



# ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

1021 NORTH GRAND AVENUE EAST, P.O. BOX 19276, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62794-9276 • (217) 782-3397

JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR

JOHN J. KIM, DIRECTOR

## MINUTES

### Water Quality Issues

### Illinois State Water Plan

August 6, 2020

The Illinois State Water Plan Task Force (SWPTF), chaired by the Office of Water Resources (OWR), Illinois Department of Natural Resources is in the process of updating the State Water Plan (SWP). Rick Cobb, Acting Manager, Division of Drinking Water and Groundwater, Bureau of Water, represents the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) on the SWPTF. Rick Cobb volunteered to work on developing *Water Quality Issues and Recommendations* to be included in the SWP. A draft document was developed on Water Quality Issues and Recommendations on June 6, 2020. This draft was provided during a SWPTF conference call held by OWR on June 18, 2020 with the Lt. Governors Office and the Illinois Environmental Council.

Rick Cobb Illinois EPA and Cindy Skrukud, Sierra Club coordinated with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to obtain additional stakeholder input on water quality issue. A WebEx session was held on August 6, 2020 and the following persons participated on the call:

Participant	Organization	E-Mail Address
Rick Cobb	Illinois EPA	rick.cobb@illinois.gov
Mike Summers	Illinois EPA	micheal.summers@illinois.gov
Scott Twait (ST)	Illinois EPA	scott.twait@illinois.gov
Cindy Skrukud (CS)	Sierra Club	cindy.skrukud@sierraclub.org
Albert Ettinger (AE)	Sierra Club	ettinger.albert@gmail.com
Molly Kordas	Openlands	mkordas@openlands.org
Holly Hudson	CMAP	hhudson@cmap.illinois.gov
Ashley Maybanks	The Nature Conservancy	amaybanks@tnc.org

The NGO's indicated that your list (Water Quality Issues) looks good, we would like to discuss the following additional issues:

- Endocrine disrupting/emerging pollutants
- Plastics
- Ammonia
- Nitrate
- PAHs
- Monitoring and Protection of Headwaters

4302 N. Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103 (815) 987-7760  
595 S. State Street, Elgin, IL 60123 (847) 608-3131  
2125 S. First Street, Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 278-5800  
2009 Mall Street Collinsville, IL 62234 (618) 346-5120

9511 Harrison Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016 (847) 294-4000  
412 SW Washington Street, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61602 (309) 671-3022  
2309 W. Main Street, Suite 116, Marion, IL 62959 (618) 993-7200  
100 W. Randolph Street, Suite 4-500, Chicago, IL 60601

**Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)** - CS asked that RC provide an overview of the PFAS statewide investigation. Illinois EPA provided a copy of the approved United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to the stakeholders. RC indicated that Illinois EPA will be conducting a statewide investigation into the prevalence and occurrence of PFAS in finished water at 1,456 entry points to the distribution system representing 1,759 community water supplies (CWSs) across Illinois. The purpose of this investigation is to support the potential development and promulgation of maximum contaminant level (MCL) standards in Illinois for certain PFAS, and to respond to scientific data throughout the nation regarding the effects of PFAS on public health. Samples will be analyzed using United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Method 537.1. Illinois EPA, in conjunction with the QAPP for this investigation network. The QAPP also contains a Standard Operating (SOP) for Sample collection.

**Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)** - A short discussion came up on HABs. RC indicated that Illinois EPA has been screening for HABs relative to community water supply surface water intakes for several years. Like PFAS and several other emerging contaminants U.S. EPA has not developed MCLs. U.S. EPA has not proposed any new MCLs for the past 22 years.

**Nutrient Water Quality Standard** - AE indicated that a goal could be to get nutrient water quality standards in place. AE provided that maybe the SWP could encourage U.S. EPA to do a better job of proposing and adopting MCLs.

**Chlorides** -The next topic discussed by AE, was chlorides and the fact that there was no chronic water quality standard. ST provide that he thought U.S. EPA was working on a dissolved chloride/ TDS but would check on that. There was discussion that rock salt after storm events is the source of some of these chlorides but is not the only source.

**Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDC)** – The next topic of concern discussed by the NGO stakeholders was EDC. RC indicated that that was a legislative proposal for public water supplies to sample for EDC, the biggest problem is that there is no health-based data to explain the results. Once again, a lack of scientific data. AE provided that in various Chicago water ways fish up stream and downstream have been impacted because the water flows both ways.

**Microplastics** – Microplastic was one of our issues in priority legislation. Micro beads have been banned, but what else can be done. Shed Aquarium has been working on a source reduction project. RC indicated that the surveys had done a project that found microplastics in karst groundwater.

**Ammonia** – ST indicated that Illinois EPA is working with U.S. EPA variance for small system before moving forward with an Ammonia Water Quality Standard. ST stated that they are trying to find a process.

**Nitrates** - AE stated that he hoped that the basis of the nitrate drinking water standard of 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L) will be revisited by U.S. EPA. There has been a significant amount of research done on nitrates that indicates that they are carcinogens. RC reiterated what he said

earlier about U.S. EPA not proposing any new drinking water standards for the past 22 years. Many MCL basis could be revisited by U.S. EPA.

**PAHs** – CS initiated the discussion on coal tar pavement sealants as an issue and concern. There have been legislative initiatives to regulate these sealants. There has been strong opposition from industry. Illinois EPA has been supportive. U.S. EPA is working on a draft permit for industrialized facilities.

**Monitoring and Protection of Headwaters** – HH kicked off this discussion encouraging that monitoring and protection of headwaters be given a higher priority. HH stated that we are never getting into the headwaters to develop metrics.