Technical Expert Working Group Conference Call

Friday December 5, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.

CALL SUMMARY

Attendees:

EPA Region 3 and contractors: Jennie Saxe, George Rizzo, Kathy Martel, and Laura Dufresne

The Washington Aqueduct: Lloyd Stowe and Patty Gamby

DCWASA and contractors: Maureen Schmelling and John Civardi

George Washington University: Marina Moses

Arlington County: Dave Hundelt

DC Department of the Environment: William Slade

CDC: Larry Franklin

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. EPA Personnel Update

Bob Smolski is still serving as the acting DW Branch Chief, the position left vacant by Rick Rogers. EPA expects to announce a personnel change soon. Jennie will contact the call group when the announcement is made.

2. Washington Aqueduct Pipe Loop Update

Lloyd Stowe provided an update and indicated that the Aqueduct is not actively using the pipe loops for research at this time. The pipe loop data sent to the TEWG prior to the call represents data for the period March 2005-November 2008. The data for the 2008 period show similar trends as historical data and no unusual results. The Aqueduct is planning for future pipe loop studies to investigate the potential impacts of reducing the phosphoric acid dose in order to reduce chemical costs. They would also like to study particulate lead release issues. These pipe loop studies will be initiated in about one year. They have hired a consultant to conduct these studies, and have started to harvest lead lines from the DCWASA system to construct new pipe loops. The existing control pipe loop no. 7 will also be used in the future studies.

3. DCWASA Pipe Loop Update

Maureen Schmelling provided a graph of the DCWASA Pipe Loop 1 (the control loop) prior to the TEWG call. The graph represents lead data from September 2006 through November 2008. Maureen noted that lead levels have stabilized since October at 5 ppb.

DCWASA has completed LCR sampling for the second semester but has not completed a quality assurance review of the data. Preliminary results indicate lead 90th percentile levels are 8 ppb for first draw samples and 13 ppb for second draw samples. In addition, Maureen reported that of the 10 homes with either 1st or 2nd draw LCR sampling results above the action level, 7 had high iron levels. DCWASA is continuing to investigate correlations and negative effects of galvanized iron pipe on lead levels.

4. USGS Briefing on Surface Water Assessment Study Report

The USGS is holding a briefing on December 5, 2008 (the day of the TEWG call) to announce the release of two surface water assessment reports. One report is a site-specific study of the Potomac River and the second report summarizes raw and treated water data for nine selected rivers that are used as drinking water sources. Low levels of certain man-made chemicals that are unregulated for drinking water were found in the rivers. The study did not test for pharmaceuticals or hormones. Jennie encouraged the call group to review the reports that are posted on USGS website at http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/swqa. EPA Region 3 was given a chance to review the Potomac River report (but not the full study report) prior to their publication and was not surprised by the results. There is not much new information in the reports.

5. Update on Perchlorate Sampling Project

Jennie Saxe provided an update on the perchlorate sampling study of the Potomac River. Sampling was completed in September 2008 and results have been compiled for the whole sampling period, October 2007 through September 2008. The highest perchlorate levels were found in November 2007 with values of 7.5 ppb in raw water and 6 ppb in treated water. The lowest levels were found in the period from December 2007 through June 2008. Jennie will send summary graphs to the call group. During this study EPA used a reference level of 24.5 ppb. A recent action by EPA has developed a new reference level of 15 ppb that will be used for future studies. Although the current study is complete, EPA has ideas for future perchlorate investigations including isotopic analyses to differentiate between manmade and natural sources.

6. Thoughts on Future Call Schedule

Jennie Saxe will be preparing the call schedule for 2009. The group confirmed that a quarterly schedule is appropriate for these calls. Also, the group agreed that EPA Region 3 should continue to coordinate the calls.

Attachment A: Call Agenda

* Call for additional agenda items
* EPA personnel update
* Washington Aqueduct pipe loop update (WA)
* DCWASA pipe loop update (DCWASA)
* USGS briefing on surface water assessment study report (EPA, others?)
* Perchlorate study update (EPA)
* Thoughts on future call schedule (EPA, all)