

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Technical Expert Working Group Conference Call

Friday March 27, 2009

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

DRAFT CALL SUMMARY

Attendees:

EPA Region 3 and contractors: Jennie Saxe, George Rizzo, Laura Dufresne, and Anne Jaffe Murray

The Washington Aqueduct: Lloyd Stowe

DCWASA: Rich Giani, John Civardi

DC Department of the Environment – Collin Burrell

Center for Disease Control: Barry Brooks

City of Falls Church: Matthew Jacobi

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. Update on Current Events

Jennie Saxe discussed EPA's plans for reviewing the "Elevated Blood Lead in Young Children Due to Lead-Contaminated Drinking Water: Washington, DC, 2001–2004" prepared by Marc Edwards of Virginia Tech and published in the January issue of ES & T (hereafter referred to as the ES & T paper). She noted that the Agency does not plan to prepare a separate evaluation of this paper but will review it with other similar studies as part of a future rulemaking process.

Barry Brooks from CDC was asked if his agency plans to review the study. He indicated that his Branch Chief, Mary Jean Brown, had reviewed the article. He was not certain if CDC will provide any official word on the study but in general, it was not CDC's practice to review and comment on studies.

DCWASA hired a marketing group to assess the damage caused by the ES & T article. The marketing group distributed a survey to determine people's thoughts and concerns. The survey is due to DCWASA on March 27, 2009. DCWASA will be running separate campaigns that will include water quality, conservation, and convenience. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) is planning a similar

campaign related to infrastructure age/needs and the associated need for rate increases. The campaign may include billboards, displays, and ads. Rich also noted an increase in participation in the LCR sampling program after the article was released (participation rose to 70%).

In an effort to improve risk communication, Jerry Johnson and Tom Jacobus participated in a radio call-in program on March 2nd. The group asked about the success of this effort. Those who listened to the call indicated that it was comprehensive. Rich noted a drop in lead sample requests following the show and some inquiries regarding pharmaceuticals. He also felt that the survey might reveal more about the effects of this radio show. Lloyd did not believe that Washington Aqueduct received any calls. Jennie indicated that the call was archived and that she would provide the group with a link.

2. Future Directions of the TEWG

Jennie noted that the TEWG had accomplished several of the technical action plan goals and asked what the future role of the three different TEWG subgroups (technical, research, and communication) should be. She suggested that a good role for the group was message mapping. For example, communication efforts could include how orthophosphate treatment has reduced lead levels, and information on chlorine burn.

Rich Giani noted that DCWASA recently hired an expert in this area to help them develop information on the LCR and other issues such as discoloration from iron, taste and odor caused by biofilms, and TCR. Jennie suggested that the public affairs people should periodically be part of the TEWG conference calls on lead and other water quality issues.

Lloyd Stowe stated that the purpose of TEWG is information sharing and coordination versus taking the actual action. Rich elaborated by indicating the TEWG has provided information on the “chlorine burn” but the public affairs group is the one that prepares the actual press release. Rich stressed the importance of providing a single message and indicated that the TEWG could support the public affairs group by providing message mapping. Jennie added that TEWG could provide a review function.

Rich indicated that the public needs to be better informed regarding the safety afforded by the Safe Drinking Water (SDWA). He asked if materials existed that could help deliver the message. Jennie indicated that the region would be happy to see what information has already been developed on SDWA and to provide this to the group. She offered to send the link to EPA’s message mapping and a copy of the recent UK article on orthophosphate optimization (*refer to Follow-up to Call below*).

Follow-up to Call

As a follow-up to the call, Jennie Saxe distributed the following:

- A link to EPA's chloramine message maps:
http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/disinfection/chloramine/pdfs/all29_q.pdf.
- A copy of the article on orthophosphate dosing in the UK in The Journal of Water and Health (Hayes, et al, 2008).
- A link to the Kojo Nnamde show from March 2, 2009 (featuring Tom Jacobus from Washington Aqueduct and Jerry Johnson from DCWASA) at:
<http://wamu.org/programs/kn/09/03/02.php#24826>.

The next TEWG call will be held on June 5th; unless an earlier meeting is requested.

Attachment A: Call Agenda

- * update on current events since the 2/27 call
- * thoughts on future directions of the TEWG