

# DRINKING WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DEQ State Office  
**Conference Room B**  
Thursday, May 31, 2007  
8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## MINUTES

### Attendees:

#### DWAC Members:

Butch Anderson, IRWA	John Wiskus, CH2M Hill
Greg Wyatt, United Water	Kellye Eager, Health Departments
Bob Hansen, IBOL Board	Fred Ostler, AWWA
Cyndi Grafe, EPA - Idaho	Jonathan Parker/Adam Little, Idaho Water Users
Mac Pooler, City of Kellogg	Dave Six, City of Lewiston
Chad Stanger, City of Idaho Falls	

#### DEQ:

Lance Nielsen      Don Lee  
Amy Williams      Joan Thomas

#### Guests:

Maria Barratt, Governor's Office

### Introductions/Review of Agenda Items –John Wiskus

- Members introduced themselves and were asked if there were requests for additional items for the agenda.
- Amy Williams, Source Water Protection Coordinator will be added to the agenda to present the committee with an overview of the Source Water Protection Grant Program.
- Minutes from the January 23, 2007 meeting were reviewed.
- Lance talked about the 2006 Drinking Water Program Review and how the program is measured. Performance Measures are a percentage of the program's evaluation. EPA measures the program by national goals. Some of the measures are based on population. Dave Six added that the 2006 report says DEQ is doing a good job, but the numbers don't entirely reflect that. In 2008 EPA will begin to take other things into account so possibly the report may look different.

*MOTION/ACTION TAKEN:* A motion was made to accept the minutes of the last meeting.

*MOTION MADE BY:* Mac Pooler      *SECOND:* Dave Six      *VOTE:* Unanimous

### Source Water Protection Grant Program Overview – Amy Williams

- The Source Water Protection Program is working on setting up a new grant program to help public water systems and wanted to ask if the DWAC would be interested in being part of the review process. They may have a grant application ready by the end of December.
- The new grant will be available to public water systems, local governments, special districts (i.e. soil conservation districts), nonprofit organizations, schools and universities). Butch (IRWA) would like DEQ to consider the smaller systems.
- Projects may include items in the PWS's Drinking Water Protection plan, education and outreach materials (storm drain markers, signs, and brochures), security issues, and well abandonment.
- The program will be reviewed in the regional offices and then the state office will rank systems.
- An RFP is expected to be sent out in late summer.
- The program wants to let people know that this funding is available. Information will be presented to systems through the drinking water newsletter, when a system does a Source Water Protection plan, letters to systems, and information on the DEQ website. Butch said that IRWA can put the information on their website also.

*MOTION/ACTION TAKEN:* The DWAC would be happy to look at the initial criteria, but may not be appropriate for involvement in the day-to-day process.

#### **Revisit Financial Forecast – Lance Nielsen**

- Lance reviewed the financial forecast presented at the last meeting with the committee. Comments by committee members and staff follow:
- By 2008 or 2009, DEQ and the DWAC would have to begin looking at how to increase funding. If we have success the first time around, DEQ will receive the money just in time because 3-4 years lead time is needed.
- General Fund money was a favored source of funding before increasing the drinking water connection fees.
- DEQ will have to show what they've done to be more efficient and still get the job done.
- Education of legislators will be critical early in the process.
- DEQ and the committee have to prepare a report that will analyze the economic sense of an additional fee to legislators and/or systems of why it will work or why it will not work.
- Having the bigger systems subsidizing the small systems wasn't popular at the onset of the original connection fees and would probably be less acceptable now. There will be acceptance problems with both large and small systems. The monitoring waivers large systems could get because of the connection fees were very beneficial at the time, but are a less compelling argument now.
- Affordability is a greater problem and it is time for the Legislature to help with General Fund resources.
- AIC will likely have concerns with an increased connection fee.
- Primacy withdrawal was a big issue before, but is not such a concern this time.
- Last time there was a short timeframe to get things done; this time there will be more opportunity to get information together and make a good presentation.
- Make a presentation to the AIC committee at their fall meeting (e.g. develop a communications plan).
- Lance will be discussing the funding issue with Barry Burnell and Toni Hardesty.
- A presentation at next year's IRWA conference was suggested.

*MOTION/ACTION TAKEN:* Over the next year, DEQ will put together a strategy and show efficiencies and cost savings they have achieved, and develop an economic cost/cost savings to different stakeholders and present it to the DWAC for review.

#### **Drinking Water Information on DEQ Website – Lance Nielsen**

- Lance gave members an electronic overview of DEQ's website and asked if there was anything they would like to see added. He said that DEQ is trying to be more efficient and make information quickly available to the public, and at the same time minimize the time staff spend on individual requests.
- On the home page of the website at bottom right is a sign up button where you can request notification and updates to specific program areas.
- Operator Certification information is electronically refreshed weekly between IBOL and DEQ so information is up-to-date.
- Butch asked about finding out about Legislative changes. If it has to do with DEQ rules and proposed changes to water system, it will be on DEQ's website. There is a public comments section and Gov. Delivery sign up. Other Legislative changes would be on other websites.
- There were three requests:
  - Post drinking water rules monitoring summary. DEQ hopes to post this within the next 60 days. DEQ will be duplicating Montana's system at little cost to DEQ.
  - A link to the rules for public drinking water systems on the drinking water page.

- Bob Hansen wondered if sanitary surveys could be posted. Don Lee will look into that.
- Bob also wondered if a list of backflow assemblies could be available on our website. The list is copywrited but DEQ can look into it further.

*MOTION/ACTION TAKEN:* DEQ will add a link to the Drinking Water Rules on the Drinking Water web page.

### **Operator Certification Topics – Bob Hansen**

- Bob went through the IBOL website electronically and discussed the contents. Topics discussed:
- Reciprocity is referred to as “Endorsement”. Anyone who has a license can fill out an application and request reciprocity in Idaho and pay the fee to the Idaho Board of Professionals. Bob reviewed the “Endorsement” rules.
- Temporary provisional licenses for special jobs like operating new equipment. The operator now isn’t licensed to run the new equipment and can’t get a “temporary” license. Operators of systems should be upgraded in the process of getting tested. Bob said that the system can hire a contract operator in the meantime (short amount of time). In summary, the WWP Board is not issuing “temporary provisional licenses”.
- Multiple Licenses: Butch asked what is the need for five separate licenses for one person. A Class I Water Treatment license used to cover a Distribution license in the past. Now you need one for distribution and one for treatment. How was it determined who had to get a second license? It changed when it became mandatory for operators to be licensed. Licensing requirements were determined and established by the American Boards of Certification (ABC). Dave Six felt operators should be able to get Class I through IV if they have the experience in training and licensing without having to take additional tests.
- Instructor Approval: IBOL has a simplified application for organizations that have regular classes of the same type. IBOL doesn’t want to make the application process cumbersome, but they need to know what courses are going to be taught. EPA has restrictions and guidance which limits such things as computer courses.
- Standard Curriculum: John Wiskus asked if there was a standard step-by-step curriculum of what operators need to do next. No, in the requirements, there are only timelines given. There is no one place to go. Brown Environmental has training classes available all the time for operators. They do mostly general classes, but it may be a good idea to have some site specific classes such as slow sand filter, membrane filters, etc. John W. Maybe some other states have a curriculum of steps for operators. Bob: Continue education looking to making it easier for surrounding states also on reciprocity. Goal is to approve people that have approved instructors in other states.
- Continuing education: is listed on the IBOL website
- Correct amount of CEUs for classes: Butch thought that IBOL should watch the conferences to see that operators who are relying on the classes to get there CEUs are getting the right amount. Sometimes the amount of CEUs is an issue if the time of a class is shorter then expected.

*MOTION/ACTION TAKEN:* Bob will bring the issue of multiple licensing for operators who have sufficient experience before the Board.

### **Idaho Public Utilities Commission Concerns – Bob Hansen**

- There is a problem systems are having complying with DEQ rules and meeting the requirements of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission.
- When the drinking water rules were revised in 2000, the IPUC would not accept the regulations unless the exclusion paragraph was added to the regulations. The exclusion paragraph appears on page 35 under Section **500. Facility and Design Standards--Demonstration of Technical, Financial, and Managerial Capacity of Public Drinking Water Systems. 07. Exclusion.** New public water systems which are public utilities as defined in Sections 61-104 (Corporation), 61-124 (Water System), 61-125 (Water Corporation), and 61-129 (Public Utility), Idaho Code,

must meet the regulatory requirements of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) in Chapter 1, Title 61, Idaho Code, Public Utilities Law, and IDAPA 31.01.01, "Rules of Procedure of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission." Such water systems will not be required to meet any requirements of this Section which are in conflict with the provisions and requirements of the IPUC.

- Chad Stanger suggested contacting Terri Carlock, at the Public Utilities Commission to get more information about the financial depreciation discrepancy.
- A meeting with IPUC and IDEQ to discuss the inconsistency was suggested.

#### **Mutual Aid Agreements – Water Area Response Networks – Don Lee**

- Mutual Aid Agreements is a Network of water systems who agree to help each other by sharing their equipment, staff, and other operations for a charge during an emergency.
- EPA is encouraging states to join in this effort.
- There are only a few states that have this; California, Florida, and Louisiana.
- DEQ feels that it is a good idea and could help minimize a tragedy such as occurred in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina.
- Idaho DEQ may be able to provide some monetary support through funding from Security Grant dollars. The AWWA has agreed to help with training on getting involved. In case of an emergency it would be important and necessary to be prepared in advance, and have signed mutual aid agreements in place.
- The Attorney General's office is taking a look at what DEQ would be looking for in an umbrella mutual aid agreement.
- Bill Carr of United Water is the Lead – This umbrella agreement would be for emergency situations for both large and small systems.
- California is willing to share their code for the web site and have Idaho put its logo on it.
- There is a July 12 meeting in Denver to set up a WARN here in Idaho. DEQ should encourage systems to get involved.

#### **On-going Engineering and Scientist Vacancies – Lance Nielsen**

- Lance spoke about the vacancies at DEQ and the recruitment challenges because of salary issues, and asked members if they were experiencing the same type of problems.
- Chad Stanger said they have the same pay issues in Idaho Falls, and the city is not flexible enough to deal with it.
- Mac Pooler has the same problems in Kellogg, but the city is trying to improve the medical plans.
- Greg Wyatt indicated that scientist and engineering majors in colleges are decreasing in the United States and increasing in other countries. United Water is trying to recruit college interns in these fields. They are also partnering with the Boise school district to use summer interns.
- Cyndi Grafe added that hiring retirees as part time workers is working well for EPA and a good idea. Lance said that DEQ is also keeping flexible on part time workers.

#### **Regulatory Status – Lance Nielsen**

- EPA has been promulgating the LT2, and Stage 2 DBP rules. DEQ is preparing to take primacy of the LT2 and Stage 2 DBP rules after approval by the Legislature in 2008.
- Ground Water Rule has been adopted by EPA and is final. DEQ will adopt it over the next two years. The rule changes the frequency a system must have a sanitary survey from every five years to every three years. This will increase DEQ's workload significantly and there will be no additional resources. The question was asked could DEQ contract out sanitary surveys to reduce the workload. DEQ has agreements with the Forest Services and health districts to do some of the surveys already. It may be possible to contract more and DEQ can look at that, but additional resources would be needed.
- Dave Six asked if we could streamline the sanitary survey for small systems. The new survey form and process has been reduced quite a bit already, but the long-term goal is to shorten it even

more.

- The sanitary survey is part of the services systems pay for with the connection fee.
- The Total Coliform Rule and Distribution Systems Rule. There has been discussion for some time about systems that have a TC detection but not Ecoli and resulting sampling requirements. The EPA has sent up a Federal Advisory Committee (including members of industry, and regulators) to discuss the issue. Cyndi Grafe (EPA) will check into when they will be meeting.
- Telecasted workshops are being held today, May 31<sup>st</sup> around the state for design engineers to become familiar with the Drinking Water and Wastewater Facility Design Standards and Reuse Rules.

#### **Point of Use (POU)**

- POU is a viable option in some cases, but systems aren't always aware of the full costs.
- Two systems are using POU and a couple more are getting ready to implement it.
- Gaining access to the individual houses is difficult. In order to successfully implement POU there must be 100% compliance, which means that each customer must agree to have maintenance done on the POU.
- Proper training of operators is important. It is expensive to hire an engineer to maintain and operate the system.
- Butch (IRWA) pointed out problems he has seen with waste disposal and cross connection in some small subdivisions using POU.

#### **Wrap-up/Action Items**

- Lance thanked DWAC members for the help they give DEQ in providing safe water to the citizens of Idaho.
- DEQ Action items from discussions were reviewed.
- The next meeting will be in October of 2007 – Date To Be Determined

Adjournment at 2:00 p.m.