

Safe Water Advisory Group (SWAG) Meeting Minutes
Tues 4/6/2021 | 6:30-8:00pm via Zoom

Attendees: Cliff Lazenby, Deaglan McEachern, Brian Goetz, Andrea Amico, Katrie Hillman, Rich DiPentima, Dr. Laurel Schaidler, Rep. David Meuse, Hope Van Epps

Presenters

Dr. Laurel Schaidler, Silent Spring Institute

Dr. Jonathan Ali, NH Department of Environmental Services

Brian Goetz & Al Pratt, Portsmouth Department of Public Works

Andrea Amico, Testing for Pease

- Andrea welcomed meeting participants
- The minutes from the 2/21/21 meeting were accepted and approved

SWAG Overview Document:

- Andrea reviewed some of the edits made to the latest version of the document
- Motion made and accepted to approve the SWAG document and post it on the city website

Review of Tentative SWAG Schedule for Remainder of 2021

- Items include current and proposed legislation, status of private well owners, status of current PFAS testing, possible Drinking Water forum in the fall, develop recommendations/report for the City Council in advance of final Council meeting scheduled for December 6th

Presentation by Dr. Laurel Schaidler, Silent Spring Institute: Federal and State Approaches to Regulating PFAS in Drinking Water

- Overview of what PFAS are, their properties and health effects, where PFAS are found in consumer goods & how we are exposed
- Review of sources of PFAS water contamination, monitoring in drinking water (PFAS remain an unregulated contaminant), more stringent testing will be implemented in the future
- Overview of evolving state and federal testing guidelines & implications of current approach

Presentation by Dr. Jonathan Ali, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services: NH Drinking Water Standards for PFAS

- Overview of how MCLs were set, terminology used when discussing MCLs, how MCLs are enforced
- Overview of what the future holds from the NH DES perspective

Brian Goetz & Al Pratt presentation, Portsmouth Department of Public Works: PFAS in New Hampshire and in Portsmouth

- Where are the PFAS in Portsmouth, Portsmouth PFAS in drinking water sampling (results, methodology, etc.)

Andrea Amico, Testing For Pease: Community Led PFAS Water Sampling Projects

- Pease Non-Target Analysis Project
- Portsmouth PFAS Tap Water Sampling Program

Questions:

- Rich: Asked a question about the variable levels in PFAS sampled at the different locations in the city. Brian indicated it was reflective of the water sources and blending that happens at the different locations throughout the city.
- Katrie: Asked a question about PFAS in biosolids used for agricultural purposes. Jonathan said a coworker is working on this issue and could possibly provide information or a presentation if the group is interested.
- Katrie: Asked a question about when the shellfish information from Dartmouth be available? Jonathan thinks it will be early to mid-summer when the information would be available.
- Brian: Asked Jonathan where DES is with setting surface water standards for PFAS? Jonathan said that a plan was submitted, but action has not yet been taken by the state legislature.
- David: Asked a question about Gen X and other newer PFAS compounds and noted that we seem to be playing catch up when it comes to regulating these types of compounds – there seems to be a lot of substitution of one compound for another. Are we always going to be playing catch up? Laurel weighed in and said essentially yes, among PFAS and other chemical classes we often substitute one harmful chemical for another. This is one reason why we are pushing for regulation of the entire class of compounds rather than individual compounds. Action has been slow at the federal level but quicker at the state level. Retailers have also been responsive to addressing and removing PFAS in various consumer products.
- David: Asked where do we get the most bang for our buck in terms of regulations around PFAS? He said that we (state lawmakers) want to have a comprehensive picture of where to spend our time and energy in the most productive way.
- Cliff asked is there is an indication of how the Biden administration will address the PFAS issue. Brian said they are moving towards regulating PFOA and PFOS, and they also have pushed forward on the Unregulated Contaminant Rule (UCMR) which mandates water systems sample for unregulated compounds in 2023 – 2025.
- Cliff: Are their mechanisms in place for Portsmouth to be proactive with the Dover Landfill, given its proximity to the Bellamy reservoir? Brian said that the landfill is a superfund site, so the EPA has jurisdiction with NH DES. Brian also said there is a long

history of PFAS sampling there. Al said that they have an upgrade to their remediation plan that is awaiting approval by the EPA.

- Rich: Asked a question about whether the legislature has addressed the surface water contamination in Great Bay given the aquaculture industry there? Jonathan responded that this question is addressed in the Surface Water plan that NH DES submitted but the legislature has chosen not to act on it. NH does have a shellfish program, but currently PFAS is not a required part of that program. NH DHHS does have a food safety program, but because there is not a surface water standard for PFAS there is no tool to employ to detect PFAS in Great Bay or in the shellfish in Great Bay.
- David asked Jonathan if the NH DES Surface Water plan could be distributed and Jonathan said he would forward it to David through Andrea and Brian.
- Hope asked if there is a place that consumers could be directed toward to better understand where some of these potentially harmful exposures come from? Laurel suggested referencing the [Green Policy Institute](#) for a list of [PFAS-free products](#); Laurel also mentioned that the [PFAS Exchange](#) would be a good resource. Also, Safer States website tracks legislation in different states.

Additional Notes:

Deaglan: The Pease Development Authority (PDA) has an application from the Air Force for another Air Refueling contract at the Pease Airport. The PDA held a vote on this application and it did not pass previously because five of the nine members wanted to ensure that the environmental safeguards would be met before approving the new Air Refueling contract. Deaglan has drafted a letter to the PDA thanking them for their attention to the environmental risks associated with the refueling application; he will distribute the letter to SWAG members and if anyone wants to review and sign on please let him know.

Andrea: The National Academy of Sciences is holding a townhall for the east coast region tomorrow, April 7th. Topics to be discussed include Physician Guidance, medical monitoring and biomonitoring for PFAS. Andrea will distribute the link to the meeting.

Public Comment: None.

Link to YouTube recording of the meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0b9HvjHJvAU>