



Inside Pretreatment Newsletter

December 12, 2008

Who will be the new EPA Administrator?

Lisa P. Jackson: Likely the next Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Can she clean up (and out) EPA HQ? Will EPA really rebuild its credibility, incorporate risk into its decision making and resource commitments, retain experts, and institute transparency? It will be interesting to see who at the senior level (EPA HQ) are retained. Aside from the lack of credibility, I will smile when they salute and pledge undying loyalty to Ms. Jackson, the environment and us (with a wink?).

Training for Local Governments

Local Limits Training: February 9-11, 2009. Lakewood, Colorado. **Registration is open.**

Grease Program Development: February 12-13, 2009. Lakewood, Colorado. Instructor: Dan Tonello. **Registration is Open.**

Local Limits Training: March 31-April 2, 2009. Indianapolis, IN. Registration opens 1/1/09.

Local Limits Training: April 28-30, 2009. Arlington, Texas. Registration opens 1/1/09.

IU Inspectors Training: May 11, 2009. Cody, Wyoming. **Registration is open.** This is being held the day prior to the CIPCA-Region 8 Pretreatment Workshop.

Local Limits Training: June 9-11, 2009. Portland, Oregon. Registration opens 1/1/09.

Local Limits Training: July 14-16, 2009. Orlando, FL. Registration opens 1/1/09.

These courses are for POTW Pretreatment staff and managers that work for local programs.

Be sure to go to: www.CWACS.com and click on the Training Courses tab. Workshops are generally limited to 50 attendees (most facilities do not have additional meeting space as the training date approaches and we want to keep these manageable to facility interaction). This website is updated as registrations are received. On the website, you will find all locations, their status, registration information, registration deadlines, and number of spaces available.

EPA Seeks Public Comment on Proposal to Add Hazardous Pharmaceutical Waste to Universal Waste Rule. Federal Register / Vol. 73, No. 232 / Tuesday, December 2, 2008 / Proposed Rules

“EPA is proposing to add hazardous pharmaceutical wastes to the Universal Waste Rule. The Universal Waste Rule, originally promulgated on May 11, 1995, modified the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act’s hazardous waste regulations by establishing a set of streamlined requirements for the collection of certain widely dispersed hazardous wastes, called “universal wastes.” This proposed rule would facilitate better management of pharmaceutical wastes by streamlining the generator requirements and encouraging generators of hazardous pharmaceutical wastes to manage them under the provisions of the Universal Waste Rule, which ensures that these hazardous pharmaceutical wastes are properly disposed of and treated as hazardous wastes. In addition, this proposed rule would facilitate the implementation of pharmaceutical take-back programs by removing RCRA barriers in the collection of pharmaceutical wastes from health care and other such regulated facilities, as well as facilitate the collection of pharmaceutical wastes from households, including non-hazardous pharmaceutical wastes. Comments must be received on or before February 2, 2009.”

Comment: I hope programs review this proposed rule, and where appropriate, make comments to strengthen protections for the POTW.

Interesting News

Smoke and Mirrors: The Subversion of the EPA.

This is an article that digs into EPA management. Seems pretty accurate and covers a lot of topics in the news. Past Administrators are uniquely vocal in this article. There are four parts to this article. Long, but worth reading.

<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/special/35362879.html>

EPA Fugitives Website: Seen any of these people?

Defendants charged with environmental crimes or violations of the U.S. Federal Criminal Code sometimes flee the court’s jurisdiction and/or the USA rather than face prosecution or to serve a sentence. When these circumstances occur, the defendants become fugitives from justice.

<http://www.epa.gov/fugitives/>

America's Addiction Fuels Desire For Coffee Ground Biodiesel

Researchers are reporting they have successfully made a high quality biodiesel from spent coffee grounds. They estimate that the coffee ground biodiesel industry could generate as much as \$8,000,000 in profits annually using waste from US Starbucks stores alone.

<http://gas2.org/category/biofuels/biodiesel/>

Baby Fish in Polluted San Francisco Estuary Waters Are Stunted and Deformed

Striped bass in the San Francisco Estuary are contaminated before birth with a toxic mix of pesticides, industrial chemicals and flame retardants that their mothers acquire from estuary waters and food sources and pass on to their eggs, say UC Davis researchers.

Using new analytical techniques, the researchers found that offspring of estuary fish had underdeveloped brains, inadequate energy supplies and dysfunctional livers. They grew slower and were smaller than offspring of hatchery fish raised in clean water. http://www.news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=8887

Utah gold and silver refinery sentenced for Clean Water Act violation (Interesting Pretreatment Case) (From EPA)

(Denver, Colo. --- December 2, 2008) Johnson Matthey Inc. (JMI), a Pennsylvania corporation, was sentenced today to a \$3 million criminal fine for a felony violation of the Clean Water Act by Judge Dee Benson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah, the Justice Department announced. JMI admitted on Sept 3, 2008, to violating the Clean Water Act at its Salt Lake City precious metals refining facility.

The Clean Water Act makes it a crime to knowingly render inaccurate or cause to be rendered inaccurate a reporting method required to be maintained under the Clean Water Act. The former plant manager, Paul Greaves, and the former general manager of the facility, John McKelvie, each pleaded guilty and were sentenced previously for a felony violation of making false statements to government officials.

The case arose out of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) investigation into JMI's discharge monitoring reports required under the Clean Water Act. The Salt Lake City facility began operating in 1982 and refines both gold and silver from a semi-refined product called dore. As part of the refining process, pollutants such as selenium, and other materials accumulated in the wastewater. JMI's wastewater was treated at several steps in the facility to remove selenium before JMI discharged the wastewater to a sewer leading to Central Valley Water Reclamation Facility, where it was subsequently treated and discharged to the Jordan River.

From approximately 1996 through 2002, JMI had difficulty consistently limiting selenium discharges to its permit limit. An internal audit conducted by JMI's auditor in 1999 at the Salt Lake City facility discovered that the facility had exceeded its permit limit for selenium and that employees had screened samples before submitting them to an outside laboratory for analysis. The auditor warned the general manager that this violated the terms of JMI's industrial discharge permit,

which required that samples be representative of the reported discharge.

In January 2000, to avoid disclosing true concentrations of the selenium-contaminated wastewater discharged from the facility, employees at the Salt Lake City Facility again screened the samples they reported to Central Valley by analyzing in-house the selenium concentrations and then submitting samples with low selenium concentrations to an outside laboratory for eventual reporting to Central Valley.

The court sentenced JMI to pay a total monetary penalty of \$3,000,000 for violating the Clean Water Act. Of this amount, a total of \$750,000 will fund various environmental projects in Utah administered by the congressionally established National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Projects include wildlife habitat acquisition and restoration projects in the vicinity of Great Salt Lake and its tributaries, and research related to setting selenium standards and limits for the Great Salt Lake and its tributaries.

U.S. EPA proposes to renew San Diego wastewater permit variance for the Point Loma treatment plant (From EPA).

SAN FRANCISCO - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today proposed to renew the city of San Diego's discharge permit for the E.W. Blom Point Loma Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant and Ocean Outfall. Under the proposal, the city would continue to operate its municipal wastewater treatment plant and ocean outfall under a variance from federal secondary sewage treatment standards. "Today we have made a tentative determination that the city of San Diego may continue its discharge from the Point Loma treatment plant under a Clean Water Act variance from secondary treatment," said Wayne Nastro, the EPA's administrator for the Pacific Southwest region. "The city's application demonstrates that plant operations, including the recent upgrade to disinfect treated wastewater, result in a discharge that protects recreational users of San Diego's ocean waters and ensures a healthy marine ecosystem."

The EPA's tentative decision, along with the draft permit for renewal, will be available for public comment through January 28. A public hearing, conducted by both the EPA and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, on the EPA's tentative decision and the draft permit, will be held on January 21 at 9:00 a.m. at the regional board's office. At the completion of the public comment period, the EPA will consider all public comments and make a final decision on the city's variance request.

The Point Loma plant operates as a chemically-assisted primary wastewater treatment plant. At Point Loma, the primary treatment process is enhanced by the addition of chemicals that improve the solids settling process. Chlorine is added to the treated wastewater prior to its discharge via an outfall pipe terminating 4½ miles off the Pacific Coast, at a depth of approximately 300 feet.

Finalists for Grants to Improve the Gulf of Mexico (From EPA)

(Washington, D.C. - Dec. 12, 2008) A total of \$3.7 million is available to help selected organizations reduce pollutants that contribute to the oxygen-depleted zone in the northern Gulf of Mexico. The 10 finalists will support agricultural conservation measures, restore wetlands and riverbanks, monitor water quality, and create a variety of innovative, market-based programs to improve water quality.

"This seed money will grow innovative, cost-effective solutions to speed up the cleanup of impaired watersheds in the Mississippi River Watershed and cut the size of the Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico," said Benjamin H. Grumbles, EPA's assistant administrator for water.

These projects under the EPA's Targeted Watersheds Grants Program will reduce the sources of pollutants, including runoff from developed land, soil erosion, agricultural fertilizers, and sewage and industrial discharges. Parts or all of 31 states drain into the watershed that flows into the Gulf of Mexico.

Comment: At its peak, the nearly lifeless water can span 5,000 to 8,000-plus square miles, an area almost the size of New Jersey

(http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2005/05/0525_050525_deadzone.html). I think the reference to New Jersey is appropriate so that the expected Obama choice for EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson (New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection), can get a really good feel for the extent of this environmental disaster. Section 101 of the Clean Water Act states: "it is the national policy that programs for the control of nonpoint sources of pollution be developed and implemented in an expeditious manner so as to enable the goals of this chapter to be met through the control of both point and non-point sources of pollution".

Coral Reef Loss Suggests Global Extinction Event

December 12, 2008

The world is on the brink of a massive extinction event, according to the United Nations. Rapid releases of greenhouse gas emissions are changing habitats at a rate faster than many of the world's species can tolerate. A study earlier this year in the *Proceedings of the National Academies of Science* said the current extinction period, known as the Holocene extinction event, may be the greatest event in the Earth's history and the first due to human actions. Unlike previous events, however, extinctions are happening over the course of decades rather than centuries. The latest global coral reef assessment estimates that 19 percent of the world's coral reefs are dead. Their major threats include warming sea-surface temperatures and expanding seawater acidification.

The report, released by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network Wednesday at the international

climate change negotiations in Poznań, Poland, predicts that many of the remaining reefs may disappear within the next 40 years if current emission trends continue.

The coral reef assessment found that 45 percent of the world's reefs are healthy - providing hope that some species may be able to endure the changes expected from global warming. Marine biologists are now attempting to understand how certain coral reef species can survive warmer, more acidic ocean waters when others are less fortunate. <http://www.worldwatch.org/>

Newsletters reflect the opinions of CWACS. They are not intended to change what a specific State or EPA may require.

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