

Remote Attendance (19)

Council Members: Paul Junio (Chair), Jennifer Buchholz, Tad Schwartzhoff, Erin Mani, Brenda Anderson, Craig Obry, Carol Mielke
DNR Staff: Steve Geis, Tom Trainor, Zana Sijan, Brandy Baker-Muhich, Janelle Nehs, Autumn Farrell
Others: Sharon Mertens (Milw MSD), Alfredo Sotomayor (Milw MSD), Matt Schmeichel (Menasha WSU), Jessica McCammon (Mad MSD), Kevin Freber (Oconomowoc), Brooke Klingbeil (Medford)

Agenda repair and approval of last meeting minutes

- There were no agenda repairs.
- Last meeting minutes were approved.
 - Paul asked that we send the update on concentrating samples to lower LODs to all participants of the NR 149 training session. Tom said the plan is to send the update to all labs.
 - Carol asked if their normal procedure includes steps to lower the LOD would that be acceptable. Tom said yes if that is how you perform all samples. Carol said this wasn't necessarily clear in the minutes. Tom said he will include that clarification when the update goes out to the labs and include examples. The clarification being that you can concentrate samples to lower the LOD as long as that is part of your normal procedure and all samples are treated this way. Just doing something different to a random sample here or there to lower the LOD would not be an acceptable practice.

Outstanding issues from last meeting

- Tom indicated that the clarification of sampler ice attestation would be included in the email update sent out to all labs.
- Tom indicated website updates will be worked on in the near future.
- Bromoform breakdown is not discussed in EPA 524.2, 524.3, or 524.4 but we added it to our checklists. Even though it is not discussed in these methods Sharon asked if Lab Cert could recommend that laboratories utilize it. Tom indicated that we would add this information to our website.

Program metrics report

Large-scale lab metrics: July 2021 – Oct 2021 (FY 2022 partial)

- Completed: Audited = 100%, Reports issued = 100%, Closed = 85%, Applications = 2.
- Reports issued within 60 days = 54%.
- Audits not closed over 1 year from report date = 0.
- Audits not closed over 6 months from report date = 3.
- 114 Active labs.
- 3-year cycle audits overdue at time of meeting = 14 labs.
- 2 new labs applied to program since last meeting.
- No labs dropped from program since last meeting.

Small-scale labs: July 2021 – Oct 2021 (FY 2022 partial)

- Completed: Audited = 78%, Reports issued = 93%, Closed = 67%.
- Reports issued within 30 days = 92%.
- Audits not closed over 1 year from report date = 0.
- 220 Active labs.
- 3-year cycle audits overdue at time of meeting = 43 labs.
- No new labs applied to program since last meeting.
- No labs dropped from program since last meeting.

Sharon asked if on-site evaluations were now taking place instead of remote evaluations. Tom said most in-state audits are being performed in person with the exception of small applications. Out of state evaluations that require air transportation are still not frequently being performed in person.

Paul asked if there is any plan to catch up on the small lab backlog. Tom said catching up on that should be quicker than the large lab backlog. Steve discussed our 3-year plan to catch up on all labs. Paul asked if we could include our progress in knocking down the backlog in the metrics reports. Tom said sure.

Other business items

- **FY 2023 Budget First Look:** Salary and Fringe = 552,582. Supplies and Services including allocables = 103,488. Total Expenses = 656,070. Total RVUs = 8,748. This relates to a \$75.00 cost/RVU which equals a 50 cent per RVU saving (0.7% decrease per RVU) this year compared to last year. The lower cost per RVU is due to the removal of the fee caps with the updated code. Alfredo asked if the contractor auditor expenses are based on the expected number of audits that they will perform. Tom said yes. Alfredo asked if we could keep the fees the same as they are this FY and not provide a decrease in RVU? Tom said yes but we would want to think carefully before we used that approach. Steve said that there is value in providing a lower cost per RVU, especially for WW labs, and that one of the benefits of uncapping the fees in NR 149 was to provide a more realistic RVU. Sharon agreed with Steve. Paul indicated that prices are increasing everywhere such that even holding the fees the same as this year would appear to be a win for all.
- **Program updates:**
 - **WET lab updates:** GLEC in OH has applied. LSRI is considering adding acute toxicity testing to their current chronic accreditations. Badger Labs has whole effluent toxicity testing on their radar but needs to find an expert to perform work there. Really have just ECT and Ramboll that provide full service. Sharon mentioned that there are still issues with shipping and that they are driving samples themselves. Sharon and Paul would like to revisit this issue at the April meeting to see if a Plan B can be developed to mitigate lack of testing capacity.
 - **Labeling of standards and reagents:** NR 149.39 (3)(a) indicates that containers will be labeled with “chemical name, concentration, and expiration date.” Even though code provides this requirement, it is not possible to comply with it for multi-analyte standards due to lack of space. Therefore, lab certification will be looking to make sure that the lab includes an identifier on the label that is traceable to all of this required information. The spirit of the requirement was to clearly label dangerous chemicals.
 - **Recertification of weights:** NR 149.44 (3)(d)3 indicates that balance weights shall be certified for accuracy every five years by a metrology service outside the laboratory. To clarify, a metrology service that is not part of the laboratory can recertify weights on the same day they check balances for a lab as long as records of recertification are provided.

Council member issues

- None

Checkout and next remote meeting date

- Next meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2022 at 9 AM.