

Minutes of the December 4, 2003 Pathogens Work Group Meeting

The Pathogens Work Group (PWG) met at the offices of the Hudson River Foundation on December 4, 2003. The purpose of the meeting was to review a variety of subjects.

IEC Sampling Efforts - Brian Mitchell reviewed the latest sampling effort conducted by IEC in the Passaic River, Hackensack River and Newark Bay. Sampling was conducted between August 11, 2003 and September 22, 2003. Parameters included Temperature, Salinity, Total Coliforms (TC), Fecal Coliforms (FC) and Enterococcus (Enterococcus). Multiple tube fermentation methodology was used to determine MPN/100 ml. Six sample runs were conducted at 15 sampling stations, half of the sampling runs were wet weather runs. A discussion took place regarding the sampling efforts that focused on two issues. The first issue were the sample results when FC numbers were equal to and exceeded the TC numbers. The conclusion was that when FC numbers equaled or exceeded by the TC results, the sample should be discarded due to QA/QC problems. This criteria should apply to the Fecal Strep and Enterococcus numbers as well. The second issue focused on the choice of multiple tube fermentation methodology utilized by IEC. All other sampling efforts in the Harbor Estuary Program utilize membrane filtration methodology. The consensus was that the MF methods were more appropriate for enterococcus analysis as well as for TC and FC. They decided that MF would be the method utilized in future pathogen sampling. IEC was requested to consider switching to MF methodology.

NJHDC Sampling Efforts - Mick DeGraeve presented an overview of the sampling efforts that the NJHDC began at the end of November 2003. The area to be sampled includes Passaic River, Hackensack River, Newark Bay, Arthur Kill, Elizabeth River, Rahway River, Raritan River and Raritan Bay. The sampling network is comprised of 30 stations which will be sampled monthly during the months of November - March (?) and weekly during the remainder of the year. Parameters include FC and Enterococcus.

Harbor-wide Sampling Coordination - IEC, EPA, NYSDEC, NJDEP, NYCDEP and NJHDC are involved in an effort to coordinate sampling efforts in the NY/NJ Harbor. This effort includes agreement on which group will sample designated areas and stations on a routine basis. Discussion has also taken place regarding the appropriate parameters and associated analytical methods to be utilized. As part of this effort, NYCDEP is compiling all sampling data collected in the NY/NJ Harbor and post it on their website. Decisions have not been made regarding format,

Sampling rationale - A discussion regarding area-wide water quality sampling versus close proximity (end-of-pipe) sampling came up. A paper will be drafted that describes the rationale for the ongoing sample program. The paper should also address longitudinal versus latitudinal dispersion and whether current sampling adequately represents this dispersion.

Listing of water bodies - A discussion about the criteria for listing a waterbody took place. The focus was on the interpretation of model runs where a cell might show a standard being exceeded but the rest of the cells in the waterbody segment indicated attainment. How should these results be interpreted? An analogous situation might occur with sampling results where one sample indicated an exceedance and all other samples indicated attainment. Antony Tseng will contact

EPA Regional and HQ contacts for guidance on this issue.

Attendees

Bob Nyman, US EPA - HEP
Chris J. Villari, NYCDEP
Keith Mahoney, NYCDEP
Jim Olander, US EPA
Eric Feerst, NJDEP
Dave Rosenblatt, NJDEP
Beau Ranheim, NYCDEP
John St. John, HydroQual, Inc.
Carol Hoffman, NYSDEC
Mick DeGraves, GLEC/NJHDG
Charles Dujardin, HydroQual, Inc.
Dan Zeppenfeld, NJDEP
Philip O'Brien, NYSDEC
Russell Arnone, US EPA
Peter L. Sattler, IEC
Brian J. Mitchell, IEC
Cathy Yuhas, NJSG/HEP
Chris Mallery, US Army Corps of Engineers
Antony Tseng, EPA - TMDL