

Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee Minutes for March 22, 2016 – Harrisburg, PA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cristin Geletei (US Steel Clairton Works Lab)
Stephen R. Morse, P.E. (Skelly & Loy, Inc.)
Gene Greco (Franklin Township Municipal Sanitary Authority)
Danielle Cappellini (A.E. Kirby Memorial Health Center)
Marykay Steinman (Analytical Quality Assurance)
Twila Dixon (MJ Reider Associates)
Anita Martin (Chester Water Authority)
David Barrett (Mahaffey Laboratory LTD)
John Stolz (Duquesne University) – called in
Joel Jordan (Pennsylvania Rural Water Association) – called in

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STAFF PRESENT

Aaren Alger, Laboratory Accreditation Program Chief
Laura Edinger, Regulatory Coordinator, Policy Office
Dana Marshall, Laboratory Accreditation Program
Amber Ross, Laboratory Accreditation Program
Amy Hackman, Laboratory Accreditation Program
Jason Minnich, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Thomas P. Starosta, Bureau of Clean Water
Maria Schumack, Bureau of Clean Water

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Steinman and the committee and participants introduced themselves.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2015 MEETING MINUTES

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the December 2, 2015 LAAC meeting. The minutes were approved by the committee as written.

DISCUSSION OF SDW REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS (Minnich)

The Draft Laboratory Reporting Instructions for Total Coliform and *e.Coli* Bacteria was presented to the advisory committee prior to the meeting for their review and comments. Jason Minnich from the Bureau of Safe Drinking Water (BSDW) provided a summary of the major changes in the document. The majority of the changes relate to the Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR). The revised rule eliminated the use of fecal coliform when confirming positive total coliform samples. Laboratories must use *E. coli* for confirmation. All water systems will conduct monthly total coliform monitoring under the revised rule. Additionally, laboratories will be required to report all individual total coliform sample results in addition to the summary form they are currently using to report total coliform results. Once Pennsylvania has a Revised Total Coliform Rule the laboratories will no longer be required to submit total coliform results using the SDWA-S form to submit summary data. The document also contains the revised list of

acceptable analysis methods. The advisory committee and the audience were given two weeks to provide comments via email to the Laboratory Accreditation Section.

During the meeting, the committee and public suggested edits to the documents. Mr. Minnich confirmed that the draft documents would be edited as appropriate.

Further discussion ensued. Ms. Dixon asked if laboratories are required to keep contact phone numbers updated. She further inquired if there is a procedure that the state uses to establish a change in a phone number and if mass e-mail can be used by the state as a means to communicate this change. Mr. Minnich responded that they will provide a list of contact numbers each January to all accredited laboratories via email.

Mr. Morse asked if a laboratory is responsible for making sure the checks are completed. Mr. Minnich responded that the laboratory is not responsible. The water system is ultimately responsible for meeting the monitoring requirements under Chapter 109.

Ms. Dixon asked for clarification regarding the number of required samples. She noted that the safe drinking water program requires that five samples need to be taken and the microbiology program requires that three samples need to be taken. Mr. Minnich responded that, under the existing Total Coliform Rule, five samples are required to be collected the month after the system has a positive total coliform sample (systems which collect fewer than five routine samples each month). However, under the RTCR, the requirement to collect follow-up samples was eliminated. Systems are required to collect three check samples within 24 hours of notification of a routine total coliform positive sample result.

Mr. Barrett asked if it is correct that two level 1s in one year will trigger a level 2. Mr. Minnich replied that is correct. Two Level 1 Assessments within a rolling 12-month period will trigger a Level 2 Assessment.

Ms. Dixon asked when the assessment training will begin. Mr. Minnich replied that the assessment training occurred late spring and summer of 2015, depending on the region.

Ms. Cappellini noted that she has been told by Regions that if the total reading is negative, she would still have to report *E. coli*. She asked if this is accurate. Mr. Minnich replied that is not correct. *E. coli* only needs to be reported if the sample is total coliform positive.

Ms. Dixon inquired if 'S' type samples are not included in the summary; will the new 'A' type samples need to be included. Mr. Minnich responded that 'S' and 'A' samples should only be reported on the SDWA-1 (detailed record) form.

A member of the public attending the meeting asked what would happen if a client does not turn in a new sampling plan by April 1st. Mr. Minnich answered that the public water system would be in violation of the Federal Revised Total Coliform Rule and will receive an NOV. Sample results will still be accepted in DWELR until further notice.

Mr. Morse asked if sampling plans also need to be submitted or re-submitted by April 1st. Mr. Minnich answered affirmatively. Each water system must submit a Total Coliform Sample Siting Plan.

Mr. Barrett inquired as to whether or not Pennsylvania has the primacy to issue these violations. Mr. Minnich answered that Pennsylvania does not currently have primacy for these violations. Pennsylvania will not have a final RTCR until Fall 2016.

A member of the public asked when the Department first learned of the April 1st change and if the Commonwealth could refuse to comply with this change. Mr. Minnich answered that the Federal Revised Total Coliform Rule was published as final on April 28, 2014. In order to maintain primacy for the Safe Drinking Water Program, Pennsylvania (and all primacy agencies) must promulgate regulations at least as strict as regulations under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. In the interim period between when a federal regulation takes effect and the state has its own regulation, the state or the federal government must enforce the requirements of the new regulation. Pennsylvania did not have the option to ignore the new provisions without losing primacy for the entire Safe Drinking Water Program.

DISCUSSION OF LABORATORY REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS (Minnich)

The Draft Cryptosporidia, *E. coli* and Turbidity LT2ESWTR Laboratory Reporting Instructions was presented to the advisory committee prior to the meeting for their review and comments. Jason Minnich from the BSDW provided a summary of the major changes in the document. This is a new document which describes the submission of raw water data required as part of Long-Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2ESWTR). The document specifies how laboratories should submit cryptosporidium sample results to the department via DWELR for the first time. The document also lists the approved analysis methods and contaminant ID numbers used to analyze and report *E. coli* enumeration sample results. The advisory committee and the audience were given two weeks to provide comments via email to the Laboratory Accreditation Section.

Ms. Cappellini asked if bottled water is included within the scope of this guidance document. Mr. Minnich responded that bottled water is included. A member of the public inquired what has changed with regard to bottled water. Mr. Minnich responded that, since this is a new document, all provisions of the document pertain to bottled water if they use a surface or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water (GUDI) source.

A member of the public asked when this guidance would be implemented. Mr. Minnich responded that it should be in effect later this year, once it is approved for publication.

Ms. Cappellini asked how public water systems receive notifications especially with regard to bottled water. Mr. Minnich responded that Public Water Suppliers are notified of changes via mail, email and inspections, depending on the type of information being shared. Mr. Greco asked if there is a separate guidance document for water systems to follow. Mr. Minnich noted that the Department has a separate document that covers similar information for the water systems. Turbidity and LT2ESWTR Reporting Instructions for Public Water Systems Using Filtered

Surface Water or Groundwater Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water (GUDI) Sources
Technical Guidance Number 383-3301-106

Mr. Barrett inquired as to the timing and pace of these changes. Specifically, he asked why the changes seem to take extended time period to implement. Mr. Minnich replied that the Department's policies on documents are designed to make sure affected parties have the opportunity to be part of the process both during development and through submission of public comments. Also, staffing issues and prioritization of workload can impact the timing to get changes implemented.

DISCUSSION OF THE NPDES QUANTITATION LIMITS (Starosta and Schumack)

Bureau of Clean Water (BCW) staff attended the meeting to discuss the use of Target QLs in NPDES permits. There continues to be concern by accredited labs over some Target QL values. Specifically, labs voiced concerns such as:

- the Target QLs are not attainable and resolution is needed,
- the mining program limits differ from those established by the BCW for permit renewals,
- some permit holders are expecting their laboratories to be able to meet the Target QL limits without consideration of the needs of their specific permit, and
- to whom should concerns or questions be directed.

BCW explained that Target QLs were established in order to meet EPA's "Sufficiently Sensitive Methods" (SSM) Rule. BCW staff noted that they are willing to review alternative QL proposals that are submitted by the committee or accredited labs, and consider such proposals in light of the SSM Rule. BCW has also committed to participate in future LAAC meetings when requested to do so.

OTHER BUSINESS AND CONCLUSION

Mr. Greco asked how a proposed laboratory supervisor who has taken and passed the supervisor test can become approved as a laboratory supervisor. Ms. Alger explained that the LAP has a supervisor application on its website and the individual must complete the application and submit all attachments. The LAP will then review the individual's qualifications, experience and will confirm a passing test score before making any decisions.

Mr. Stolz commented that the lab supervisor qualifications for a microbiology supervisor should include the requirement for a lab course, not just four credits of microbiology.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.