

Laboratory Certification Standards Review Council Meeting Minutes From 1/20/2021

Remote Attendance (15)

Council Members: Kevin Freber (Chair), Jennifer Buchholz, Paul Junio, Tad Schwartzhoff, Angie Albrecht
DNR Staff: Steve Geis, Tom Trainor, Zana Sijan, Autumn Farrell, Patty Doerflinger, Janelle Nehs
Others: Jessica McCammom (Mad MSD), Sharon Mertens (Milw MSD), Alfredo Sotomayor (Milw MSD), Unknown
Absent: Craig Obry, Carol Mielke, Brandy Baker-Muhich

Agenda Repair and Approval of last meeting minutes

- There were no agenda repairs.
- There were no changes to the minutes from the November 2020 meeting.
- Kevin noted that Zana Sijan has done a good job helping him learn to enter data electronically into the DNR LDES database.

Outstanding issues from last meeting

- **Onsite in-person evaluation delays.** The Laboratory Certification Program prepared a short resolution for Council to review and sign if acceptable. Tom presented the proposed resolution language for review. The resolution was adopted.

Program Metrics Report

Large-scale lab metrics: July 2020 – Dec 2020 (FY 2021 partial)

- Completed: Audited = 89%, Reports issued = 72%, Closed = 44%.
- Reports issued within 60 days = 85%.
- Audits not closed over 1 year from report date = 2. Audits not closed over 6 months from report date = 0.
- 3-year cycle audits overdue at time of meeting = 17 labs + 1 new lab app.
- No new labs applied to program since last meeting.
- No labs dropped from program since last meeting.

Small-scale labs: July 2020 – Dec 2020 (FY 2021 partial)

- Completed: Audited = 78%, Reports issued = 73%, Closed = 61%.
- Reports issued within 30 days = 89%.
- Audits not closed over 1 year from report date = 1 lab.
- 3-year cycle audits overdue at time of meeting = 39 labs.
- No new labs applied to program since last meeting.
- No labs dropped from program since last meeting.

Other business Items

- **FY 2022 Budget:** The new “Cost per RVU” proposed is \$75.50 which is an increase of \$1.50 from last year which represents a 2% increase. This increase is due to the need for the contract auditor and IT programmer. Council approved the budget proposal.
- **2021 Council Elections:** Paul was elected chair. Jennifer was elected vice-chair. Craig was elected secretary. Election positions change after the first meeting of each calendar year. Paul will begin chairing at the next meeting in April. Kevin’s second council term ends in July of 2021 so the April meeting will be his last. As a result, we need to start searching for a replacement for Kevin as a representative for Public Water Utilities. Paul and Jennifer will send Steve an email indicating that they are interested in continuing into their second terms.
- **NR 812 findings due to 7.1.20 code update:** Samples received after 48 hours of collection are not rejected. Test reports do not meet NR 149 standards for real estate samples. Nitrate results reported when sodium **thiosulfate** used as a preservative. Documentation that show metals samples preserved in the lab were held and rechecked for the required time period was not maintained. Paul brought up the confusion with sub-contract laboratories trying to adhere to the 48 hours from collection to receipt time for arsenic. Tom said he is aware of that one and is meeting with the Private Water Program to discuss clarifying this issue. Paul asked about the NR 149 test report requirements. Tom said all private water samples except for real estate samples get a pass on meeting these requirements because that data is submitted electronically to the department. However, as it stands now, real estate samples need to meet NR 149 test report requirements. Tom said he will also talk to the Private Water Program about this as he doesn’t think this is necessary. Alfredo asked if real estate samples are received on standardized DNR forms. Tom said no they are not because that data does not go to the department. Tom also mentioned that since January 1, 2021, Marty Nessman has been promoted to Private Water Program Section Chief.

- **Sample Receiving Audit Issues:** Sample receiving thermometer must be current and NIST traceable. Thermal preservation documented (ROI). Chemical preservation status on arrival checked and documented, for each bottle preserved. If additional chemical preservation is needed, document it. Lab has a documented policy that addresses that the sample containers used are sufficiently clean. COC documentation required for those facilities that do not perform their own sample collection and analysis. Sample receipt documentation is covered. Lab has documented sample acceptance policy. Samples stored separately from standards, reagents, and food. Required sample storage conditions met and documented. Sample receiving issues qualified on test reports. Samples received in the correct container with the correct preservations. Sufficient sample received for the source and any required QC. Metals samples preserved in lab include date/time preserved documented. Reagents used documented. Samples assigned a unique id code. DW only issues: Temperature upon receipt measured and documented. If the temperature upon receipt is greater than 6 °C, then samples can be accepted without qualification if all three of the following conditions exist: Samples were received on ice. Samples were received within 24 hrs of collection. The laboratory has in writing a statement from the sample collector that the samples were placed on ice immediately after collection. NR 812 As and unpreserved NO3 (if total will be done) must be preserved upon receipt. NR 812 samples must be received within 48 hrs of collection or rejected. Lab has documented sample acceptance policy that includes rejection criteria. Pb/Cu rule samples need 1-liter volume or reject. DW samples received securely. DW samples rejected as required. If DW metals are not going to be digested, turbidity checked, documented, and performed correctly. Paul asked what issues we are seeing with turbidity. Tom said there is a good summary of the issues in the drinking water metals preservation document that was sent out to all drinking water laboratories by the Laboratory Accreditation Program last year.

Council Member Issues

- Jessica asked about the status of non-drinking water PFAS certification. Tom indicated that we are still working on resolving issues identified during the audits with three laboratories. Tom said he was working with the DNR PFAS Management Team to decide what position we want to take on field blanks. Tom indicated that his best guess was we would have three laboratories certified for PFAS in the non-drinking water matrix before the end of the first quarter of 2021. Alfredo asked if we were granting certification all at once or staggering them as they come in. Tom said we are waiting for three labs to be ready before we grant anyone.
- Paul brought up the issue of needing sample collectors to declare that drinking water samples collected were put on ice immediately and if this is a solid requirement to let all DW labs know. Tom indicated that this instruction was from Region 5 and that the language in the SDWA Supplement, **how the program interprets it**, indicates as much. Tom said he would confirm this in writing with Region 5 and report back at the next meeting.
- Kevin asked if the operator exams are happening in person yet? Steve said yes. Kevin also asked if the on-line exam format is still being pursued? Steve said yes.

Checkout and Next Remote Meeting Date

- Next meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2021 at 9 AM remotely via Zoom.
- Paul motioned to adjourn the meeting and Kevin seconded.