

Highlights

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ITLA

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Ex-President's Message

By Dan Falcone

Hello ITLA members,
As I was watching one of the Christmas television specials I started thinking of all the reasons why I am happy.

- I have a wonderful family.
- I have good friends.
- I have a good job.
- I work with and for a group of dedicated and professional scientists known as the ITLA.

It is easy to see why I am happy.

For this reason, I want to take this opportunity to say to all the ITLA members.....

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

I hope all of you have a happy holiday season.

Dan Falcone

PS: The upcoming Members Meeting will be very informative—with discussion on Solid Phase Extraction technology and a MADEP Air Emission Audit update—I hope to see you there.

MWRA Items

By Mike Delaney

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

EPA's Annual Report Card Gives the Charles River an A-

In its annual report card, the EPA has given the Charles River a grade of A⁻ for water quality during the calendar year 2013. It is the highest grade EPA has issued since the 1995 inception of the Clean Charles River Initiative.

MWRA has completed a number of projects under the federal court-ordered Long-Term Combined Sewer Overflow Control Plan that have had enormous benefits to water quality in the Charles River. Recently, the Town of Brookline completed a \$25.6 million project to separate its remaining combined sewers that had overflowed to the Charles River in large storms, and Boston Water and Sewer Commission completed a \$10 million project to build storm drains in the Bulfinch Triangle and North Station areas, remove stormwater from the sewer system and close a

Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday., December 10, 2014, Holiday Inn Express in Milford, MA.

Feature Presentation: "MADEP Air Emissions Audits" by the MADEP Air Quality Section

combined sewer overflow outfall in the lower basin. MWRA also completed a \$3 million optimization project that has greatly reduced discharges from its Cottage Farm CSO treatment facility adjacent to Magazine Park, and the City of Cambridge continues to aggressively pursue sewer separation projects to further reduce combined sewer overflows to the Charles River.

For more detail on MWRA's work to control combined sewer overflows, visit our [CSO Control Program page](#).

Lithium Not Detected in MWRA Drinking Water

You may have read a recent article in the New York Times that talks about Lithium and drinking water. Lithium is a naturally occurring element that can be found in some drinking water sources, usually ground water. Screening performed by the MWRA Lab indicates that MWRA drinking water does not have detectable levels of lithium.

If you have any questions about water quality, please visit our Water Testing page [Water Testing page](#), for all of our annual and monthly test results.

Invasive Plant Control at Chestnut Hill Reservoir

For the last few years, MWRA has been battling Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum* L.), an invasive plant found growing in the Chestnut Hill Reservoir. Last winter the reservoir was lowered by 10 feet in order to expose the shoreline to freezing conditions to kill off the Milfoil, as well as Fanwort. With the extreme cold and long duration of ice cover last season, the effort was successful in knocking back these plants. In fact, this year's aquatic plant harvest yielded just 79 cubic yards of plant matter compared to 607 cubic yards last year.

However, this success did come at a cost: the lack of invasive plants plus excessive nutrients, mainly phosphorous, from the reservoir sediment as well as from runoff (like geese feces) provided ideal conditions for a blue green algae bloom. As this algae expanded, it further shaded out light and prevented rooted plants from growing and absorbing nutrients. It's a bit of a tradeoff of problems. One of the

concerns with blue green algae is that it can release toxins which are harmful to water quality. Remember, this is still an emergency drinking water distribution reservoir and MWRA must keep it ready for use, as was done in May 2010.

This year, MWRA is planning some adjustments to the reservoir management plan for 2014-2015 season. This week, drawdown of the reservoir will begin again for control of the dense shoreline invasive plants, but only five feet down. The target elevation should be reached in late December and will be kept at that level until the spring when the ice is gone.

Then, to deal with the high phosphorous levels that caused the blue green algae bloom, a low-dose alum treatment will be applied in the spring. Alum is aluminum sulfate, which is a non-toxic material commonly used in drinking water treatment plants to improve clarity. It is not harmful to aquatic life or people. Alum binds with the phosphorous to form aluminum hydroxide precipitate (or floc). As the floc settles to the bottom, it will remove the phosphorous from the water and lock it up in the sediment. An added benefit is that it will also collect other suspended particles in the water and improve water clarity. Once on the bottom, it will also act as a barrier to prevent phosphorous already in the sediment from cycling back into the water column.

MWRA will follow this treatment with periodic water quality monitoring to gauge its effectiveness, and will continue the annual survey to assess need for seasonal plant harvesting.

The Chestnut Hill Reservoir, bordered by the cities of Boston and Newton, was built in 1870. It holds 500 million gallons of water and is an integral part of the MWRA's emergency back-up water supply system.

Visit Our Web Page for More Information

Check us out at www.mwra.com. We have a wealth of information for both the public & for experts on our water & wastewater activities. This includes monthly updates on drinking water quality testing, information on lead, our most recent Consumer Confidence Report, & 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

At the last meeting we were told that there was a new IT czar in the state who was looking at all of the proposed IT projects. This new czar derailed the plan to upgrade all of eDEP in one fell swoop and mandated that the proposal which had already gone out to bid be rescinded and made into smaller "pieces." This has further set back our requests for improvements - by how much, one can only guess!

Lead & Copper rule

DEP has looked at their language and EPA's language on hold times and has restated the requirement that samples must be acidified within 14 days. Samples not acidified within that time frame are not considered valid. This is important if you have PWS' who stretch sampling out over a period of time!

Manganese

We will have an update at the meeting on this topic.

Other

We were told that a draft of the Lab Certification Regulations (310CMR42) had gone out & comments were received. There was some hope that the regulations would be finalized before the November elections. It was noted that certification for 1,4-dioxane and additional secondary contaminants (including manganese) has been added to the regulations.

You should have received the revised Proficiency Testing Policies for Microbiology and Chemistry in early October from the Laboratory Certification Office.

Air Issues

We will have two DEP representatives at the next meeting to further discuss this subject. This is a **VERY IMPORTANT DISCUSSION.**

On these and other issues, stay tuned!!! 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.

ITLA Quarterly Meeting

ITLA Meeting Agenda December 10, 2014

Holiday Inn Express Milford
(The Holiday Inn Express is just up the street from the Doubletree.)
50 Fortune Blvd
Milford, MA 01757
508-634-1054

8:30 a.m. Breakfast Buffet and Networking

9:00 a.m. SPE for 625/8270
By Fluid Management Systems

10:00 a.m. Committee Reports

- Regulatory
- Ethics
- Finance

10:45 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. MADEP Air Emissions Audits

By Glenn Keefe and Mark Wohman
MADEP Air Quality Section

Upon ITLA's request, our speakers have agreed to clearly discuss the Air Quality requirements, their methods of calculations for air emissions, & alternatives to having to obtain a large generator permit. They have developed a flow sheet and other handouts which will be of assistance to ALL laboratories. **Even if you are a small lab doing few extractions, be aware that you could be over a threshold, and particularly over the "potential to emit" threshold.** ITLA has worked hard to get DEP to provide assistance. This meeting will provide answers to your questions.

11:45 a.m. Meeting Adjourns