

Minutes of the February 14, 2024 Meeting
Public Water System Technical Assistance Center (PWS TAC) Board

A regular meeting of the PWS TAC Board was called to order by Chairperson Serena DiMagno at 9:02 AM. This was the first regularly scheduled meeting of 2024.

The following Board members were present:

Amy Batdorf, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA)
Jeff Bickel, State Board for Certification of Sewage Treatment Plant & Waterworks Operators (SBCSTPWWO)
Doug Crawshaw, American Water Works Association, Pennsylvania Chapter (AWWA)
Serena DiMagno, Water Works Operators Association of Pennsylvania (WWOAP)
Roger Hadsall, Pennsylvania Rural Water Association (PRWA)
JT Hand, National Association of Water Companies (NAWC)
Greg Herb, Pennsylvania Association of Realtors (PAR)
Clint McKinley, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC)
James Steele, Pennsylvania Builders Association (PBA)

The following Alternate members were present:

Chip Bilger, Water Works Operators Association of Pennsylvania (WWOAP)
Jennifer Case, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA)
Ed Chescattie, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
Laura Dimino, Center for Rural Pennsylvania (CRP)
Sharon Fillmann, American Water Works Association, Pennsylvania Chapter (AWWA)
Mary Gaiski, Pennsylvania Manufactured Housing Association (PMHA)
Joel Jordan, Pennsylvania Rural Water Association (PRWA)
Emme Reiser, Pennsylvania Association of Realtors (PAR) – *not yet an approved alternate member*
Mary Roland, State Board for Certification of Sewage Treatment Plant & Waterworks Operators (SBCSTPWWO)
Tesra Schlupp, Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PIIA)

The following Organizations were not represented:

County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP)
Department Community and Economic Development (DCED)
League of Women Voters, Pennsylvania (LWVPa)
Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA)
Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD)
Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS)
RCAP Solutions, Inc. (RCAP)
Rural Utilities Service/Rural Development (RUS)

Members/alternates from 13 organizations were present; therefore, a quorum was achieved.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staff attending the meeting:

Jeff Allgyer, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Angi Anderson, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Jill Anderson, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Brad Baker, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Janelle Barry, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Nate Crawford, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Amelia Czwalina, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Derik Dressler, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Dave Grube, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water

Amanda Ferguson, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Sabrina Haydt, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Michael Hess, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Dawn Hissner, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Bill McNamara, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Rod Nesmith, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Selina Prettner, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water
Andrew Foley, Regional Permit Coordination Office
Brian Chalfant, Policy Office
Leda Lacomba, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel

Non-Members attending the meeting:

Christine Swailes, Veolia Water
Matt Walborn, Western Berks Water Auth. (WBWA)

Note: A network glitch caused an improper record of the online attendance.

General Advisory Board business

Two items were discussed.

- The draft meeting minutes from October 26, 2023 PWS TAC Board meeting were presented for discussion. JT Hand (NAWC) made a motion to approve the October 23, 2023 minutes as presented. Mary Gaiski (PMHA) seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.
- 2024 is an election year for the Chairperson and 5 Vice-Chairpersons; Chairperson Dimagno is not seeking re-election. The following members/alternates volunteered to form the Nominating Committee: Chip Bilger, Serena DiMagno, Sharon Fillmann and Mary Gaiski.

Trenchless Technology Technical Guidance (TGD #1) Presentation and Discussion

DEP's Regional Permit Coordination staff provided an outline of the draft-final trenchless technology TGD and discussed fields of application (Oil and Gas, Utilities, Pipelines, Etc.). PWS-TAC had no comments on the document.

Draft SDW Design Standards for PFAS Treatment (TGD #2) Review and Discussion

DEP Safe Drinking Water staff provided a summary of the design standards for PFAS treatment options that will be added to the PWS Manual, Part II – Community Water System Design Standards

The PWS TAC Board had the following comments.

- Clarification was requested on lead/lag and redundant units. Early detection of treatment breakthrough and replacement of the media in the lead unit reduces stress on the remaining treatment unit(s).
- Clarification was requested on pilot studies for future treatment.
 - Piloting may allow for quicker approval.
 - Treatment proposals not covered in the guidance would need to undergo a pilot study.

- Clarification was requested on the DEP response from initial compliance monitoring results.
 - DEP reminded the group that initial compliance monitoring begins in the current calendar quarter (for systems serving more than 350 people); water systems have until March 31 to collect samples. Results are to be reported by the 10th of the month after the analysis is completed (but no later than April 10th). Results are posted to the public-facing Drinking Water Reporting System (DWRS) on approximately the 12th of each month for the previous month.
 - The long-standing 1-hour reporting requirement for MCL exceedances enables DEP to coordinate a timely response when necessary based on the level(s) detected. DEP could provide a quarterly report PFAS results to be posted on the PFAS website.
 - A PFAS “Tool Kit” is being developed for water systems, and a Fact Sheet is being developed for consumers.
 - The upcoming AWWA Conference May 13-15, 2024 in Lancaster PA will have several PFAS topics.

Drought Management Presentation

DEP provided a background on Drought Management, the status of Drought Declarations and Drought Contingency Plans, noting that less than 10% of community water systems have a current and approved Drought Contingency Plan with a reminder to “update your Drought Contingency Plan when it’s raining.”

The PWS TAC Board noted that there is sometimes a long lag between submission of the Drought Contingency Plan submission and its approval, noting that the plan approval is only for three years. DEP noted that when a press release is issued for a watch or warning water systems should take time to review the Drought Contingency Plan and submit it for approval.

SDW Informational Session

LCRR/LCRI: DEP submitted comments for the proposed LCRI on December 6, 2023. EPA is still expecting to publish the final by October 16, 2024 (the implementation date of the LCRR). DEP reminded the group that Service Line Inventories are due by October 16th, 2024.

Cybersecurity: DEP sent information to all CWs/NTNC water systems in early Dec that included information for water systems to take steps to reduce their risk.

- There are several resources available to PWSs that can be implemented without incurring exorbitant consulting fees from cyber security or IT consultants. There are two crucial tasks that systems should initiate if they have not already done so:
 - Determine if any default passwords are in use on any hardware or software and change them immediately to passwords that are random and challenging. Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled on any networks that allow remote access to a PWS’s OT and IT systems to prevent hackers from cracking system passwords.
 - Install a secure firewall between the internet connection and the Operational Technology (OT) and their Information Technology (IT) systems.
- Any suspected cyber-attacks should be reported to PSP, CISA and the EPA’s Water Infrastructure and Cyber Resilience Division (WICRD).
- DEP recommends that water systems use EPA and CISA tools & resources to conduct a self-assessment of their OT and IT to identify vulnerabilities.

Accredited Drinking Water Labs: There has been a decline in the overall number of labs across the state in recent years. DEP is now tracking this trend; water suppliers may need to verify lab capacity when contracting for services.

The PWS TAC Board commented that there are few labs that can test for HABs using methods 544 and 545 so several other states have moved away from these methods. More discussion on HABs methods is needed.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Adjourn

Chip Bilger (WWOAP) made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed by a unanimous vote, and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

DRAFT