Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee
Minutes for July 15, 2021-Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bryan Swistock, Penn State State University (Academic Laboratory)
Cristin Geletei, US Steel Clariton Works Lab (Industrial Environmental Laboratory)
John Stolz, Department of Biological Services Duquesne University (Academic Laboratory)
Twila Dixon, M.J. Reider Associates, Inc. (Technical Expertise in Testing and Analysis of Environmental Samples)
Danielle Cappellini, A.E. Kirby Memorial Health Center (Commercial Environmental Laboratory)

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STAFF PRESENT

Annmarie Beach, Laboratory Accreditation Program Chief
Dwayne Burkholder, Laboratory Accreditation Program
Amy Hackman, Laboratory Accreditation Program
Laura Griffin, Policy Office
Leda Lacomba, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order by Annmarie Beach at 9:03 AM. There were not enough committee members to establish a quorum.

INTRODUCTION

At 9:09 AM Annmarie Beach welcomed everyone to the committee meeting and went over the agenda items: Legionella and PFAS discussions.

QUORUM

Annmarie Beach called for a quorum at 10:07 AM-there were still not enough members to vote on approving the meeting minutes from 12/1/2020.

LEGIONELLA ACCREDITATION UPDATES

Dwayne Burkholder discussed the different testing methods and setting up an accreditation program for *Legionella* testing. Dwayne discussed the background of *Legionella* and the diseases it causes (Legionnaires' disease and Pontiac Fever). He also talked about who is more at risk, and the natural environment of *Legionella*. He discussed how *Legionella* can grow in human-made structures if the water is not properly treated. He also discussed disease transmission.

Dwayne Burkholder discussed the number of species and serogroups. *L. pneumophila* is responsible for >90% of cases of Legionnaires' disease. Serogroup 1 (SG1) is responsible for >80% of cases of Legionnaires' disease. Currently, *Legionella* is regulated under the SWTR (MCL goal of zero organisms). Treatment technique is maintaining residual chlorine, not through testing. *Legionella* is in UCMR5 as being proposed to being added in the future (only *L. pneumophila).*

Dwayne discussed the available methods for use (culture method, IDEXX Legiolert, qPCR based methods).

- The culture method is considered the 'Gold Standard', requires analytical expertise. Can have some background organism grow. Long testing time.
- IDEXX Legiolert only detects *L. pneumophila.* This method is easier to use, similar to Colilert. Analytical technique is simple. However, additional testing would be required to determine serotype (isolation required). There have been peer-reviewed papers coming out where it has been found that non-*Legionella* organisms are presenting as positives but are actually false positives.
- qPCR based methods-DNA testing. Ability to detect organisms that are not culturable (dead). Rapid detection, specificity rate relatively high for *L. pneumophil*a, but not for *Legionalla* spp. Can't determine viability and serotype.

LAP is currently evaluating offering accreditation for *Legionella*. They are looking at their purpose (surveillance vs. Investigation), criteria (presence/absence, enumeration, % positivity), sample collection and handling protocols, test methods/level of identification, proficiency testing.

LAP would like to discuss the lab communities' thoughts on the testing.

Questions:

John Stolz asked whether hospitals are required to perform routine testing and Dwyane Burkholder responded that he's not sure if it's routine, but hospitals do outbreak investigations.

PA Method Detection Limit Levels for per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

Annmarie Beach shared that DEP's Drinking Water Program is developing limits for PFAS. The expense of enforcement needs to be evaluated and the Program must assess how limits may fit with EPA's future proposed limits. The EPA has proposed UCMR 5 for 29 of the compounds and proposed reporting limits, however, they are not regulated. DEP is researching monitoring requirements and considering a phased-in approach so municipalities are not on the same schedule. EPA proposed reporting limits in the UCMR 5 and a proposed RL for each individual analyte and need to consider instrument capability. The Appendix A for the pre-draft proposed PFAS regulation is on the Public Water Systems Technical Assistance Center meeting on July 29, 2021 and the monitoring summary is available online.

Questions:

Committee members inquired about several PFAS-related issues including: laboratory shortages, incentives for labs, LC MS/MS for methods, EPA's perspective on PFAS and their rulemaking projections, concerns about the lack of labs to implement the rule, PFAS limits in existing permits, PFAS entry in DWELR for DW, DEP and EPA's approach for PFAS in wastewater, access to the proposed PFAS MCL rulemaking documents, and a timeline for the rulemaking.

Laura Griffin shared that DEP's rulemaking process takes about 18-24 months and stressed that the Administration see PFAS as a priority issue. Draft proposed regulations will go to the advisory committee in late summer. Laura went over the review process and the steps for proposed regulations. Legislative committees are involved in the process and we will have to take their comments into consideration and well as public comments.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

CLOSE OF MEETING

No quorum was established, therefore no vote was held for the official adjournment of the meeting. The meeting ended at 10:07 AM.