



*District of Columbia  
Water and Sewer Authority*

**Board of Directors  
Ad-hoc Committee on Drinking Water Quality Meeting**

Thursday, July 17, 2008, 11:00 a.m.  
Conference Room B, CMF, Blue Plains

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**Board Members**

Joseph Cotruvo, Chairman  
Howard Gibbs  
David J. Bardin

**Staff Members**

Jerry Johnson, General Manager  
Leonard Benson, Acting Chief Engineer  
Linda Manley, Board Secretary

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Cotruvo called the Ad-hoc Committee Meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.

**II. WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

**1. Coliform Testing:**

Ms. Maureen Donnelly, Supervisor in the Water Quality Division, reported that in June one site had a detection of coliforms; and in July two sites were positive for coliforms. All repeat samples at these sites had no detectable coliforms. Regulations allow up to 5% positive coliform detections per month.

**2. LCR Compliance:**

Ms. Donnelly provided an update to the committee on the status of the Lead and Copper Rule compliance testing activities. Ms. Donnelly noted that the First Semester 2008 Report has been submitted to EPA. She also noted that the most recent sample results are those reported to the committee last month. Dr. Cotruvo requested that in future the values of those samples that exceed the lead action level be provided to the Committee.

### **III. LEAD ISSUES:**

#### **1. Basis for decision not to use dielectrics in copper / lead joints:**

A requested written memorandum on the issue authored by Greg Welter was provided to the committee. Mr. David McLaughlin, Acting Director of Engineering and Technical Services, stated that two factors were considered in the decision to not use dielectric couplings. The information available at the time the decision was made, subsequently confirmed through later studies, indicates there is minimal water quality benefit related to lead release from the use of dielectric couplings. Second, WASA was concerned about the impact on the electrical grounding systems at many District homes where the water lines are the primary grounding source. Installation of the dielectric would interfere with the ground system and potentially expose customers to risk of electric shock. In response to a committee member, Mr. McLaughlin stated that the International Building Code does not require nor preclude the use of dielectrics.

#### **2. Other cities' lead service line replacement programs**

A requested written memorandum on the issue of other cities' experience with lead service line replacement authored by Greg Welter was provided. Information from 13 surveyed cities was summarized. Many of them were functioning similarly to DCWASA with some variations.

#### **3. Lead reduction approximation**

The committee had also previously asked whether there was a way to approximate or project the likely long term outcome of DCWASA's phosphate addition program based upon experiences in other cities which had been using orthophosphate for an extended time. Reports from DCWASA had indicated a general downward trend in lead concentrations from compliance sampling since orthophosphate addition had been initiated. Ms. Donnelly stated that predicting the likely maximum effectiveness of orthophosphate in reducing lead levels in public water supplies was not possible. WASA contacted Mike Shock, EPA's research and development laboratory expert on lead issues, who agreed that results of orthophosphate use cannot be directly correlated from city to city because each city has a different distribution system and different water chemistry. Ms. Donnelly reported the latest ninetieth percentile results for Philadelphia, PA (9ppb) and Richmond, VA (3 ppb).

Dr. Cotruvo mentioned that at some point it would be logical that the Washington Aqueduct may want to consider reducing the level of ortho-phosphate in the water when lead levels have been reduced to a stable optimum level. He opined that such an action would not occur without expert consensus and careful oversight. Mr. Johnson agreed that no dosage change will be made until it is thoroughly vetted and coordinated with all parties.

#### **4. Status of comprehensive monitoring report:**

Ms. Donnelly stated that a draft of the report has been completed and will be finalized by the end of this week. The report will then be submitted to Councilman Graham, DC

Council. Dr. Cotruvo asked that the report be as comprehensive as possible with respect to test results, dates, etc, and that it should directly address all of the issues that had been raised by some parties who have challenged the progress of the program and the data being generated.

#### **IV. LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**

##### **1. Management Presentation:**

Mr. McLaughlin summarized the initial portion of the presentation that was previously made during the committee's last meeting on June 30, 2008. He continued the presentation with the Public Outreach Summary section. WASA has provided extensive public outreach concerning the LSR Program which Mr. McLaughlin summarized.

Mr Bardin asked if any doctor, epidemiologist, or medical expert in blood lead levels (BLLs) submitted an opinion contrary to Dr. Guidotti's findings report. Mr. Johnson responded that to his knowledge no one has.

Mr. McLaughlin then provided specific details for each of nine possible alternatives for the future of the LSR Program. Mr. McLaughlin provided an overview of the scope and budgets associated with each alternative. He concluded the presentation by detailing WASA's recommendation for the future of the program.

The recommended program goals were:

- Maximize full replacement
- Minimize partial replacements
- Manage program and costs to ensure predictability

The recommended program elements were:

1. Replace lead services in conjunction with water main replacements-not optional.
2. Additionally, replace lead services when customer agrees to participate (primarily in advance of DDOT).
3. Pursue legislative agenda previously recommended in resolution #06-27.
4. Continue annual water testing at customer request.
5. Continue WASA relationships with GWU, WAD and EPA.

Element 3 would require that daycare center licensing would include certification of no lead service line; require certified plumber inspection and disclosure as part of property sales documentation; require elimination of lead service as part of any real property transfer.

The cost of the proposed option was estimated to be 5 million per year, compared to 42 million per year for the accelerated program to 2016. Implementation of legislation that required complete service line replacement as part of the conveyance of property would significantly reduce costs to WASA.

Mr Bardin asked if WASA had approached the Mayor or City Administrator to follow through with the legislative recommendations included in the Board's previous policy decision. Mr. Johnson responded that the legislative approach had been provided to the DC Council but not direct to the Mayor's office.

## **2. Committee Discussion:**

The initial discussion following the presentation focused on the future DDOE Water Quality Study. A DDOE Representative, Mr. Brendan Shane, provided an update on the Water Quality Study. The scope of the study will be determined by the fall 2008. No time frame was offered for the final report. The Committee estimated that it will be several years before any findings will be available.

A committee member asked for confirmation from Mr. Shane that blood lead surveys conducted to date had found no direct correlation between the presence of lead service lines and elevated blood lead levels. Mr. Shane advised that although he is not directly involved in that program, DDOE staff members who are, believe that to be the case.

Further discussion concerned the budgets for two of the alternative recommendations and the annual and total costs including debt service, and whether the projected costs were in constant dollars. The Committee reached a consensus on a recommendation to be made to the D.C. Members of the full BOD. The recommendation would provide two alternatives for consideration. The first would be adoption of a BOD resolution that would repeal the BOD resolution(s) that required an accelerated lead services replacement program (LSR), and adoption of the program recommended by management. A second alternative would be a BOD resolution that would differ from the first only in that it would call for the suspension in lieu of repeal of the effect of the BOD resolution(s) requiring an accelerated LSR program, and that in the interim the program recommended by management would be implemented. Both resolutions would acknowledge that an independent study is to be undertaken in the near future. The suspension resolution would have the issue addressed again when the Water Quality Study results were available and peer reviewed. The Committee requested two draft resolution as described above be provided to them by the end of July / early August for discussion with the D.C. Members of the full BOD in September. Mr Bardin requested that the resolution language allow the General Manager considerable flexibility in developing and implementing a lead services replacement program going forward, including a test pit program if he should see fit to do so.

The Chairman asked that WASA investigate additional mitigation steps that could be taken when a partial lead line replacement is necessary, such as more aggressive follow up sampling, provision of test kits, provision of certified water filters, and changes in the language of materials provided to customers to encourage full participation. The consensus was that another resolution should be prepared directing the General Manager to provide a plan to that effect. This may not require a BOD resolution but could be a directive from the BOD. Mr. Johnson stated that the language had been reviewed and approved by risk communication experts, but that WASA will investigate possible alternatives. Mr. Johnson stressed that any actions must fall within the four corners of the applicable regulations. Mr. Bardin recommended close coordination with the Mayor's legislative program.

## **V. EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. McLaughlin noted that WASA has been providing technical advice to Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) with issues related to fire protection on the St. Elizabeth's campus. It was noted that all fire hydrants maintained by WASA, on the periphery of the campus, are providing adequate water. The problem is related to the District owned water distribution system on the St. Elizabeth's campus. WASA understands that the appropriate District agency will be hiring experts to provide solutions to the problems. In the interim, WASA will continue to advise FEMS as requested.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Cotruvo adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.