

Secretaries' Science Advisory Board

MEETING MINUTES

Training Room, Green Square Building

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

10:00 AM-3:00 PM

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretaries' Science Advisory Board (SAB) met on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, in person in the Training Room in the DEQ Green Square Building, in a public meeting. SAB members in attendance were Tom Augspurger, PhD, Chair; Viney Aneja, PhD; David Dorman, PhD; and Detlef Knappe, PhD. The SAB members in virtual attendance were Jamie DeWitt, PhD; David Howard; Richard Di Giulio, PhD; Gina Kimble, PhD; and Elaina Kenyon, PhD. Also, in attendance were DEQ and DHHS staff: Frannie Nilsen, PhD; Stephanie Bolyard, PhD; Michael Scott; Richard Rogers, Paula Chappell, Dylan Friedman, Chris Ventaloro, Kennedy Holt, MSPH; Virginia Guidry, PhD, MPH; and Zack Moore, MD, MPH.

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Chairman ("Chair") Augspurger noting it is an in-person meeting with a few Board members attending virtually due to schedule conflicts.

II. Review and Approve Agenda

Chair Augspurger asked for a motion and second to accept the agenda with the changes made to accommodate the presentations. The agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

[Feb 08, 2023, Agenda](#)

III. Ethics Statement

Chair Augspurger read the ethics statement and reminded the members that if anyone had any conflict of interest, or issues for which a conflict may be perceived, to indicate so. No conflicts were noted by those in attendance.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 05, 2022

The draft meeting minutes were circulated to all members and minor edits were requested; the December minutes were adopted unanimously by verbal vote to include the requested edits.

[December 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes](#)

V. DEQ/DHHS Updates

DEQ Update:

Provided by Michael Scott, Director of the Division of Waste Management, NC DEQ.

Chemours updates:

- Residential drinking water well sampling continues in the Lower Cape Fear (LCF) region. Thus far, 957 wells in the LCF that have PFAS concentrations that are above the Consent Order values. There are 578 wells in New Hanover, 80 wells in Brunswick, 288 wells in Pender, 1 well in Columbus.
 - 100 properties that exceed the 10 ng/L in wells- properties being put on public water or given Reverse Osmosis (RO) filtration systems.

- The work on the Barrier wall is ongoing, construction has begun and will take 2-3 months to install.
 - The ground water extraction system is coming online and will be subject to efficiency testing.
- There are 5000+ properties around facility in the Fayetteville area that are eligible for RO, and 2000+ eligible for Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) or public water.
- The Division of Air Quality (DAQ) has received the application for permit modification from Chemours for Fayetteville Works facility. The application has been reviewed in December 2022 and is incomplete; all of the requested information has not been received by DAQ to date. There will be public meetings about this application for permit modification at a later date- info available at [DEQ Chemours Permit Information website](#).

Other PFAS Updates:

- The Division of Water Resources (DWR) has expanded PFOS and PFOA sampling across the state, following the PFAST network monitoring in 2019.
 - There will be 3 rounds of samples collected at the 50 Public Water Systems (PWS) that had PFOS/PFOA concentrations about 4 ng/L in 2019 when sampled by the PFAST Network. DWR is sampling raw and finished water and is testing the water for 57 PFAS.
 - This data will be used to identify PWS for further characterization.
 - The Ambient Groundwater monitoring network is expanding into the LCF. The biggest impacts appear to be in southeastern portion of the state.
 - The surficial aquifers have greater impacts than the deeper aquifers based on current data.
 - The Water Sciences Section's newly renovated lab will start moving chemistry equipment into the lab in early March. These additions to the facility are instrumental in accommodating the PFAS needs of DEQ.
- Greensboro airport – private well sampling to follow up previous PFAS detections.
- Many permitted facilities are voluntarily submitting PFAS data and characterizing sources of PFAS across NC.
- Biosolids- The methods for sampling biosolids are currently under development.

DHHS Update:

Provided by Dr. Virginia Guidry, Branch Head, Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology, NC DHHS

- DHHS is having discussions around the 'clean trucks' rule that DEQ is developing.
 - The health impacts of medium and heavy-duty vehicles are of interest to DHHS.
- Developing GIS tool for the Environmental Justice and Environmental Health Tracking Program.
 - Exploring funding additional funding opportunities to support Environmental Justice efforts.
- DHHS has been working to measure covid in wastewater; working to increase their surveillance and disease targets, as well as determining priorities for NC. This is a collaboration between DHHS, Local Health Depts, and Academic partners.

VI. PFMOAA Recommendation (*meeting recording: 00:00:01*)

The Board has reviewed and discussed the availability of data and information regarding PFMOAA toxicity. Their conversation included a review of Provisional Peer-Reviewed Toxicity Values as related to PFMOAA. The Board reached a consensus in their recommendation process.

[PFMOAA Summary Presentation](#)

VII. Public Engagement around the Chemours Facility (*meeting recording: 00:51:25*)

Provided by Kennedy Holt, MSPH, DHHS Environmental Toxicologist.

DHHS provided a summary of the citizen communication related to PFAS contamination.

[Communications with Citizens Impacted by PFAS Contamination presentation](#)

VIII. Lunch

Lunch break taken from 12pm -1pm

IX. PFOS and PFOA Bioaccumulation Factor (BAF) Evaluation (*meeting recording: 01:13:49*)

The initial presentation on this topic was presented on October 3, 2021 and can be found [here](#).

[Summary of the PFOA and PFOS BAF Literature Presentation](#)

The Request from DEQ to the SSAB was:

- 1) Does the SSAB support for the use of EPA literature for the foundation for BAFs for NC?
- 2) Is the method that DEQ Applied to the EPA's vetted BAF data a scientifically sound approach for NC BAFs?
- 3) Which value is most appropriate - the average, geomean, median, or some other statistic to represent PFOA & PFOS BAFs for NC?

The summarized Board discussion regarding Item #1:

- Board members support the use of the EPA-vetted literature to be used as the foundation for BAF derivation in North Carolina.

The summarized Board discussion regarding Item #2:

- Board members agree that DEQ's process is a scientifically sound method, as the goal is to derive a surface water concentration to ensure fish are safe to eat.
- With all species from the EPA's Draft Aquatic Life Criteria included in the BAF calculation for PFOS and PFOA, the Board notes that the summary statistics have not changed much and either data grouping is appropriate.

The summarized Board discussion regarding Item #3:

- The Board requested that this charge question be reworded to reflect EPA's method using the geometric mean.

IX. Water and Fish Collection Update (*meeting recording: 02:14:47*)

Provided by Frannie Nilsen, PhD; DEQ Environmental Toxicologist.

The preliminary data analysis of the 2022 Water and Fish Collection Project was presented. The PFAS that are observed in the surface water and in fish tissue have both similarities and differences in their appearance, patterns, and concentrations in the Cape Fear River.

[2022 Water and Fish Collection Project – Status Update presentation](#)

X. Consent Order Toxicity Studies Update (*meeting recording: 02:54:21*)

Provided by Frannie Nilsen PhD; DEQ Environmental Toxicologist.

[Consent Order Toxicity Studies – Status Update](#)

XI. Public Forum (*meeting recording: 03:08:37*)

One member of the public signed up to speak, comments can be heard in the meeting recording.

XII. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:40pm