

Emerging Constituents Program Task Force

April 8, 2024

ATTENDEES:

CASA, Jared Voskuhl	Riverside Public Utilities, Robin Glenney
EVWMD, Lenai Hunter	RWQCB, Maile Gee
EVMWD, Sudhir Mohleji	SAWPA, Bruce Whitaker
EMWD, Anthony Budicin	SAWPA, Gil Botello
Eurofins, Katie Beall	SAWPA, T. Milford Harrison
Eurofins, Kevin Calcagno	SAWPA, Jeff Mosher
IEUA, Bonita Fan	SAWPA, Rachel Gray
IEUA, Daisy Puga	SAWPA, Ian Achimore
IEUA, Pietro Cambiaso	SAWPA, Melissa Bustamonte
IEUA, Stephen Parker	SAWPA, Haley Gohari
Kahn, Soares, & Conway, LLP, Theresa (Tess) Dunham	SCCWRP, Dr. Charles Wong
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Ai Jia	SCCWRP, Dr. Leah Hampton
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Carrie Guo	SBMWD/RIX JPA, Marissa Flores-Acosta
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Jonathan Zapata	SWRCB, Wendy Linck
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Lucy Li	SWRCB DDW, Darrin Polhemus
OCWD, Jason Dadakis	West Yost, Veva Weamer
OCWD, Lisa Haney	WMWD, Lyndy Lewis
OCWD, Kevin O'Toole	YVWD, John Wrobel
OC San, Matt Smith	Yorba Linda WD, Rosanne Weston
Riverside Public Utilities, Farid Ishak Boushaki	Shane Nystrom

Introductions

The Emerging Constituents (EC) Program Task Force (Task Force) meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m. in a virtual Zoom Meeting. Brief introductions were made.

Approval of January 22, 2024 Meeting Notes

Meeting notes were approved as posted.

Microplastic Regulatory Developments at the State Level – Jared Voskuhl, California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA)

Jared Voskuhl, of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), provided a PowerPoint presentation titled *Microplastics Regulatory Developments at the State Level* explaining CASA, their mission and current activities surrounding upcoming legislation. CASA represents over 130 agencies across the state that do work in wastewater collection, treatment, recycling and resource recovery services through legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy. CASA works alongside regulatory groups such as California Water Boards, the Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Ocean Protection Council (OPC).

Mr. Voskuhl then reviewed a list of regulatory initiatives that may be of interest to the Task Force:

- Senate Bill (SB)1263: Passed in 2018, requires a statewide microplastics strategy that entails numerous critical elements for management:
 - A prioritized research plan to support the development of risk assessments
 - Standardized methods for sampling, detecting, and characterizing microplastics
 - Characterization in the marine environment of ambient concentrations
 - Assessment of environmental impacts by particle age, size, shape, and type
 - Investigation of the sources and pathways relative importance
 - Development of a risk assessment framework for microplastics
 - Evaluation of source reduction and product stewardship techniques
 - Recommendations for policy and statutory changes

- SB1422: Passed in 2018, requires a definition of “microplastic: and four years of sampling by drinking water agencies;
- OPC WWTP Study conducted in 2020;
- SWRCB Adopts Definition of Microplastics in 2021;
- OPC Risk Assessment Framework in 2021;
- OPC Statewide Microplastics Strategy adopted in February 2022;
- Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Candidate List (2023); and,
- SWRCB Integrated Report included thresholds for microplastics and looking to develop an appropriate threshold for microplastics.

Mr. Voskuhl then described the challenges of sampling for microplastics in wastewater media. The first obstacle to overcome is that the sampling process is a 24-hour method and will require the appropriate staffing levels and overlap to ensure a successful sample is taken. He referred the Task Force stakeholders to California’s standard operating procedure for Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) and Raman Spectroscopy that was developed by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) for the SWRCB through a microplastics methods evaluation. If anyone has any questions or would like to join the listserv, please contact Jared Voskuhl.

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

State Microplastics and Wastewater Study – Dr. Charles Wong, SCCWRP

36:00 Dr. Charles Wong, of SCCWRP, provided a PowerPoint presentation titled *Microplastics research initiatives in California drinking water and coastal California wastewater treatment plants*. The presentation demonstrates SCCWRP’s work in microplastics in drinking water and wastewater practices. There are two methods now accredited for analysis methods by ELAP for drinking water: (1) Infrared spectroscopy and (2) Raman spectroscopy. To determine these methods, SCCWRP compared methods being conducted internationally in laboratories across six countries.

SCCWRP is working with Dr. Bob Andrews at University of Toronto to develop a standardized approach and training materials, anticipated for review and distribution in March 2025. For wastewater, the study was motivated by the Ocean Protection Council and CASA to determine the levels of effort needed to protect the aquatic environment from microplastics. The project’s objectives were to determine the emissions of microplastics into California coastal waters and evaluate removal efficiencies from different processes of treatment systems. Seven POTWs worked with SCCWRP in major urban coastal areas in various sizes and treatment types (primary to tertiary).

In the draft report, results showed that removal efficiencies between influent to final effluent are up to 99+%, meaning the POTWs are effective and efficient at removing microplastic particles. The study showed that many of the particles end up in biosolids, which then end up in sludges or scum that are then landfilled or incinerated. Another positive finding showed that source control is effective at keeping microplastics out of waste stream and reduces microbeads and spheres in effluent. Once the study is finalized, the Ocean Protection Council will approve and share the final report and findings.

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Regulatory Report and Updates – Tess Dunham, KSC

Tess Dunham, of Kahn, Soares and Conway, LLP, provided two short verbal updates. On Friday, April 5, 2024, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) adopted official Public Health Goals (PHG) for:

- PFOA PHG is 0.007 parts per trillion, and,
- PFOS PHG is 1 part per trillion.

Darrin Polhemus, of the Division of Drinking Water (DDW), provided a short verbal report of an order for additional testing for many municipal supply wells across the state. The state is providing full support for sampling to disadvantaged communities water systems only. DDW will be coordinating and working closely with the agencies to satisfy the requirements of the order issued on March 4, 2024.

General Update on PFAS and Microplastics – Maile Gee, Regional Board

Maile Gee, of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, provided a brief verbal update on their work in PFAS and Microplastics.

a. Site Cleanup Program - Region 8 PFAS Investigations

PFAS investigation work continues throughout the region. Ms. Gee also inquired on the Task Force's interest in a study that evaluated PFAS concentrations in rainwater for a future meeting.

b. ITRC Microplastics Toolkit Workgroup Update

Not available just yet, but Ms. Gee will provide the Interstate Technology Regulatory Council (ITRC) toolkit to the Task Force for their use and information when it is finalized.

Mid-Year Update on EC Task Force Outreach Efforts – Melissa Bustamonte, SAWPA

Melissa Bustamonte, Communications Specialist of SAWPA, provided a few verbal updates regarding the work of the EC Public Outreach Workgroup. There are plans for a check-in meeting amongst the Workgroup on April 24 as a brainstorm session for content and communications planning. Ms. Bustamonte also shared the April content video put together by JPW Communications about where our water comes from. Videos are shared in the content cycle on the Your SoCal Tap Water social media accounts every other month.

[April 2024 Video](#)

Schedule Future Meeting

The next Emerging Constituents Program Task Force will be scheduled via doodle poll and will be distributed to the Task Force members through email at a later date.

Future Speakers Ideas? – Ian Achimore, SAWPA

If there are any topics or suggestions for presentation to the Emerging Constituents Program Task Force, please feel free to contact Ian Achimore or SAWPA Staff to share your thoughts and requests.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.