

TOXIC SUBSTANCES COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TSCC)

December 20, 2016
10:00 am – 11:30 am

Room M-653
Texas Department of State Health Services
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

Attendance:

Attendees

Heidi Bojes
Versa Burnett
Robin Cypher
Deba Dutta
Josh Duty
Tom Ellerbee
Laura Morse
Andrew Myers
Leticia Nogueira
Alex Nuñez (c)
Yahitza Nunez
Ketki Patel
Beth Patterson
Michael Tennant
Melissa Valadez
David Villarreal

Agency

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
DSHS
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
DSHS
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Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
DSHS
DSHS
DSHS
DSHS
Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)

(c) denotes attendee participated by conference line

Call to order and welcome visitors:

Laura Morse, DSHS, called meeting to order at 10:05 am.

Approval of minutes dated September 20, 2016:

Committee members approved the minutes as is.

Presenter:

Dr. Bryan Brooks, Baylor University

“Green Toxicology? Challenges and Opportunities for Alternatives Assessments and Sustainable Molecular Design of Less Hazardous Chemicals”

Subcommittee reports:

- Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) workgroup meeting update (Michael Tennant, DSHS)
 - The Texas HAB Subcommittee has not met again since the meeting on April 21, 2016.
- Fish Sampling subcommittee meeting update (Michael Tennant, DSHS)
 - *Subcommittee Meetings*
 - The subcommittee has not met in 2016.

- *Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Fish Project (Ongoing)*
 - Ellison Creek Reservoir
 - ◇ Fish samples collected May 2014.
 - ◇ DSHS issued ADV-58 (rescinding ADV-29) on September 29, 2016 to revise the existing fish consumption advisory.
 - Mountain Creek Lake
 - ◇ Fish samples collected November 2015.
 - ◇ Mountain Creek Lake chemical contaminant analyses completed August 31, 2016.
 - ◇ DSHS Seafood and Aquatic Life Group (SALG) completed a draft risk characterization on December 12, 2016. The document is in review.
 - Lake Worth
 - ◇ Fish samples collected November 2016.
 - Unscheduled Sampling
 - ◇ Leon Creek (six sample sites; $n = 60$)
 - ◇ Trinity River DFW (12 sample sites; $n = 192$)
- *Other Projects*
 - “Fish Smart. Eat Smart. Be Healthy. A Guide to Health Advisories for Eating Fish Caught in Texas Waters” completed December 1, 2016.
 - The Health Assessment Comparison (HAC) Value Workgroup (DSHS, TCEQ, TPWD, TDA, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry [ATSDR], Baylor University, and Texas A&M University) met in September to provide guidance for the Fish Consumption Advisory Program.
- *Potential Future Projects*
 - DSHS SALG submitted an Upper Galveston Bay fish tissue monitoring proposal to the Galveston Bay Estuary Program Monitoring and Research Subcommittee earlier this year.
 - ◇ DSHS SALG will receive \$100,000 for FY 2018 to analyze fish tissue samples and reassess the risk associated with consuming fish from an impaired portion of Upper Galveston Bay south of the State Highway 146 Bridge and all connected waters north of a line from Red Bluff Point to Five-Mile Cut Marker to Houston Point.
- *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Fish Program*
 - Fish and Shellfish Program newsletter published monthly: www.epa.gov/fish-tech/fish-and-shellfish-program-newsletter
 - Fish and Shellfish Program national call December 15, 2016
 - ◇ Agenda
 - Who’s on the call? – Sharon Frey
 - Opening – Shari Barash
 - Updates from EPA Headquarters
 - ◆ Fish Tissue Data Repository – Sam Fontenelle
 - ◆ Fish Consumption Survey Guidance – Sam Fontenelle
 - ◆ National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Studies – Sam Fontenelle
 - ◆ Curriculum on Integrated Food Safety training – Bill Kramer
 - ◆ Inspector General Evaluation of Fish Advisory Program – Lisa Larimer

- ◆ Fish Forum Update – Tracy Bone
 - EPA Regional Updates
 - ◆ A Multifaceted Approach to Enhancing Fish Advisory Programs in the Great Lakes – Jackie Fisher
 - Updates from the States and Tribes
 - ◆ Mercury Maps - Sara Moses, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
 - Questions for States, Territories, and Tribes
 - ◆ Assessing the Effectiveness of Fish Advisories – Roselyn Thalathara
 - ◆ Fish Tissue Data and Impairment Listings – Shari Barash
 - ◆ Potential topics for Fish and Shellfish Program Newsletter (www.epa.gov/fish-tech/fish-and-shellfish-program-newsletter) – Sharon Frey
 - Wrap-up
- Environmental Health and Toxicology workgroup update (Laura Morse, DSHS)
 - The HAC Value Review workgroup met on September 21, 2016, to discuss the best health guideline for the Texas Fish Consumption Advisory Program (TFCAP) to use for assessment of dioxin health risks.
 - Participants were from the TPWD, DSHS, TDA, TCEQ, ATSDR, and Texas A&M University.
 - ◇ Baylor University researchers were also invited, but unable to attend.
 - DSHS followed up with the two Baylor University researchers after the workgroup meeting, and found that the researchers were satisfied with the meeting results.
 - The workgroup discussed the critical studies that were used to develop the ATSDR chronic oral Minimal Risk Level (MRL) and EPA chronic oral Reference Dose (RfD) for dioxin.
 - ◇ The MRL is based on an older animal study.
 - ◇ The RfD is based on two more recent human studies.
 - Participants examined the various approaches currently taken by Texas and other states with fish consumption advisories for dioxin-contaminated water bodies.
 - ◇ Five out of 10 states who responded to a request for information use the EPA RfD as their health guideline.
 - ◇ Two of the 10 states use the ATSDR MRL.
 - ◇ Texas currently uses the MRL for issuing fish consumption advisories.
 - All workgroup members discussed the best health guideline for Texas to use.
 - ◇ Majority of attendees supported the use of the RfD.
 - DSHS will develop a technical support document in 2017 addressing the use of the RfD for dioxin as the basis for Texas fish consumption HAC values.
 - ◇ DSHS will work further with the HAC Value Review workgroup with regard to this document.

Agency updates on department policy and/or legislative issues:

- Texas Department of State Health Services (Laura Morse, DSHS)

- *Zika Virus*
 - On November 28th, 2016, the DSHS reported the first case of locally acquired mosquito-borne Zika virus infection in the city of Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas.
 - On December 9th, 2016, four additional cases in persons living in close proximity of the first case were reported.
 - DSHS continues to investigate Zika virus transmission in Brownsville.
 - Areas of active Zika virus transmission have already been reported in Mexico along the border of the United States and Mexico.
 - ◇ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a Travel Notice for Mexico on December 10, 2015, recommending that pregnant women should avoid travel to Mexico.
 - Since many people with Zika virus infection will not have symptoms or will have only mild symptoms, additional individuals may be infected.
 - In addition, active Zika virus transmission may not be apparent yet, given that the incubation period for Zika virus infection can be as long as two weeks and the diagnosis and investigation of cases can take several weeks.
 - This is an ongoing investigation; and DSHS, Cameron County Health Department, and CDC are working together to rapidly learn more about the extent of Zika virus transmission in Brownsville.
 - ◇ CDC will update its recommendations as more information becomes available.
- *Legislation*
 - DSHS has begun to analyze bills for the upcoming legislative session.
- *Transformation*
 - As part of complying with Senate Bill (SB) 200, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Sunset bill, DSHS is undergoing reorganization of its program areas.
 - The proposed reorganization will be finalized this month and effective on September 1, 2017.
 - Additionally, some regulatory programs as well as state supported living centers and state hospitals will transfer to HHSC on September 1, 2017.
- *Environmental Epidemiology and Disease Registries Section*
 - Health Assessment and Consultation Group
 - ◇ Staff is working on our grant application with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).
 - ◇ This is a competitive year for the existing cooperative agreement.
 - New Staff
 - ◇ In October, Dr. Ketki Patel joined the Environmental Injury Epidemiology and Toxicology (EIET) Unit as our newest epidemiologist.
 - Dr. Ketki Patel has a medical degree in general medicine from the Vitebsk State Medical University, Vitebsk Republic of Belarus, and a master of public health degree in environmental, agricultural and occupational health and a doctor in philosophy degree in epidemiology both from the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska.

- Dr. Patel has experience in public health, epidemiology and surveillance. Most recently, she was the epidemiology surveillance coordinator with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Omaha, Nebraska. Prior to this position, Dr. Patel was a graduate research assistant with the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska.
 - Texas Fluoridation Program
 - ◇ Texas Fluoridation Program provided a free water operator training course in September in Cedar Park for operators from 13 communities across Texas.
 - ◇ The course offers expert instruction in water fluoridation and allows participant to earn credits for renewing their water operator licenses.
 - ◇ The next training course is tentatively scheduled for spring 2017.
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
 - TCEQ Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program (Robin Cypher) had no updates.
 - Staff from the TCEQ Toxicology Division was unable to attend and provide an update.
- Texas Department of Agriculture (David Villarreal, TDA)
 - *Pesticides*
 - TDA is preparing for next year's mosquito spraying and the safe use of pesticides.
 - The Department is working with EPA on any new pesticides or new uses of existing pesticides to combat mosquito populations, especially those that might carry the Zika virus.
 - TDA continues to work with apiaries, farmers, and or other stakeholders on the proper use of pesticides in regards to pollinator populations, especially the Monarch Butterfly.
 - *Food Modernization Safety Act*
 - TDA is attempting to implement aspects of the Food Modernization Safety Act in regards to inspections at food distribution points on farms or in food centers.
 - ◇ This will ensure fruits and vegetables and other farm products are not contaminated with infectious disease agents or farm chemicals.
- Texas Department of Public Safety (Melissa Valadez, DPS)
 - *Legislative Session*
 - DPS is gearing up for the legislative session and several bills have already been identified as potentially impacting the Crime Laboratory Service.
 - *Controlled Substance Cases*
 - The Amarillo Crime Laboratory has been challenged with a significant number of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) edibles being submitted to the lab which take a significant amount of time to analyze compared to other Controlled Substance cases.
 - ◇ The edibles are primarily originating from Colorado and are confiscated in traffic stops when they cross the border into Texas.

- DPS Crime Laboratory Service will continue outsourcing Controlled Substance cases in 2017, and plans to ramp up the project to have most of its backlogged cases completed by August 2017.
 - *Crime Laboratory DNA Sections*
 - The DNA sections have had some significant challenges this year regarding mixture interpretation changes.
 - Casework has slowed due to the implementation of new software and associated policies, but that process has been completed.
 - In early 2017, DPS Crime Laboratory Service will be introducing a new kit to expand the number of loci that are analyzed in order to be in compliance with new national Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) standards.
- Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC; Laura Morse, DSHS, for Amanda Kindt, RRC)
 - Commissioner David Porter will be leaving at the end of 2016, and is no longer Chairman of the RRC.
 - Wayne Christian has replaced David Porter as a RRC Commissioner.
 - Commissioner Christi Craddick was elected Chairman of the RRC.
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
 - Staff was unable to stay through the entire meeting. As a result, an update could not be provided.

Public comment:

- No members of the public were in attendance.

Review of upcoming 2017 meetings:

- March 21, 2017 - DSHS, M-653, 10:00 am
 - Dr. Peter Langlois with DSHS will provide a presentation about birth defects.
 - Attendees at the December 20, 2016 meeting approved an action item for those present at the March 21, 2017 meeting to vote on the mission statement for TSCC.
 - Two different mission statements are shown on the TSCC meeting agendas and website.
- June 20, 2017 - DSHS, M-653, 10:00 am
- September 19, 2017 - DSHS, M-653, 10:00 am
- December 19, 2017 - DSHS, M-653, 10:00 am

Adjourn:

- Meeting adjourned at 11:52 am.