

**FINAL MINUTES
TOXIC SUBSTANCES COORDINATING COMMITTEE
(TSCC)**

**December 16, 2014
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Room T-607
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756**

1. Call to order and welcome visitors – 10:00 AM

Attendees present: Natalie Archer (DSHS), Heidi Bojes (DSHS), Carrie Bradford (DSHS), Josh Duty (DSHS), Kitten Holloway (DSHS), David Rivera (DSHS), David Villarreal (TDA), Tina Walker (DSHS), Tina Williams (DSHS), Thandi Ziqubu-Page (DSHS), Versa Burnett (DSHS), Emily Hall (DSHS), Larry Rice (DSHS),

Visitors: Bill Edgemon (DSHS), Jocelyn Jeimsmire (DSHS), Andrew Vinyard (DSHS)

2. Approval of minutes from the June meeting: Tina Walker and Josh Duty, with corrections

3. Presentation – E. Spencer Williams, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor, Baylor University

Topic: “Cleaning Products Risk Assessment”

4. Subcommittee reports:

- **Harmful Algal Bloom workgroup meeting updates – Alex Nunez**

Red Tide

On September 24, 2014, Texas A&M University's Imaging Flow CytoBot detected rising concentrations of *Karenia brevis* at Port Aransas. Cell concentrations are currently well below the threshold to cause fish kills, discolor water or respiratory irritation at this site.

Monitoring

- TPWD collected additional samples in the Corpus Christi sites and South Padre Island sites; samples contained densities of 3-4 cells/mL
- TDSHS has been monitoring passes in Galveston Bay and no cells have been found. Due to oyster harvesting activities at this time in the Galveston Bay area, TDSHS stated this area is currently their priority area for concern
- NOAA reports were increased to 2 reports/week
- Lisa Campbell stated that she will continue to send out HAB data under the current threshold and keep the same format
- Bridget from UTPA asked if they need to be sampling regularly for HABs. Kirk Wiles stated that there is no commercial harvest of oysters in the south, so the area is not a major concern. Alex said to sample once a week. Recent rains have reduced cell concentrations to levels below the automatic notification concentrations at the IFCB site

Response

- No fish kills
- No shell fish closures have been issued due to red tide
- Someone from the phone asked about reports from Mexico. Lisa said she has no contacts in Mexico at this time, but might in the future.

Research

- Darren Henrichs presented a hindcast model on the distribution of *Karenia brevis* during 2011 bloom. His model used surface winds to show movement of *K. brevis* along coast. The idea is to use the hindcasting model to predict the movement in future blooms.

Golden Algae

September 25, 2014, Lake Colorado City - An on-going fish kill on Lake Colorado City was reported by Lake Colorado State Park staff. Approximately, 300-500 fish have died and are at different stages of decay. The fish range from large carp to small sunfish/bait fish. They are believed to have died near the dam/southern end of the lake based a two days of a strong northwestern wind, which has pushed the fish onto the state park shoreline. Two water samples collected for golden algae (*Prymnesium parvum*) contained high cell concentrations and were characterized as highly toxic.

Monitoring

- Lake Granbury and Possum Kingdom sampling postponed until Oct 8
- Lake Whitney is scheduled for sampling
- Samples at Moss Creek were found to be toxic at last sampling.

Response

- Jennifer Bronson (TPWD) provided an update that no more dead fish are being found at Lake Colorado State Park.
- Sampling will continue at Lake Colorado State Park.

Research

- Janet Nelson stated that they are to resume sampling in the Brazos River. Sampling will be from late November to March or April.

Dinophysis

In March 2014, shell fish closures in Texas bays occurred due to elevated densities on *Dinophysis*. This past year the season closed before the oysters were clear of toxins.

Monitoring

- Kirk Wiles (TDSHS) reported the process that DSHS goes through for monitoring.
Kirk receives an automated notification from the Flow Cytobot
Water sampling commences to determine if shellfish closures are required.
Uptake of okadaic acid is quick by the oysters and the closure lasts 30 days or more.
Dinophysis is an emerging issue in shellfish worldwide, but no cases of anyone in Texas being sick from it have been reported.

Response

- NA

Research

- A hind casting a model could be used to develop a predictive model

Blue Green

Monitoring for microcystin toxins by the USACOE in collaboration with Grayson Count Health Dept., Grayson County, Texas, has been ongoing. The most recent results indicate concentrations below the limit of quantification.

Response

- N/A

Research

- N/A

Other

Alex (TPWD) also reported a bloom of a *Polykrikos* sp. in Copano Bay and Matagorda Bay. Kirk (TDSHS) added that blooms were seen in Galveston Bay. Lisa Campbell reported the images were also observed by the IFCB. Silvia (TAMU) said that they were not *Polykrikos* but *Cochlodinium* sp.

Discussion Topic: Regroup and Moving Forward

TPWD Harmful Algal Bloom coordination

- Alex stated that TPWD will continue dissemination of HAB information and updates.
- Alex will handle the data collection and information dissemination. Colt Cook will handle the public outreach component.
- It was brought up that the triggers for notification from the IFCB need to be addressed. It was decided that current triggers for notifications were appropriate.
- Some partners requested fresh Lugols to fix samples. Historically, Meridith would call the TPWD San Marcos lab and request a new batch of Lugols and Janet would pick it up and transport it.
Texas Harmful Algal Bloom Response Plan update
- TPWD will continue updating TPWD's roles in the HAB Response Plan
- Alex requested other agencies to review and update their roles in the plan.
- When updates are completed it will be sent out for review by the TexHAB workgroup (~6 months).

Schedule next meeting

The meeting concluded and the next meeting was set tentatively for April 16, 2015.

- **Fish Sampling Subcommittee meeting update** – no update
- **The Environmental Health and Toxicology Workgroup updates**

- The workgroup met in October 2014. At that time, Carrie Bradford spoke about convening a Fish HAC Value Review Workgroup with the purpose of reviewing available dioxin and mercury studies as they relate to fish consumption advisories.

HAT Group updates – Heidi Bojes

- Emily Hall was recently hired as an Epidemiologist III for Environmental and Injury Epidemiology and Toxicology Unit (EIET).
- Citizen concern prompted the EIET Unit and Texas Cancer Registry of DSHS to examine the occurrence of cancer in east Harris County, Texas. Local residents were concerned about a possible excess of cancer cases occurring in the vicinity of the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site. The cancer cluster investigation is currently being reviewed by DSHS leadership and is expected to be released to the public soon.
- Following a citizen's request, the EIET Unit investigated the current prevalence of MS in Valley Mills, Texas, to determine if there is an excess of MS in this city. DSHS was able to verify MS diagnoses for 6 individuals living in Valley Mills in 2014. The prevalence of individuals with a neurologist-confirmed MS diagnosis living in Valley Mills was estimated to be 511.5 per 100,000 persons. This MS prevalence estimate is statistically significantly higher than the prevalence that is typically seen in the US population. The reason for such a high prevalence of MS in Valley Mills is unknown.

5. Agency updates

TDA updates - David Villarreal

- Commissioner Miller – new focusing on greater quantity as opposed to quality. Looking at more things in ground water that are effecting the quality PPCP, pesticides
- TDA staff are heavily involved with emergency management because of the possible Ebola outbreaks in Texas
- David will send DCPS contact information (Karen and Sarah) to TSCC in order for DCPS or Sarah to contact and participate

Railroad Commission of Texas – not present

TCEQ updates – Joseph Haney

- New final Development Support Document (DSD) for *Chromic Acid Mist*.
- Two DSDs (*propionaldehyde, hexamethylenediamine*) out for public comment, comments due Feb. 16th.
- *Systematic Review & Evidence Integration* paper out for public comment, comments due Feb. 20th.
- Hexavalent chromium paper published: *Use of dose-dependent absorption into target tissues to more accurately predict cancer risk at low oral doses of hexavalent chromium*. Available at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0273230014002608>

- TCEQ ozone article of interest: *Will EPA's Proposed New Ozone Standards Provide Measurable Health Benefits?* Available at <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/publications/pd/020/2014/will-epas-proposed-new-ozone-standards-provide-measurable-health-benefits>
- TCEQ hosted an olefins conference on Nov. 5-6.
- TCEQ will host a conference on ozone science around late March-early April, 2015.
- Society for Risk Analysis Conference was held last week:
 - TCEQ scientific poster – *How dose-response curves derived from clinical ozone exposures can inform public policy.*
 - Participation on mode of action expert panel, roundtable discussion on fracking, and presentation on *Comparative Weight of Evidence Approach for Limited Toxicity Data Chemicals.*

Upcoming meetings:

2015 TSCC Meetings and locations

March 17, 2015 – DSHS, T-607, 10:00-11:30am

June 16, 2015 – DSHS, T-607, 10:00-11:30am

Sept 15, 2015 – DSHS, T-607, 10:00-11:30am

December 15, 2015 – DSHS, T-607, 10:00-11:30am

6. Adjourned

TSCC Mission:

Our mission is to protect and promote the health of the people of Texas through the prevention and control of adverse health effects related to toxic substances and harmful physical agents. This is accomplished through interagency coordination of regulation development, health risk assessments, cooperative studies, information dissemination, and public education efforts.