

**Sewage Advisory Committee
DRAFT
Minutes of the Meeting
April 29, 2026**

VOTING SEWAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) MEMBERS PRESENT

William Glasser, American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania
John Wagman, American Society of Civil Engineers
John Peffer, County Departments of Health and Health Agencies
Brian Chalfant, Alternate, Governor's Policy Office
Robert Bressler, Pennsylvania Association of Professional Soil Scientists
Cory Warner, Alternate, Pennsylvania Association of Sewage Enforcement Officers
Martin Siegel, Pennsylvania Bar Association
Sarah Miller, Alternate, Pennsylvania Builders Association
William Rehkop III, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association
Adam Browning, Chair, Pennsylvania Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (POWRA)
Joseph Valentine, Pennsylvania Septage Management Association
Keith Heigel, Pennsylvania Society of Land Surveyors
Michael Ciocco, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers
Duane Mowery, Vice Chair, Pennsylvania Water Environment Association (PWEA)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Members of the public were present, but the only identified individuals were Daniel Westrich of BioMicrobics, Inc. and Terry Carcella of PA Municipal League.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP) STAFF PRESENT
(CENTRAL OFFICE ONLY)**

Tomisa Kiskadden, Environmental Group Manager, Planning Section, DMF, BCW
Richard Wright, Environmental Program Manager, DMF, BCW
Charles Klinger, Water Program Specialist, Planning Section, DMF, BCW
Annamaria De Sanctis, Environmental Engineer, Planning Section, DMF, BCW
Aspen Weitzel, Water Program Specialist, Planning Section, DMF, BCW
Jay Patel, Assistant Bureau Director, DMF, BCW
Adam Duh, Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel
Laura Campbell, Executive Policy Specialist, Policy Office
Lauren Imgrund, Director, Policy Office
Jessica Graybill, Deputy Communications Director, Office of Communications
Robert Haines, Environmental Group Manager, Training Section, BCW

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chair Adam Browning at 9:05 A.M. The meeting was conducted both in-person and on-line. No members of the public attended the meeting at the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg, PA.

A quorum was present.

Motion: Chair Browning called for a motion to approve the minutes for the January 29, 2026, meeting.

The Committee suggested the following amendments and clarifications for the January 29, 2026, meeting minutes:

- The minutes stated that Martin Siegel made a motion “to support the advancement of the draft regulations.” The correct language is that the motion was to support the advancement of the draft regulations along with the SAC’s comments (not conditional on all SAC changes being incorporated, but in conjunction with those comments).
- The minutes did not accurately reflect that Patrick Drohan and Sarah Miller, in addition to Joe Valentine and Robert Bressler, voted in opposition to advancing the regulations. Aspen Weitzel confirmed this via the meeting recording. DEP agreed to update the record.
- Joe Valentine requested that the minutes list organizational affiliations alongside individual names for voters.
- Duane Mowery requested that DEP exercise caution in how SAC’s actions are communicated externally, noting that a Citizens Advisory Council report had incorrectly characterized the vote as SAC supporting DEP’s rulemaking package in its current form. Tomisa Kiskadden acknowledged the concern and agreed to address it.

Action: Due to the substantive nature of these corrections, the Committee agreed not to vote on approving the January minutes until revised minutes are distributed. Approval is deferred to the September 30, 2026, meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Registered speakers:

- Daniel Westrich, Biomicrobics – Stated he had only recently become aware of the draft regulations and intended to submit formal comments at a future meeting after further review.
- Terry Carcella, PA Municipal League – Clarified a name discrepancy in the participant list (appeared as “Kelly Cook”). PA Municipal League membership status was flagged as unconfirmed in DEP records; Terry Carcella agreed to follow up with the League.

No additional public comments were received.

ACTION ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

- DEP provided a general status update regarding the proposed rulemaking updates to Chapters 71, 72, and 73. Tomisa Kiskadden reported that the DEP is continuing to work through comments received from SAC and manufacturers.
- Brian Chalfant and Laura Campbell presented an overview of the Pennsylvania environmental regulatory process. The presentation included resources for tracking rulemaking progress, which includes DEP e-notice system, e-comment platform, EQB public participation webpage, and DEP Regulatory Update publication.
 - Brian Chalfant indicated that it is unlikely the package will go to EQB before the end of 2026, given the volume of work remaining. He suggested the September 30 SAC meeting as an opportunity for another update.
- **Motion:** Sarah Miller (Pennsylvania Builders Association) introduced a motion to request that DEP explain what changes are being made to Chapters 71, 72, and 73 based on SAC's letter to the Secretary prior to submission into the formal regulatory process. The motion was seconded by Joe Valentine (Pennsylvania Septage Management Association). Discussion regarding this motion including the following:
 - Duane Mowery and Joe Valentine emphasized the Committee's desire for transparency on how their comments were addressed before the package enters the internal review pipeline.
 - DEP staff acknowledged the request, noted it cannot be formally committed to at this meeting, and stated it would be taken back internally for consideration.
 - Laura Campbell clarified that once the annex enters formal internal review, it is not a public document and is not shared externally until posted on the EQB website.
 - Martin Siegel noted the Committee retains the ability to submit comments during the public comment period even if no pre-submission review occurs.
 - Sarah Miller clarified the motion does not require a full written comment-response document, but rather a presentation or overview of changes made (and not made) in response to SAC's letter to the Secretary.
 - **Action:** Motion carried. No opposition recorded.
- Chair Browning (POWRA) introduced the issue of stacked split-lot sewage systems, particularly shallow limiting zone systems (e.g., micro-mounds) that are divided into two sections placed hydraulically upgradient and downgradient of each other due to site constraints. These have historically been permitted as site-specific alternates, primarily in repair situations.
 - Joe Valentine stated that DEP requires applicants to demonstrate no hydraulic competition between stacked sections, but provides no prescribed testing methodology, leaving practitioners without a clear pathway to approval.
 - Tomisa Kiskadden stated that the micro-mound listing has never permitted stacking, only staggering. DEP issued an SEO alert reaffirming this position. The following information was also provided:
 - There is no established minimum separation distance, as site-specific variables (soil type, slope, etc.) make a universal standard infeasible.
 - Applicants wishing to pursue a stacked configuration should engage the regional DEP office to develop a site-specific testing plan. Central office may be involved in coordination.

- Options include working with manufacturers to revise the technology listing based on collected data or pursuing case-by-case approvals.
 - Duane Mowery noted that the Elgin system listing (Section I, #7) contains language that may offer a pathway for stacked systems in repair situations specifically, distinguishing repair from new land development.
- Chair Browning raised concerns about inconsistent regional application of marginal soil condition assessments.
 - Tomisa Kiskadden stated that the draft regulations eliminate the concept of marginal conditions by requiring a primary replacement area for all systems and provide approximately 13 defined planning triggers intended to replace the current ambiguous four. Tomisa acknowledged the existing inconsistencies and agreed to review the specific examples Chair Browning raised with regional staff to improve guidance.
 - Jay Patel requested that practitioners submit specific examples (actual sites/planning modules) so Central Office can develop consistent FAQ guidance for regions and the regulated community.
 - Joe Valentine raised the broader concern that several program requirements, including marginal site conditions and certain planning module instructions, lack statutory basis and are implemented informally as policy. He suggested that the ongoing regulatory revision is an opportunity to address these.
- Joe Valentine and Chair Browning expressed concern that DEP treats the malfunctions and nuisances as interchangeable, limiting a practitioner's ability to address systems that are not operating as designed but do not yet meet the definition of a nuisance.
 - Jay Patel acknowledged the ongoing tension but stated that the current regulation in Section 73.3 ties best technical guidance (BTG) to resolving existing pollution and environmental health problems, limiting relief on non-critical isolation distances unless those thresholds are met. He indicated the draft regulations are intended to address this. Valentine acknowledged the upcoming regulatory language but reiterated that the non-critical isolation distances (property lines, rights-of-way) present limited public health risk and should not block otherwise beneficial system upgrades.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

SAC REQUESTED ITEMS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Chair Browning (POWRA) called for a motion to adjourn the SAC meeting at 11:11 A.M. Michael Ciocco (Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers) motioned to adjourn. Joe Valentine (Pennsylvania Septage Management Association) seconded the motion.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is September 30, 2026. Notice of the meeting and meeting materials will be posted on the SAC webpage.