

*Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality and Testing Standards
Minutes from October 21, 2005 Meeting*

Members Present:	Robert Andrews Michele Giddings Peter Huck (via phone) Marilyn Lee Ken Roberts Lesbia Smith	Ron Brecher Rod Holme Alex Hukowich Jim Merritt John Rudnickas Robert Walton
Ministry Liaison Staff Present:	Dale Henry, MOE	Fred Ruf, MOHLTC
Council Staff Present:	Scott Barrett	Iris Biggar
Regrets:	Pat Lachmaniuk, MOE	Harry Richardson
Guests:	Satish Deshpande, MOE SDB Mojgan Sharifi, MOE SDB	

1. Call to Order:

The Chair opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Adoption of October 21, 2005 Agenda

October 21, 2005 agenda was adopted by consensus.

Adoption of September 16, 2005 Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2005 Meeting Minutes were adopted by consensus.

Review of Outstanding Action Items

None

2. Reg 170 Review:

The MOHLTC Liaison staff member briefed the Council on the progress of the Joint (MOHLTC / MOE) Project Management Committee regarding the Small Drinking Water Systems Transformation Project, whose goal is to move the Regulation 252 systems from MOE over to MOHLTC.

It was noted that consultations will continue this fall / winter, with a first phase of policy approval / monetary considerations, and a second phase dealing with the site-specific risk evaluation process and necessary protocols.

The Council will remain engaged in this project, and has asked that feedback be received for the rationale of decision-making as to why or why not the Council's advice was followed.

The Council's Executive Assistant updated and will maintain the tracking table that was developed to assess the progress of the government on the implementation of the Council's 22 recommendations from their Reg. 170 Report on smaller, private systems.

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Actions:

- **Council to remain engaged in the Small Drinking Water Systems Transformation Project, in order to provide on-going advice and to understand the rationale of decision-making, regarding advice previously given**
- **Council Executive Assistant to continue to update Reg. 170 Report recommendations versus the Ministry's progress table for future Council consideration of providing feedback to the Ministry of the Environment**

3. Reg 903 Disinfection Review

CELA's October 18, 2005 letter to the Minister was discussed in the context of how and when the advice that the Council provides is released to the public.

Issues management was discussed, and it was agreed that the Council's function is to support the Minister, through the Chair, and that individual Council members should not be addressing the media directly.

It was also noted that, as an over-arching principle, as the Council becomes more proactive, its advice will often be to improve a particular situation, and is not necessarily formulated to address an acute, imminent problem.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant and Council Chair to develop standard wording, for appropriate future advice items, that will define its purpose as continuous improvement of a situation rather than addressing an imminent problem**

4. Drinking Water Source Protection

The draft advice letter to the Minister was discussed and changes were suggested. It was agreed that the revised letter be finalized and delivered to the Minister prior to the next Council meeting.

Actions:

- **Council Members Peter Huck and Ron Brecher to liaise with Council Executive Assistant to review and edit the draft advice to include changes agreed to at the October 21, 2005 meeting**
- **Council Executive Assistant and Chair to finalize and deliver advice letter to the Minister prior to the next Council meeting**

5. Justice O'Connor Priorities

It was noted that the Council's Disinfection Procedure advice letter was delivered to the Minister on September 20, 2005. The Council's advice addressed three immediate Justice O'Connor priorities via Walkerton Recommendations: #28: Protozoa Treatment Standard; #29: Recommending a lower Turbidity limit; and #31: Disinfection By-Products Review.

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6. Standards Review

THMs:

The draft advice letter regarding the endorsement of THM standards was discussed, and it was agreed that, with modifications, the letter would be finalized for transmittal the Minister, pending the outcome of the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines approval process by the Committee on Drinking Water (CDW) meeting in Ottawa, October 26-28, 2005.

The general topic of providing implementation advice for standards was discussed. It was agreed that phase-in, sampling frequencies and locations, and average calculation advice would be included on a case-by case basis.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant and Chair to finalize advice letter to the Minister regarding the endorsement of THM standards, once the outcome of the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines approval process by the Committee on Drinking Water is known**

Turbidity:

The Council's discussion on a stand-alone turbidity standard, and a turbidity limit that is lower than the federal guideline were discussed.

It was agreed that the current turbidity Guideline, as reflected in the "*Procedure for Disinfection of Drinking Water in Ontario*" was deemed to be acceptable.

It was noted that turbidity is an important operational surrogate, and is a valuable tool in determining overall system health, when trends are analyzed.

To this end, the Council was interested to find out whether changes in turbidity (upward trends) are being used to flag potential operational problems, and how this concept is being communicated to operators.

Action:

Council Executive Assistant to investigate the current forms of guidance for Ontario's Water Treatment Plant operators, regarding the use of trend analysis for turbidity to flag potential operational problems

1,4-dioxane:

Ministry of the Environment staff briefed the Council on its review of Health Canada's guidance value of 30 µg/L. The Council had no concerns with this value being used in the short-term, pending further study.

It was noted that the Ministry of the Environment has asked Health Canada to consider 1,4-dioxane for its Priority List.

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Action:

- **Council to monitor the inclusion of 1,4-dioxane to Health Canada's Priority List, and suggest to the Minister this substance be made a Ministry of the Environment priority if Health Canada does not include it**

Pending Reviews

None

7. Other Drinking Water Issues

Use of Untreated Surface Water as a Source of Drinking Water

The use of untreated surface water as a drinking water supply for private systems was next discussed in context of the Council's next steps.

It was decided that finding evidence of health-related problems would likely be difficult, expensive, time consuming, and perhaps inconclusive. Nonetheless, the Council agreed that, from a health perspective, to expand from surface water supplies, to suggest that some form of control over *all* private supplies may be needed for such an important commodity as drinking water.

It was noted that it would be important to obtain an estimate of the number of private water supplies in Ontario, broken down into: Drilled Wells, Dug Wells, and Surface Water supplies, in order to determine the scope of the problem.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant and Council Member Alex Hukowich to develop draft advice for the consideration of the safety of all private drinking water supplies in Ontario, and determine how many private systems exist in the province, broken down by type**

Drinking Water Testing Services (Reg. 248):

The Council reviewed a draft advice letter to the Minister regarding its two recommendations for improving Reg. 248, and endorsed it, with some minor modifications.

Action:

- **Council member John Rudnickas to liaise with Council Executive Assistant to finalize draft advice letter for the Minister, with the recommendations, for discussion at the November 18, 2005 Council Meeting**

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8. Administrative Items:

The Council's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guideline was discussed again, and no outstanding issues were raised.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant to finalize the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guideline for Council Members' endorsement at the November 18, 2005**

It was decided that the Council would record all real and perceived Conflicts of Interest in a log to be maintained by the Council, on an on-going basis.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant to create and maintain a Conflict of Interest log for all real and perceived Conflicts of Interest pertaining to the Council**

The Action Plan for the Council's 2005 fiscal year was introduced. It was agreed that the document would be discussed in detail, at the November 18, 2005 meeting. Upon finalization and endorsement, the Council's chair will make it available upon request.

Action:

- **Council to review and finalize Action Plan at November 18, 2005 meeting**

Council Member Marilyn Lee attended the Walkerton Clean Water Centre's Board meeting on September 30, 2005, as an observer, and briefed the Council on the proceedings.

An invitation was extended to the Council to have a representative on the Walkerton Clean Water Centre's Research Committee. Council member Robert Andrews volunteered, and the first meeting will not likely occur until sometime in 2006.

The two membership vacancies on the Council were discussed in context of skill sets that may be useful for new Members to possess, as well as specific nominations.

Actions:

- **Council members to ensure that their feedback on skill set gaps and any potential nominations are sent to the Council Executive Assistant**

- **Council Chair to transmit a list of skill sets gaps, as well as any nominations to Minister's Office**

An update on conference attendance / Call for Papers was presented by the Council's Executive Assistant.

It was noted that some Council Members are planning to attend the Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities Latonnell Symposium, November 16-18, 2005, in Alliston.

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It was also noted that the Council's Executive Assistant submitted a paper on the Council's Reg. 170 Report to the OWWA/OMWA Joint Conference – April-May, 2006, in Toronto.

The process for public release of the Council's advice to the Minister, as well as promoting or highlighting the accomplishments of the Council was introduced.

Action:

- **Council Executive Assistant and Council Chair to further develop the process for public release of the Council's advice to the Minister, for discussion at the November 18, 2005 meeting**

Next Meeting(s):

November 18, 2005

December 16, 2005

January 20, 2006

February 17, 2006

9. Adjourn.

Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 3:15 p.m.