulic Fracturing

By Tim Eriksen, Moody & Associates

This presentation will touch on the general principles of hydraulic fracturing, common ingredients of frac fluid, extent of shale gas & oil plays, analytical methods & QC requirements for a scientifically & legally defensible predrill and postdrill sampling program.

Current legislation in PA, specifically the Oil & Gas Act of 12/19/1984, (altered with the recent passage of House Bill 1950) assumes the presumption of guilt of the natural gas operator if a water source owner within 1,000 feet (2,500 feet in House Bill 1950) of a natural gas well reports chemical impacts to the water source. One of the ways that a gas operator can rebut the presumption of liability is to affirmatively prove that the pollution existed prior to the drilling or alteration activity as determined by a predrilling or prealteration survey. The laws and regulations governing the oil and gas industry of Pennsylvania do not specify a pre-drill or pre-alteration analyte list. The responsibility of selecting the analyte list belongs to the natural gas operator. However, both the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Marcellus Shale Coalition have published recommended analyte lists.

There is neither legislation nor regulation in New York State that guides pre-drill or pre-alteration water sampling for conventional natural gas operations. However, there is a moratorium on development of high volume hydraulic fracturing (Marcellus and Utica Shales) in New York State. The most recent information available for New York State at the time of this presentation, however, will be presented.

12:00 pm Meeting Adjourns

Nominating Committee Report

The offices to be filled in 2012 are President and Vice President. The nominee for President is Dan Falcone and the nominee for Vice President is Nancy Burnett. Due to the loss of a member laboratory, we will also be voting for a new Secretary and Treasurer. The nominee for Secretary will be Alan Ford and the nominee for Treasurer will be Paul Hobart. 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, fax it to Nancy Burnett at (508) 595-0008, email it to nancy.burnett@microbac.com, or mail it to Nancy Burnett, Microbac Labs, 100 Barber Ave., Worcester, MA 01606. Please add your name and your company name to the bottom of this page. Remember that there is one vote per member lab.

ITLA

2012 Ballot for the Election of Officers

Please - one vote only per member laboratory

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

President:

■ **Dan Falcone**

■ _____

Vice President:

■ **Nancy Burnett**

■ _____

Secretary:

■ **Alan Ford**

■ _____

Treasurer:

■ **Paul Hobart**

■ _____

Company: _____

Name: _____