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Drinking Water Advisory Committee

**August 24, 2006
Chief's Update**

While the DWAC meeting was unfortunately cancelled, I still had some updates to provide you on DDAGW's ongoing activities and process improvements:

1. The Drinking Water program is on the fast track to migrate to another data management system. Over the course of this state fiscal year, we will implement the State Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS). US EPA developed and maintains SDWIS as part of Federal data management. As the Federal reporting requirements and rule changes expanded how Ohio had to maintain and report its data, it became too costly to maintain an Ohio only data management system. A contractor is now hired and is beginning to migrate Ohio's data into the new system. As we implement the new system, you may have slightly different experiences with reporting information to the Agency. For example, we plan to send the 2007 License's to Operate Applications earlier this year to coordinate with some inventory conversion.
2. DRINKware is also being converted to a new online reporting mechanism. DDAGW and the Division of Surface Water are moving to a more flexible e-reporting. The new e-reporting will begin to be implemented in early 2007 and DRINKware will eventually be phased out over the following year. We anticipate a lot of training to laboratories and public water systems.
3. DDAGW completed the 2005 Annual Compliance Report in June. Compliance rates were similar to previous years. DDAGW continues to use this information to assist our ongoing efforts to increase compliance and to target our activities to specific types of public water systems. The report is available on the DDAGW web site at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/ddagw/annualreports.html>.
4. Governor Taft continues to make planning for a possible pandemic flu a high priority. All State agencies were required to develop continuity of operations plans to ensure critical functions are maintained during an outbreak. An Executive Education Seminar was conducted at the State Emergency Operation Center in June 2006. The objectives for the seminar were: 1) increase executive awareness of Ohio's existing systems and processes for handling an influenza pandemic catastrophic event; 2) engage executives in discussion of the implications and decisions facing them in a catastrophic event; and 3) identify unresolved influenza pandemic preparedness issues—policy, organizational, strategic and operational. Ohio EPA

is encouraging all public water systems to plan for how they would maintain operations with 25 to 80 percent (or more) of their work force not reporting to work.

5. Class A certified operator training is scheduled to begin in September. Letters were sent to all known Class A water systems the week of August 14, 2006 informing them of the upcoming training opportunities. Coming soon is a website with interactive training. When it is available we will provide the information to you. For more information , contact 360 Water at 1-866-923-3600.
6. Utility Management for Local Officials and Financial Management Training for Local Officials are one-day courses being offered free of charge to systems less than 10,000 population. These courses are geared to increase the technical, financial and managerial knowledge of small public water systems in Ohio. Ohio RCAP teaches the courses and DDAGW is financing the ten sessions currently planned. For specific information about the new sessions, please visit Ohio RCAP's website at <http://glrcap.org/ohio/>
7. DDAGW continues to work on filling staffing vacancies. Kelly Peavler has returned to Texas and we will be filling her position, as well as the other outreach position we have discussed with you. Recommendations for the outreach position and the small system compliance position have been made. Postings for Kelly's position and the community enforcement position are pending. The engineering manager's position was re-posted and an interview was conducted.
8. The agency received approval from the Department of Public Safety Homeland Security Division to release source water assessment reports for public water systems on the internet via a secure web page registration process. The completion of this activity is part of the program's commitment to make the reports readily available to the public and interested parties. In the future, we will add an Internet Map Server service to depict all of the source water protection areas in a geographic information system format. We will not make source water assessment reports available for a few public water systems that requested in writing that we not post their report due to security concerns. Instead, the Agency will refer requests for these reports to the public water system or provide a hard copy of the report per Ohio's public records law requirements. To register for access to the secure web page go to: http://www.epa.state.oh.us/ddagw/pdu/swap_securelogin.html.
9. DDAGW is getting ready for the 2007 Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey (DWINS). The DWINS occurs every four years and assesses the total twenty year needs for all of the states. The total needs for each state are compared to the national total and a percentage is established. The capitalization grant allocation is based on the percentage of need in each state. Ohio currently receives 3.05% of the capitalization grant which is used to issue low interest loans to public water systems. Full participation by the systems selected to complete the 2007 DWINS will help to accurately assess the amount of capitalization Ohio should receive. Ohio

expects 92 community public water systems to receive the 2007 DWINS. All systems over 100,000 population and a sample of systems less than 100,000 population will receive the survey. Ohio EPA will contact all of the selected water systems soon to determine who the correct point of contact is to complete the survey.

10. There is nothing new to report in Federal Rule promulgation, however, DDAGW has been very busy with numerous new rules and revisions. Several rule packages have been filed with JCARR and are expected to be effective in late September. These rules include:
 - a. Operator Certification
 - b. Miscellaneous (Operational Requirements, Secondary MCLs, and Yard Hydrants)
 - c. Disadvantaged Community Loans

In addition, two sets of no change rules (Backflow and Escrow) have also been filed to meet five year rule review requirements. DDAGW anticipates original filing the waterline replacement amendments within the next few weeks.

If you have any questions, please contact Beth Messer or Holly Kaloz. See you November 7, 2006.