

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Technical Expert Working Group Conference Call

Friday March 23, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

CALL SUMMARY

Attendees:

EPA Region 3 and contractors: Rick Rogers, and Stephanie Jones

The Washington Aqueduct: Tom Jacobus, Ann Spiesman, and Patty Gamby

DCWASA and contractors: Rich Giani and John Civardi

City of Falls Church: Bob Etris

Arlington County: Dave Hundelt

CDC: Barry Brooks

Agenda

There were no changes or additions to the agenda. The meeting agenda is included as Attachment A to this call summary.

Summary of Discussions by Topic Area

1. **Upcoming Chlorine Burn**

Rick Rogers initiated discussion about the upcoming chlorine burn, planned for April 7 – May 7, 2007.

Public Notification: DCWASA and WA plan to meet and issue a joint news release about the burn (provided in Attachment B). Arlington County is depending on DCWASA and WA's outreach; the City of Falls Church plans to issue the same release to local newsletters.

Flushing: DCWASA begins its routine flushing on Monday, March 26. They will not be able to flush the entire system this year. The Virginia utilities are continuing their own flushing programs as usual.

Staffing: Both utilities are experiencing staffing shortages. Elizabeth Turner, manager of WA's laboratory, moved to Dallas, and WA is currently recruiting a new manager. Maureen Donnelly is on leave; her last day was March 23.

Effect of Cl Burn on Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR): Rick Rogers asked DCWASA if they anticipated the possible effects of the chlorine burn on LSLRs. John Civardi replied that he could not foresee any issues and suggested that DCWASA may

want to review methods for cutting pipe. Mr. Civardi noted that the chlorine burn may have a beneficial effect on the LSLR program, as the burn could reduce lead solubility. DCWASA will consider doing more replacements during the burn to take advantage of this.

2. Washington Aqueduct

Pipe Loops

Patty Gamby explained that all of DCWASA's loops are shut down except for Loop 7, which runs only process water and will run indefinitely. C2M Hill is contracted to write WA's final report, but WA is still getting them the rest the data. They should receive the rest of the data by Monday, March 26, and a draft report will be out as soon as possible.

3. DCWASA Monitoring Results and Pipe Loop Data

Rick Rogers explained that, from what was reported, recent sampling results from DCWASA were looking very good. Total coliform levels are down. Mr. Rogers suggested that, in the next call, they add as an agenda item discussion on the potential value of changing disinfectant levels (lowering the disinfectant level). Also, LCR results are looking good, as are other water quality parameters.

DCWASA Monitoring

Rich Giani explained that DCWASA is considering compliance monitoring during and after the burn and comparing results to previous data, focusing on nitrification and HPC results. In addition, DCWASA anticipates conducting lead profiles before, during, and after the chlorine burn at one or two D.C. homes. DCWASA has already gotten one volunteer. DCWASA is very short staffed and does not anticipate doing a lot of special monitoring other than this.

Nearly all LCR monitoring results obtained thus far from the current monitoring period were below the action level except for three residences. One residence was very high—891 parts per billion. DCWASA, upon getting the result, immediately investigated this and found that this home was undergoing construction. Rich Giani speculated that this probably caused the release of particulate lead, causing the spike. DCWASA is still getting more details.

DCWASA Pipe Loops

Loop1: The control loop looks normal; no major issues.

Loop 3: This loop was dosed with CLM, PO₄, and phosphate. Lead levels trended higher, but stabilized to around 20 to 30 parts per billion. Rich Giani speculated

that the higher lead levels were caused by DCWASA rattling the pipe during reconstruction.

Monitoring at Schools

Rich Giani explained that everything is generally quiet, with monitoring going as expected. DCWASA has been working with nine schools. Five had no high lead results at drinking fountains; four had some problems, with one of these four with several exceedances. Mr. Giani suggested that this could be attributed to filtered sites where the filter has not been replaced in a long time. Also, some sample sites were janitors' sinks, which may not have been in use for years. In general, schools have problems because they are old buildings with old plumbing. Schools have been advised to institute daily flushing to ameliorate lead problems.

Press

There has been very little press attention to the lead issue. American University Radio (WAMU) recently interviewed DCWASA about the school lead levels and the corrosion control treatment. WAMU asked if the elevated levels in schools could indicate that the corrosion control treatment was a failure. DCWASA assured them that this was not the case: higher lead levels were most likely caused by old plumbing. The story did not make it to the news, as far as DCWASA knows.

4. Future Call Schedule and Other Issues

Rick Rogers stated that the next calls are scheduled for April 27, June 1st and June 29th. The April and June calls will be a good time to discuss the chlorine burn and a potential drop in chlorine residuals and determine if the group feels the same as before. Mr. Rogers instructed the group to forward any issues to Nick Tymchenko or Jennie Saxe, who is returning to work April 11 on a part time basis. Jennie Saxe will likely take over the TEWG calls.

Perchlorate Study

Rick Rogers explained that EPA was still moving forward, albeit slowly, with a planned monitoring study for perchlorate in the Potomac River. The plan was to line up six utilities to take samples once per month for one year and ship them to EPA's laboratory in Cincinnati. Two additional utilities in the lower Potomac River Basin have also agreed to participate. The water systems that have agreed to participate thus far are: the Washington Aqueduct, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the Fairfax County Water Authority. The group will likely begin sampling by the summer of 2007. EPA's Office of Research and Development's laboratory in Cincinnati will analyze the samples. EPA staff are working with the state drinking water agencies to get enough water systems samplers on board and to potentially help with sampling. The laboratory will be using a new method that can detect perchlorate down below 1 ppb (MRL is about 0.2 pb).

EPA Collaboration with Local Military Facilities

Mr. Rogers explained that EPA was currently working with area military facilities, including Bolling, Navy Yard and others, to prepare them for LT2, Stage 2 and other rules. Participants asked why Fort McNair was not on the list of regulated entities: while McNair is smaller than Bolling, it is about the same size as Navy yard.

Rick Rogers replied that Fort McNair is considered a large customer. Under SDWA, consecutive systems must meet one of four criteria to be exempt from regulation: (1) they do not sell water; (2) they do not treat water; (3) they do not collect water from an intake or well; and (4) they are not an interstate carrier of water. Such systems are still considered public water systems, but they are exempt from the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. Recently, EPA conducted a survey of large customers in the D.C. area. Gallaudet University came closest to being regulated because of the way they billed their water. However, it was found that this did not amount to selling water; rather, this represented an internal billing issue for the University. It was noted that National Airport has been directly regulated by Virginia for years.

Fluoride Tracer Study

Bob Etris explained that Falls Church has been conducting a tracer study. The fluoride was shut off last Sunday (March 18th), and Falls Church is currently taking samples. Fluoride will be shut off at least through Friday, March 30 up to April 9 or 10. Mr. Etris guessed that the Fluoride C was from the Dalecarlia Plant which was on the 3rd high. Tom Jacobus confirmed this, noting that the McMillan plant cannot control fluoride coming out of the plant. WA plans to send a note to all its customers and remind them that fluoride will be re-introduced.

Rick Rogers ended the call, reminding the group to forward to him any last minute agenda items for April 27th.

Attachment A: Call Agenda

- * Last minute items to add to the agenda
- * 2007 chlorine burn - plans for monitoring impacts
- * Washington Aqueduct - any final thoughts from pipe loop studies?
Anything new to report?
- * DC WASA - update on distribution sampling results (TCR, LCR) - anything special to report?
- * Future call schedule

Attachment B: Chlorine Burn News Release

District Drinking Water Supplier Changes Water Chemistry

Washington Aqueduct Temporarily Changes Disinfectant

Mar 23, 2007 -- For one month, April 7, 2007 through May 7, 2007, citizens in the District of Columbia may notice a slight chlorine taste and odor in their drinking water due to a temporary change in the disinfectant that is added at the water treatment plant. The Washington Aqueduct, a division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who treats the water, will switch the disinfectant from chloramines to chlorine during this one-month period.

The temporary change in water chemistry does not affect drinking water safety. Users who take special precautions to remove chlorine from tap water such as dialysis centers, medical facilities or aquatic pet owners should take note of this temporary addition of chlorine in the water treatment process and act accordingly.

- If you are a home user of a kidney dialysis machine, contact your dialysis center in order to make any modifications to your dialysis machine.
- If you own aquatic pets, you may want to contact a pet supply store to ensure proper usage of dechlorination chemicals.

The periodic disinfectant change is an industry-wide practice to keep water mains clean and free of harmful bacteria. This process along with WASA's vigorous flushing program helps loosen sediments that may accumulate in the distribution system.

Customers may notice a slight temporary discoloration of the water. Simply run the faucet until the water turns clear. In the unlikely event your water is discolored and remains cloudy please contact our Water Quality Division at (202) 612-3440 Mon.-Fri., 8 am – 4:30 pm or (202) 612-3400, 24 hours a day for assistance

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