

Highlights

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ITLA

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Message from the President

By Kevin Braga

Greetings fellow ITLA members, First, I want to extend my gratitude for all of the support that I received from the members of the Executive Committee as the recently installed President of the Independent Testing Laboratory Association, & I look forward to working with all of you in the future. The Executive Committee has already begun looking at potential speakers, training courses, and vendor presentations for the upcoming year, but we are always open to suggestions from members. Many of you are already familiar with our new website www.itla-ma.org which contains sections including a calendar of events, listing of active members, copies of PowerPoint presentation provided by vendors and guest speakers, and past newsletters. As with everything else, we are always open to suggestions on how to improve our website so it is more useful to you.

Potential upcoming presentations include training in microbiology, Tentatively Identified Compounds

(TICs), and working with new software for the GC/MS. We are also attempting to secure speakers from the Mass DEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup to discuss recent audit findings while reviewing laboratory data. Other potential topics include PCBs, Data Validation, and the new Surface Water Rules.

We are also exploring the idea of scheduling our meetings one to two weeks after the quarterly meeting of the Laboratory Advisory Committee. It is the opinion of the Executive Committee that the information discussed at the LAC meeting needs to be shared with our membership in a more timely fashion. Stay tuned for more info...

MWRA Items

By Mike Delaney

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

MWRA Update on Fluoride: Response to National Academy of Sciences Report (3/23/06)

On March 22, 2006, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) released a report that examined the effects of high levels of fluoride. The NAS report concludes that the

Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, June 7, 2006, Double Tree Hotel, Westborough, MA

Feature Presentation: "EPA's Groundwater Rule" Mr. Doug Heath, EPA See page 4 for agenda

US EPA's current standard of 4.0 parts per million, which is designed to limit high levels of natural fluoride in some ground water sources, is not protective enough. The NAS report did not call for any changes in the use of fluoride as a water additive to prevent dental cavities.

MWRA has fluoridated its drinking water for over 20 years. MWRA maintains a target fluoride level of 1.0 parts per million, as recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the American Dental Association and the international World Health Organization.

The MWRA has reviewed the NAS report and will follow any changes in drinking water standards that the U.S. EPA and CDC propose.

MWRA is aware that a number of people across the country have raised questions about fluoride in drinking water. MWRA continues to keep an open-minded view on fluoride, and will pay close attention to competing viewpoints. It is doubtful that MWRA's position will change unless the Centers for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and other responsible health organizations end their support of fluoridation and its benefits.

MWRA Reaches Agreement over Long-term CSO Control Plan: Landmark settlement will continue clean-up of Boston Harbor (3/16/06)

The approval by EPA and DEP of a Comprehensive CSO Agreement marks the culmination of MWRA's long-term plan to reduce combined sewer overflows (CSOs) to Boston Harbor and its tributaries, including the Charles River. Since 1987, MWRA has been at the forefront nationally in the planning, design, and implementation of CSO control.

The CSO plan is the final phase of the clean-up of Boston Harbor under the federal court order. A joint motion (PDF) asking for approval of the plan was filed yesterday with Judge Richard G. Stearns. The goal of the program is to protect swimming beaches, shell fishing beds and other sensitive waters from overflows due to heavy rains. For example, the Charles River has been one of the greatest beneficiaries of the program to date, with a reduction in CSO discharges of over 90% in a typical year.

Improvements added in the new Agreement will increase that to 99%.

Another major component is the \$250 million storage tunnel project along the popular South Boston beaches, which will make these among the most highly protected urban beaches in the country.

By 2015, MWRA is projected to spend over \$850 million on CSO control projects, in addition to the \$3.8 billion already spent on the Boston Harbor Clean-up that have dramatically improved the health of the harbor and brought people back to Boston's waterfront.

Update on MWRA LIMS and TRAC.IS.

MWRA is about to distribute bid documents to replace its legacy LIMS and TRAC.IS software. Both systems have been in use for over ten years and are in need of updates due to changes in computer technology.

"A Healthy Environment Starts at Home

MWRA's guide to reducing our use of hazardous household products is now available online at www.mwra.com as a 25-page, full-color downloadable "PDF" file. Publication of this booklet was required by the MWRA's wastewater discharge permit from EPA and MA DEP.

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.

Labs 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.

e-SMART File Format Specification: To better assist labs that choose to use a LIMS system to

submit data, TRAC modified the e-SMART 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, and a dictionary of MWRA test codes and components.

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, Regulatory Affairs Chair

Regulation Revisions

The Laboratory Certification Office responded to ITLA's comments on the regulation revision of 310CMR42.00. At the Laboratory Advisory Committee meeting, we had a full discussion of the suggested changes and were able to hear some of the LCO's thoughts in response to our initial questions.

ITLA then had a chance to rebut LCO's responses. Several member laboratories provided final comments on the DEP's response which were then re-submitted to the LCO. This was truly a great chance for us - as the laboratory community - to make our feelings known. We thank all that provided input.

eDEP

As you know from our special regulatory update, based upon information from the LCO, there has been no communication between them and the eDEP personnel, and we recommended to you all that the brakes be put on for a while. In recent discussions with the eDEP personnel, the LCO has made some comments that will require database modifications. Although we have asked for the final modifications, we have not received them. In spite of the uncertainty in the database format, the eDEP personnel are continuing with their "rollout."

Perchlorate

Everyone should have received the information from the Lab Certification Office about the sterile collection of perchlorate samples. This has been researched by EPA Cincinnati and seems to be following the nationwide requirement.

For other regulatory issues, please contact myself or the Executive Committee. bob@h2otest.net

calendar

June 14, 2006

MA DEP LAC Meeting
DEP in Worcester, MA
9:30 a.m.

July 27, 2006

ITLA Executive Board Meeting
Bugaboo Creek Restaurant
Milford, MA
12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

July 30 - August 1, 2006

NY/PA Annual Convention
Valley Forge, PA

September 13, 2006

ITLA Quarterly Meeting
TBD
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

October 25, 2006

ITLA Executive Board Meeting
Bugaboo Creek Restaurant
Milford, MA
12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

December 6, 2006

ITLA Quarterly Meeting
TBD
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

January 24, 2007

ITLA Executive Board Meeting
Bugaboo Creek Restaurant
Milford, MA
12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

February 25 - March 1, 2007

PITTCO 2007, Chicago, IL

ITLA Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

Doubletree Hotel

5400 Computer Drive, Westborough, MA
(508) 366-5511

9:00 a.m. Committee Reports

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

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

Mr. Bob Bentley, Analytical Balance

9:40 a.m. "EPA Microwave Extraction of Soils" CEM Corporation

CEM Technologies will present information comparing EPA microwave soil extraction to four other types of EPA soil extraction including: Sonication, Automated Solvent Extraction, Soxtherm, and Soxlet. Emphasis will be placed on general comparisons of the individual method procedures and the relative cost per sample of all the soil extraction sample prep methods. Additional topics will cover specific use of Microwave instrumentation to perform SW 846 Method 3546. Microwave gear will be displayed upon request as a visual aid in explaining the microwave extraction technique and use of the associated extraction vessels. Detailed descriptions of lab microwave hardware and how they work can be provided upon request, including but not limited to, safety devices, vessel technology, accelerated reaction rates, microwave heating mechanisms, and control devices.

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 p.m. "EPA's Ground Water Rule"

Mr. Doug Heath, EPA

EPA proposed the Ground Water Rule on May 10, 2000. The purpose of the rule is to provide for increased protection against microbial pathogens in public water systems that use ground water sources. EPA is particularly concerned about ground water systems that are susceptible to fecal contamination since disease-causing pathogens may be found in fecal contamination.

The GWR will apply to public water systems that serve ground water. The rule also applies to any system that mixes surface and ground water if the ground water is added directly to the distribution system and provided to consumers without treatment. EPA expects to issue the final GWR in August 2006.

Water systems that have ground water sources may be susceptible to fecal contamination. In many cases, fecal contamination can contain disease causing pathogens. The GWR will provide increased protection against microbial pathogens.

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Proposed Requirements: The proposed targeted, risk-based strategy addresses risks through a multiple barrier approach that relies on five major components

1. Periodic sanitary surveys of systems requiring the evaluation of eight elements and the identification of significant deficiencies;
2. Hydrogeologic sensitivity assessments to identify wells sensitive to microbial fecal contamination;
3. Source water monitoring to test for presence of fecal indicators (E. coli, enterococci, or coliphage) in the ground water sample.

12:00 p.m. Meeting Adjourns