

Meeting Minutes

Drinking Water Advisory Group Monday, February 24, 2014

Location: Kent, WA with video conference to Shoreline, Spokane, and Tumwater
Time: 9 am. – 12:30 p.m.

1. Clark Halvorson: **Welcome and emerging issues**

- Discussion for today's meeting:
 - Group B
 - Arsenic Treatment Optimization Program
 - Institutional buildings becoming water systems
- Other emerging issues:
 - We continue to have conversations with EPA about DWSRF. EPA is now talking about changing loan utilization times for funds from five to two years.
 - Deputy Director Heather Bartlett accepted a job with Ecology.

2. Clark: **Legislative update**

- Legislative session has been relatively quiet for us.
- We're currently tracking six bills. Does anyone in the audience have a bill they would like to discuss?
- HB 1484 – This bill would restore revenue to the Public Works Trust Fund Program. Public Works Trust Fund Program which had almost all of its funding taken away last session and moved to education.
 - We did have some concerns with this bill because the source of state match for federal programs would be limited to 15 percent of the Public Works Assistance Account appropriation.
 - We did have some concerns with this bill because there was talk of putting a cap of 15 percent on our DWSRF loan money.
- SB 6008 – This bill is about giving water system rate payers a voice. In the past, if a city was going to take over a local sewer-water district serving 1000 or more residents, they could. This bill allows rate payer approvals first.
- SB 6516 – This bill is joint legislative task force to study financing options for water supply, flood control, and storm water projects. If this were to happen, ODW would participate.

Question:

When would the clock start on the two year utilization timeline for DWSRF loans?

- The clock would start as soon as we get money from EPA.

3. Scott Torpie: **Group B – What’s happening at the local level**

- Background of changes to the program:
 - In 2009 the legislature made important decisions concerning funding and regulation of Group B programs.
 - We completed this process in fall 2012 when the Board of Health adopted the revised Group B rule.
 - Before this, we received annual funding of about a million dollars. Now we don’t receive any funding.
 - The changes to the rule became effective January 1, 2014.
 - Currently the only funding for the program comes from fees to change or expand a new or existing Group B water system.
 - There are no other monitoring standards (sampling, etc.).
 - We provided guidance and will refer Group B water systems to them, our website, local health jurisdictions (LHJs), and satellite management agencies (SMAs).
 - Incentives for LHJs to take on more Group B regulations:
 - It will help sources be approved easier and sooner.
 - If the source has contaminants and we inspect it, we’ll deny its completion. There is a bit more wiggle room with LHJs.
- Clark: We’ll probably have more discussions about Group B.
 - We will only update changes to owner and contact information for Group B water systems in our database, Sentry.

Comments from meeting participants:

1. This is a real concern for PUDs when you want to add a connection to an existing Group B you could have to comply with the new design standards. We need to have more LHJs pass ordinances and have a compliance agreement approach.
2. The state basically walked away from regulation Group B water systems. Was this due to money?
 - Yes, no other state regulated the way we did.

4. Stephen Baker: **Arsenic Treatment Optimization Program**

- Many systems have spent a lot of money on arsenic treatment with unacceptable results.
- Our arsenic effort goes beyond meeting standard requirements.
- Started with surface water in 1999:
 - First step was to set protective goals that are more stringent than federal requirements.
 - This results in more removal of pathogenic organisms.
 - Because we were able to develop this ex-graph, management wanted us to develop a similar system for arsenic treatment.
- At some point in the future, we suspect the federal standard for arsenic will be lowered.
- Recent health findings show that long-term exposure to arsenic can cause many health problems, including cancer and type 2 diabetes.

- Arsenic removal by coagulation is the most common treatment in the state. It has the most problems because it's a personnel intensive operation.
 - This removal method is similar to what we see in a rapid rate surface water system.
 - Have to ensure there is enough time for effective oxidants to change over.
 - There are really no good field tests for arsenic though iron has shown to be a good test case.
 - Clark wants to integrate more of this training into the Operator Certification program so there is more initial knowledge.
 - Sam Perry: **Institutional buildings becoming water systems**
- Does your water system serve a hospital?
- Background:
 - This isn't just about hospitals, this is also about institutions.
 - Two issues cause an institution to become a public water system:
 1. Treat their water supply.
 2. Develop their own source of supply.
- Hospitals:
 - Some are considering drilling their own wells.
 - They do this so they can serve customers in case of supply disruption.
 - Some hospitals are considering treating their water supply to reduce the risk of people getting sick or diseases. This makes a hospital a water system.
- We're going to continue to encourage healthcare professionals and water systems to communicate.

5. Clark: **Queuing up the next meeting**

- We issued a penalty to Green Mountain Acres. Kitsap PUD has stepped up and taken over the system. This is a good example of us using compliance when it's appropriate.
- Meeting topics:
 - In about three months we are looking for folks from different counties to talk about their Group B issues.
 - We'd like to discuss Group A rule updates.
 - Please send us any other topic ideas of interest.

Items to Note –

- Buy American:
 - An appropriation put back into DWSRF that requires water systems to use U.S. steel and iron products.
 - Water systems projects funded by DWSRF loans will be subject to this now.
 - ODW is looking for further guidance.
 - The impact of this appropriation will be huge and we have concern that it will be a big challenge; we're working hard to identify exemptions.
- Small Water Systems Workshops for water systems with 500 connections or less.
 - Mount Vernon – March 5, 2014
 - Spokane – March 19, 2014
 - Tumwater – April 23, 2014