

# SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT

October 2001



I.	Monthly Summary of Calls and Emails .....	1
II.	Comparison to Previous Year.....	1
III.	Hot Topics .....	1
IV.	Frequent Referrals .....	2
V.	Selected Questions and Answers.....	2
VI.	Specific Water System Enforcement Issues .....	3
VII....	Corrections (from previous reports) .....	4
VIII...	Question of the Month.....	4
IX. ....	OGWDW Calendar of Events and Meetings .....	4
	Appendix A – Customer Profiles.....	5
	Appendix B – Question Types.....	6
	Appendix C – Safe Drinking Water Regulations Federal Register Abstracts .....	8
	Appendix D – Daily Call Monitoring System Data.....	8
	Appendix E – Contract Management Information.....	9

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Safe Drinking Water Hotline  
National Toll-Free No.: (800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATER

## Safe Drinking Water Hotline Monthly Report October 2001

### I. Monthly Summary of Calls and Emails

Total number of calls answered	1,735
Average wait time	13 seconds
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	94.7%
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	98.0%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100%
Total number of emails received	399
Percent of emails answered in 5 days	100%
Message Retrievals: - Local Drinking Water Quality	1,538
Message Retrievals: - Arsenic Rule	87

### II. Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	Emails
October 2001	1,735	399
October 2000	2,968	350

### III. Hot Topics

Topic	Questions (via phone & email)	Percent of Total
Local Drinking Water Quality	160	8
Household Wells	184	9
Tap Water Testing	216	10
CCR General	48	2
Lead & Copper	147	7
Health Effects/Assessments	69	3
Home Water Treatment Units	79	4
Cryptosporidium	40	1
Secondary DW Regs	56	3
Radon	93	4
Coliforms	63	3
Arsenic	43	2
Bottled Water	68	3

#### IV. Frequent Referrals

Referral	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total Referrals
Local Water System	169	10
State Lab Certification	251	14
Local Public Health	113	6
EPA Internet	260	15
NSF/WQA/UL/NAIN	177	10
AGWT	129	7
State PWSS	184	10
FDA/IBWA	58	3
Other Hotlines	90	5
Non-EPA Internet	37	2
Other Federal Agencies	27	2
Regional Offices (combined)	10	1

#### V. Selected Questions and Answers

A. When a PWS exceeds the action level for lead is there a deadline by which it must take additional steps for source water treatment?

The PWS that exceeds an action level for lead does have deadlines for completing source water treatment requirements. Deadlines for the source water treatment steps are found in 40 CFR §141.83(a).

Step 1: A system exceeding the lead or copper action level shall complete lead and copper source water monitoring and make a treatment recommendation to the State within 6 months after exceeding the action level.

Step 2: The State shall make a determination regarding source water treatment within 6 months after submission of monitoring results under step 1.

Step 3: If the State requires installation of source water treatment, the system shall install the treatment within 24 months after completion of step 2.

Step 4: The system shall complete follow-up tap water monitoring and source water monitoring within 36 months after completion of step 2.

Step 5: The State shall review the system's installation and operation of source water treatment and specify maximum permissible source water levels within 6 months after completion of step 4.

Step 6: The system shall operate in compliance with the State-specified maximum permissible lead and copper source water levels and continue source water monitoring.

B. Are all motor vehicle waste disposal wells currently banned?

All new motor vehicle waste disposal wells are prohibited as of April 5, 2000 (40 CFR §141.88).

Pursuant to 40 CFR §141.87, existing motor vehicle waste disposal wells (including wells under construction as of April 2, 2000) are regulated based upon their location. If a motor vehicle waste disposal well is located within a "ground water protection area," the owner/operator is required to close the well or obtain a permit within one year of the completed ground water protection area assessment. The state must complete ground water protection area assessments by January 1, 2004. If the state has not completed the assessment in time, all motor vehicle waste disposal wells in the state must be closed or obtain a permit by January 1, 2005.

If a motor vehicle waste disposal well is located within "other sensitive ground water areas," the owner/operator must close the well or obtain a permit by January 1, 2007. States have until January 1, 2004 to delineate "other sensitive ground water areas." If the state fails to identify these areas by January 1, 2004, all motor vehicle waste disposal wells in the state must be closed or obtain a permit by January 1, 2007 unless they are subject to a different compliance date associated with the ground water protection assessment criteria.

### C. Underground Injection Control Program (UIC):

The following question was contained in an email: I am a citizen from Florida concerned about the use of an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) well in a test project wastewater injection well. The project site for treated wastewater is located near urban and residential wells. The wastewater will be used for recharge purposes as well as reuse such as spraying for a golf course. The county utility indicates this treated wastewater is meeting primary and secondary standards. Is this the correct or appropriate use of an ASR well? Wouldn't this well be considered a Class I well?

No. According to "Class V Underground Injection Control Study," (EPA 816-R-99-014, September 1999), the well is considered a Class V well. Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) wells are used to replenish water in an aquifer for subsequent use. They are used to achieve two objectives: (1) storing water in the ground; and (2) recovering the stored water (from the same well) for a beneficial reuse. Potable drinking water (from a drinking water plant), ground water (treated or untreated), and surface water (treated or untreated) are types of fluid injected into an ASR well. ASR wells injecting wastewaters are considered Sewage Treatment Effluent (STE) wells. Water injected into ASR wells is typically treated to meet primary and secondary drinking water standards. ASR wells are drilled to various depths depending on the depth of the receiving aquifer. They inject into confined, semi-confined, and unconfined aquifers. Class V Sewage Treatment Effluent (STE) wells are used for the disposal of treated sanitary waste from publicly owned treatment works or treated effluent from a privately owned treatment facility that receives only sanitary waste. STE wells are commonly used where injection will aid in aquifer recharge. The injectate may contain fecal coliforms and nitrates above primary drinking water standards as well as containing constituents that may exceed secondary standards. Some STE wells inject into shallow aquifers (< 50 feet) that are of extremely poor quality and are not likely to be used as drinking water sources. However other wells inject treated wastewater effluent for aquifer recharge, and may be injecting into aquifers of drinking water quality. It is recommended that you contact your state

Underground Injection Control program for information on this project and help with your concerns on this project. You can contact the Florida UIC program at 850-921-9417 attention Rich Deuerling.

The entire text of the above mentioned document is available online at [www.epa.gov/safewater/uic/cl5study.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/uic/cl5study.html)

## **VI. Specific Water System Enforcement Issues**

The Hotline fielded a call from a person who received a notification indicating that a PWS in Shawnee, Oklahoma, had experienced water quality violations in August and September. The caller had previously contacted both the PWS and the state, but had been unsuccessful in obtaining additional information regarding these violations. On the same day, the Hotline received a call from a doctor at Children's Hospital in Shawnee, who explained that he had an infant patient with flu-like symptoms of unknown origin. According to the doctor, the patient's parents remembered that they had recently received a letter about water quality violations. The doctor wanted to obtain more information regarding the drinking water problems to assist in diagnosing the child's illness. The Hotline forwarded this information to the appropriate EPA Regional enforcement contact.

## **VII. Corrections (from previous reports)**

N/A

## **VIII. Question of the Month**

A citizen caller asked the following question: My neighbors and I both have private household wells. They have free range cattle who are in close proximity to the wells. Recently, they have demanded that I get rid of my mule and my dogs because they may be producing disease-causing bacteria in their waste. My neighbor says that this disease-causing bacteria does not come from cattle waste, only other animals, therefore they do not need to restrict their cattle. I need some kind of documentation that says that disease-causing bacteria can be in any type of animal waste.

There is no language concerning specific animals for the source information on fecal and E. coli bacteria, which are the indicators of the presence of disease-causing bacteria. Health effects language for fecal coliforms and E.coli is as follows: "Fecal coliforms and E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes." (*Preparing Your Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report Guidance for water suppliers, Appendix A, EPA 816-R-99-002, dated March 1999*)

The caller was informed that there is no separation of cattle from mules as sources for bacteria contaminated waste.

## **IX. Additions to OGWDW Calendar of Events and Meetings**

The National Capital Area Chapter – Society of Toxicology fall meeting will be held on December 6, 2001, at the National Library of Medicine, Lister Hill Auditorium in Bethesda.

The annual ASDWA meeting will take place on September 30, 2002 – October 3, 2002, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Appendix A - Customer Profiles****Calls**

Analytical Laboratories	25
Citizens	1,086
Consultants/Industry/Trade Associations	162
Environmental Groups	8
EPA HQ	12
EPA Regions	29
Government	30
Media	6
Medical Professional	6
Schools/University	56
PWS	112
Trans Non Community	1
NTNC	1
Spanish Speaking	26
Other	15
Hangups	46
Out of Purview	114
<b>Total Number of Callers</b>	<b>1,735</b>

**Emails**

Analytical Laboratories	5
Citizens	223
Consultants/Industry/Trade Associations	51
Environmental Groups	0
EPA HQ	1
EPA Regions	2
Government	2
Media	1
Medical Professional	1
Schools/University	63
PWS	10
Trans Non Community	0
NTNC	0
Spanish	10
Other	16
Hangups	0
Out of Purview	14
<b>Total Number of Emails</b>	<b>399</b>

**Appendix B - Question Types****Calls****NPDWRs****Microbial/DBP/ICR**

Coliforms	63
SWTR, ESWTR & LT1FBR	28
GW Rule	2
Cryptosporidium	40
Other Microbial	21
Waterborne Diseases	7
ICR	3
Chlorine	28
THM	7
Other D/DBPs	23
Home Water Disinfection	27

**IOC/SOC**

Phase I, II & V	37
Arsenic	43
Fluoride	26
MTBE	19
Perchlorate	2
Sodium Monitoring	0
Sulfate	3

**LEAD and COPPER**

Lead & Copper	147
LCCA/Lead Ban	9

**RADIONUCLIDES**

Other Rads	17
Radon	93

**SECONDARY DW REGULATIONS**

Secondary DW Regulations	56
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**BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW**

Definitions & Applicability	25
EPA Homepage	3
Science Fair Projects	10
SDWA	15
Standard Setting	4
WOT, Hands & MCL List	57
Other Background	92

**OTHER DRINKING WATER****REGULATIONS**

Analytical Methods	17
CCL & DWPL	4
CCR Compliance	6
CCR General	48
CCR Saw PSA	0
NCOD	1
Operator Certification	2
Public Notification	17
Small System Variances & SSCTs	1
SRF Funds	1
State Primacy & Indian Lands	7
UCMR Lab Methods Issues	1

UCMR PWS Monitoring	9
UCMR Other	27
Variances, Exemptions & Waivers	2

**OTHER DRINKING WATER**

Additives Program	3
Affordability/Cost/Needs Capacity	1
Bottled Water	68
Complaints about PWS	47
Compliance & Enforcement	25
Health Effects & Health Assessments	69
HWTUs	79
Local DW Quality	160
Meeting Registration	24
State Lab Certification	21
Tap Water Testing	216
Treatment/BATs	30

**OTHER PROGRAMS**

Air	11
CWA	12
Pesticides	5
Pollution Prevention	4
RCRA	9
TSCA	0
Non-EPA Environmental	13
Non Environmental	12

**GROUNDWATER/WELLHEAD**

Household Wells	184
Sole Source Aquifer	1
Ground Water	14
WHP	4
Source Water	13
UIC Wells	10

**TOTAL QUESTIONS 1,887**

<b>Emails</b>		UCMR PWS Monitoring	0
<b>Microbial/DBP/ICR</b>		UCMR Other	2
Coliforms	11	Variances, Exemptions & Waivers	0
SWTR, ESWTR & LT1FBR	6	<b>OTHER DRINKING WATER</b>	
GW Rule	3	Additives Program	5
Cryptosporidium	1	Affordability/Cost/Needs Capacity	2
Other Microbial	2	Bottled Water	18
Waterborne Diseases	1	Complaints about PWS	4
ICR	1	Compliance & Enforcement	6
Chlorine	4	Health Effects/Health Assessments	11
THM	2	HWTUs	24
Other D/DBPs	4	Local DW Quality	47
Home Water Disinfection	16	Meeting Registration	0
<b>IOC/SOC</b>		State Lab Certification	7
Phase I, II, V	18	Tap Water Testing	17
Arsenic	19	Treatment/BATs	12
Fluoride	3	<b>OTHER PROGRAMS</b>	
MTBE	3	Air	3
Perchlorate	3	CWA	6
Sodium Monitoring	1	Pesticides	1
Sulfate	1	Pollution Prevention	0
<b>LEAD and COPPER</b>		RCRA	4
Lead & Copper	14	TSCA	0
LCCA/Lead Ban	1	Non-EPA Environmental	32
<b>RADIONUCLIDES</b>		Non Environmental	28
Other Rads	4	<b>GROUNDWATER/WELLHEAD</b>	
Radon	9	Household Wells	34
<b>SECONDARY DW REGULATIONS</b>		Sole Source Aquifer	0
Secondary DW Regulations	13	Ground Water	9
<b>BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW</b>		WHP	3
Definitions & Applicability	6	Source Water	6
EPA Homepage	3	UIC Wells	4
Science Fair Projects	4	<b>TOTAL QUESTIONS</b>	<b>492</b>
SDWA	1		
Standard Setting	0		
WOT, Hands & MCL List	16		
Other Background	21		
<b>OTHER DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS</b>			
Analytical Methods	13		
CCL & DWPL	1		
CCR Compliance	0		
CCR General	5		
CCR Saw PSA	0		
NCOD	0		
Operator Certification	0		
Public Notification	0		
Small System Variances & SSCTs	0		
SRF Funds	0		
State Primacy & Indian Lands	0		
UCMR Lab Methods Issues	0		

## Appendix C – Safe Drinking Water Regulations Federal Register Abstracts

### Arsenic

"National Primary Drinking Water Regulations; Arsenic and Clarifications to Compliance and New Source Contaminants Monitoring" (66 FR 50961, October 5, 2001)

This action announced the availability of three reports and recommendations on the science, cost of compliance, and benefits analyses in support of a rule on arsenic in drinking water. These reports were prepared by the National Academy of Sciences, The National Drinking Water Advisory Council, and the EPA Science Advisory Board.

## Appendix D - Daily Call Monitoring System Data

	<b>Total No. Calls</b>	<b>No. Calls Aband</b>	<b>Average Wait Time mm:sec</b>
1-Oct	109	4	0:10
2-Oct	87	3	0:12
3-Oct	81	4	0:09
4-Oct	71	1	0:11
5-Oct	88	1	0:12
8-Oct	0	0	0
9-Oct	124	4	0:17
10-Oct	100	2	0:14
11-Oct	65	3	0:13
12-Oct	92	3	0:15
15-Oct	105	5	0:18
16-Oct	95	2	0:12
17-Oct	75	1	0:12
18-Oct	69	2	0:17
19-Oct	84	2	0:15
22-Oct	93	3	0:14
23-Oct	84	1	0:14
24-Oct	64	0	0:10
25-Oct	75	2	0:13
26-Oct	84	3	0:14
29-Oct	25	1	0:07
30-Oct	85	1	0:19
31-Oct	30	2	0:09
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,785</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0:13</b>

## **Appendix E – Contract Management Information**

### **Pending and Completed Actions**

- A. Hotline staff continued to take registrations for workshops conducted in Regions 1, 4, 7, and 10.
- B. Hotline managers worked with Project Officer in developing OGWDW's counter-terrorism desk statements. The Hotline provided weekly tabulations and analyses of calls and emails concerning potential terrorist threats to the public water supply; Hotline continues to monitor and assess callers' concerns and inquiries relevant to this topic and relay this information to the Project Officer.
- C. Hotline worked with Project Officer to identify FDA contacts for issues concerning terrorism and bottled water.
- D. Hotline worked with PO to develop a modified Hotline night phone message to provide emergency referral direction for citizens.
- E. On October 3, 2001 Hotline staff was briefed by Jenny Jacobs of EPA's OGWDW on the Operator Certification program.
- F. Hotline staff attended a UIC training session at EPA Headquarters on October 15, 2001.
- G. Pursuant to instructions from OGWDW, Hotline management implemented a standard protocol for Hotline responses to inquiries regarding details specific to individual utilities (e.g., the latitude/longitude or address of a water system, water supply, dam, water intake, etc.).
- H. Hotline management worked with PO and OGWDW technical contacts to set procedures for handling comments on the Arsenic Rule submitted (via email) to the Hotline after the expiration of the comment period.

### **Report on Internet Activities**

Our searches revealed no errors on the OGWDW Web site in October.

### **Hotline Suggestions (for areas of frequent concern among callers that EPA may wish to consider addressing in future publications)**

The Hotline occasionally receives inquiries concerning EPA's position on the disposal of drugs and drug residue into drinking water sources. There is some information available from the U.S. Geological Survey, but Hotline staff will generally refer callers to either EPA's Wastewater hotline or the CWA office for information on this subject.