

Toxics Steering Group (TSG) Meeting Summary May 17, 2011

Members in attendance:

Department of Community Health (DCH)

- Christina Bush
- Jennifer Gray
- Lisa Quiggle

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

- Amy Babcock
- Dennis Bush
- Mike Depa
- Christine Flaga
- Kay Fritz
- Doreen Lehner
- Deb MacKenzie-Taylor
- Divinia Ries
- Bob Sills
- Eric Wildfang

Also in attendance:

DEQ

- Jim Sygo
- Joy Taylor-Morgan
- Emily Weingartz

General announcements

Senate bills 271 through 279, which include environmental regulation reforms, were briefly discussed.

U:\ drive folder access

It was requested that those folders on the DEQ networked U:\ drive containing files and applications relevant to all TSG members be made available to those TSG members outside of the DEQ. Applications include the EPB-CCD chemical criteria database (backed up by Doreen Lehner each month) and the DEQ library search engine, both MS Access applications. As DTMB does not support either of these applications, Doreen is pursuing MS Access training and application ownership permissions to facilitate their continued performance. Eric Wildfang will pursue requirements necessary to grant access permissions for non-DEQ TSG members. Chris Bush inquired whether DEQ TSG members would be interested in a similar access arrangement with the DCH Toxicology & Response section folders. Security and confidentiality concerns will have to be evaluated and addressed before pursuing this opportunity. This topic will be reintroduced at the next TSG meeting.

New USEPA guidance documents

Recommended Use of Body Weight^{3/4} as the Default Method in Derivation of the Oral Reference Dose (EPA/100/R11/0001) was briefly discussed. It was informally agreed that the recommendations presented in this new guidance document should be given further consideration once everyone has had sufficient opportunity to review the document.

In consideration of previous TSG discussions related to the concern of backyard and community gardening activities in potentially contaminated urban soils, the recent release of the USEPA urban gardening fact sheet (EPA/542/F-10/011) was announced.

Departmental scientific review board

Bob Sills provided a historical perspective of the department's and the TSG's interaction with a number of external scientific review or advisory boards, including the Michigan Environmental Science Board (MESB), the Michigan Environmental Review Board (MERB) and the Science Advisory Board (SAB). Discussion primarily focused on the merits of having such an external review or advisory group available to facilitate discussions on sensitive or controversial subjects between the department and the legislature or stakeholder community. While the most recent advisory board, the MESB, was abolished in 2007 by the previous administration, Jim Sygo indicated that the possibility of convening another review or advisory board still exists under executive order 2009-45.

Children's Environmental Health Subcommittee

Deb MacKenzie-Taylor presented the draft recommendations from the subcommittee on the matter of identifying and including an age dependent adjustment factor (ADAF) in the Part 201 program criteria rules package currently being drafted. These draft recommendations were informally agreed to by the TSG and will be included in the final ADAF document prepared by the subcommittee. Deb also informed the group about a cooperative agreement between the MSU Superfund Research (MSU-SRP) Center and the DEQ in regards to the bi-directional support of the MSU-SRP AhR ligand research program.

PFC Workgroup

Amy Babcock and Joy Taylor-Morgan discussed the status of this workgroup's efforts. The workgroup has convened twice, assignments have been made and it is anticipated that a preliminary work product will be ready to submit to Jim Sygo by mid-June 2011.

Front Office update

Jim Sygo provided a brief update on departmental administrative issues including ongoing transition issues back to separate DEQ and DNR departments, the status of the department's (DEQ) 2011-2012 budget, and the challenges associated with producing quantitative departmental performance metrics.

Adjourn

Next scheduled TSG meeting is Tuesday, August 16, 2011.