

Toxics Steering Group (TSG) Meeting Summary
February 16, 2011

Members in attendance:

Department of Agriculture (MDA)

- John Buchweitz

Department of Community Health (DCH)

- Christina Bush
- Jennifer Gray
- Kory Groetsch
- Lisa Quiggle

Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE)

- Amy Babcock
- Shannon Briggs
- Dennis Bush
- Mike Depa
- Christine Flaga
- Kay Fritz
- Doreen Lehner
- Deb MacKenzie-Taylor
- Eric Wildfang

Also in attendance:

DNRE

- Liz Browne
- Bob Delaney
- Mark Henry
- JoAnn Merrick
- Chad Rogers
- Duane Roskoskey
- Cora Rubitschun
- Jim Sygo
- Joy Taylor-Morgan
- Emily Weingartz

Presentation on perfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFCs) in Michigan

Bob Delaney, DNRE Remediation Division geologist and DSMOA (Defense and State Memorandum of Agreement) coordinator, provided background and a case study presentation on PFCs as related to groundwater and soil detections of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) during remedial activities at the decommissioned Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda.

PFOA and PFOS belong to a class of long-chain fluorocarbon chemicals found in a wide variety of industrial and commercial products. Their unique chemical properties provide PFCs with excellent surfactant, emulsifier and surface treatment capabilities. PFOA and PFOS are resistant to bio- and photo-degradation and are known to bioaccumulate in wildlife and humans. While no longer manufactured in the U.S., the extensive historical use of these PFCs has led to their ubiquitous distribution and persistence in the environment.

Toxicity of PFOA and PFOS

Eric Wildfang provided a brief description of the general toxicity of PFOS and PFOA as related to the departmental requirements for establishing environmental cleanup criteria for these PFCs.

DNRE Front Office assignment to the TSG

Jim Sygo charged the TSG to provide recommendations to DNRE management for assessing the status of PFCs in the Michigan environment. Areas of interest that will provide critical Michigan-specific PFC data include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying and prioritizing sources of human and environmental exposure;
- Identifying and prioritizing sources of historical and current environmental release;
- Identifying existing and available funding sources that could support human and environmental PFC investigations by the department;
- Identifying epidemiological data necessary to evaluate and prioritize possible human exposure;
- Investigating the carcinogenicity and developmental toxicity of PFOS and PFOA;
- Further characterizing the environmental fate and transport of PFOS and PFOA; and,
- Compiling all presently available Michigan-specific PFC environmental sampling data.

These recommendations will be used by DNRE management to prioritize efforts to conduct limited field investigations in summer 2011, as permitted by departmental budget allowances. TSG assignments will be made following consultation with departmental toxicology unit supervisors with a work product deadline of April 1, 2011.

Pharmaceutical take-back programs

Duane Roskoskey inquired as to the level of support for pharmaceutical take-back programs for collecting and the appropriate disposal of unused human and agricultural pharmaceuticals. MDA clean sweep collections have expanded to include agricultural pharmaceuticals. A more expanded program would likely require federal support and direction.

Adjourn

Next TSG meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2011.