

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING RECORD

TIME AND DATE:

10:30 AM, October 29, 2008

LOCATION:

TCEQ, Park 35, Building F, Room 2210, Austin, Texas

PURPOSE OF MEETING:

The FY09 First Quarter Meeting of the Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

ATTENDEES:

AGENCIES

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [TCEQ]
- Texas Department of Agriculture [TDA]
- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board [TSSWCB]
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service [TAES]

REPRESENTATIVES

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| Joseph L. Peters | Chair, Member, TCEQ, Austin |
| Richard Eyster | Member, TDA, Austin |
| Donna Long | Member, TSSWCB, Austin |
| Bruce Lesikar | Member, TAES, College Station |

AGENCY STAFF

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| Kathy McCormack | TCEQ, Austin |
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INTERESTED PARTIES

- | | |
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| Ed Baker | Syngenta Crop Protection, Mineola |
| Denise Gentsch | Syngenta Crop Protection, Austin |
| George Caldwell | Texas Farm Bureau, Austin |

MEETING SUMMARY:

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman of the Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee, Dr. Joseph Peters (TCEQ), called the meeting to order. There were several Subcommittee members not in attendance, including David Van Dresar (TAGD), Allen Jones (TAR), and Janie Hopkins (TWDB). Dr. Peters welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Subcommittee members introduced themselves and the meeting proceeded to the Task Force Reports.

II Task Force Reports

Site Selection Task Force: Janie Hopkins (TWDB), the Task Force Chair, was not present to provide an update, so Joseph Peters provided one. He indicated the TWDB has likely completed their 2008 sampling efforts. TCEQ will be presenting the 2009 draft monitoring plan at the next meeting of the Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee.

Education Task Force: Bruce Lesikar (TCE), the Task Force Chair, provided an update. He mentioned the Texas Plant Protection Conference is coming up December 3-4 in College Station. There will be some education and outreach meetings/events also coming up in the High Plains, and will report on these at the next meeting.

None of the other task forces were active.

III. Texas Pesticide Issues Update

Richard Eyster (TDA) provided an update of pesticide issues in Texas. The insecticide Termidor has been approved for use on Crazy Ants in the Houston area and surrounding counties invaded by this potentially new species of ant. Similar ants are originally prevalent in Brazil and the Caribbean. Several other pesticides have also been approved for spot and mulch treatment in other areas. The ants may have high economic impact on nurseries and residences. They are attracted to electrical equipment, with NASA having a big problem related to these ants, as did Hobby Airport, which may have started this concern. They may be appearing in pastures and hay bales, so TDA is beginning to talk with folks about ways to try and prevent or limit their inadvertent transport to other areas.

IV. Business Items

There were no business items to address in this meeting.

V. Information Exchange – Summary Presentation on the 2008 Urban and Cooperative Pesticide Monitoring

Dr. Peters gave a presentation he and Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) prepared on the 2008 urban pesticide monitoring activities. He provided an outline and details on each segment of the presentation.

A map of all the 2008 pesticide monitoring locations in Texas provided an overview of the number and areas monitored. This included the Panhandle region and a portion of Central Texas for Cooperative monitoring and the cities of Austin, San Antonio and Houston for urban pesticide monitoring. Changes from the previous year were also summarized. Pyrethroids were replaced by 2,4-D kits in the immunoassay analyses, as well as more kits for more analyses than in 2007. Additionally, an instrument was purchased to analyze for diazinon, which was more cost-effective than renting the instrument. Sampling was also expanded to include some City of Houston wells, USGS monitoring wells in the Austin area, and a greater number of springs and wells in Austin, and to a lesser extent, in San Antonio. No laboratory analyses were conducted in 2007. In 2008, not only were 22 samples analyzed by Method 525.2, but also by Methods 515.1 and 622, which included several urban pesticides, such as diazinon, malathion, 2,4-D, AZM, chlorpyrifos, and dicamba. These samples replaced those typically taken in the Panhandle in the on-going monitoring task up there. Dr. Peters next summarized sampling in each of the metropolitan areas as follows:

Austin Metropolitan Area

- 43 wells and 20 springs were sampled and analyzed by immunoassay methods
- 7 wells and 5 springs were sampled and analyzed by laboratory methods
- There were 10 atrazine detects by immunoassay ranging from 0.05 to 0.28 ppb
- There was 1 chlorpyrifos (Dursban) detect by immunoassay, but this was from a re-sampled spring, where the initial sample did not detect anything.
- There were 8 diazinon detects by immunoassay method, ranging from 0.02 to 0.1118 ppb, but because the method is very sensitive, TCEQ cut off the very low trace detects below 0.02 ppb.
- There were 5 atrazine detects by laboratory analysis below the 0.1 Practical Quantitation Limit.
- The map indicates that most of the samples were collected west of I35

San Antonio Metropolitan Area

- 37 wells, 2 springs and 2 entry points were sampled for for immunoassay analyses.
- 5 wells were also sampled for laboratory analyses.
- There were 3 atrazine detects by immunoassay analysis, all in wells ranging from 0.13 to 0.2 ppb.
- There was 1 chlorpyrifos detect in a duplicate sample, by immunoassay, at 0.116 ppb.
- There was 1 diazinon detect by immunoassay at 0.024 ppb.
- There were no detects by laboratory analyses.
- A map of sample locations in San Antonio was also provided.

Houston Metropolitan Area

- 29 PWS wells were sampled, for immunoassay analysis only.
- All wells were in the western half of the city.
- There was 1 atrazine detect by immunoassay, at 0.05 ppb.

Cooperative Monitoring

- All samples were collected by the Texas Water Development Board and analyzed by TCEQ by immunoassay
- 213 well samples were analyzed by immunoassay for atrazine
- A total of 259 immunoassay analyses were conducted, which included the 213 for atrazine, plus 3 for organophosphate/carbamates, 32 for 2,4-D, and 11 for chlorpyrifos.
- There were 11 atrazine detects ranging from 0.05 to 1.26 ppb, most in the very low range.
- The location map indicated that most samples were collected in the Panhandle, with a few from the Hueco Bolson aquifer in West Texas, and a few from the Edwards-Trinity aquifer south of the Panhandle.

In summary:

- 3 metropolitan areas were sampled for urban pesticides, in both karst and sandstone aquifers, there was greater coverage and better local cooperation, and the monitoring included shallower sampling points with the USGS monitoring wells and springs.
- Few pesticide detects, most at very low levels, none near the MCL or HAL
- Lab detections were especially few and these with low concentrations
- Results were consistent with those in 2007.
- Recommendations include sampling next Spring in the Panhandle again and possibly taking a few urban samples in Austin or other urban areas. A list should be prepared of pesticides are on the SFIREG list of 57 that will require assessment. It should then be determined which ones are sold and applied in Texas in any quantity. Finally it should be determined which ones can be analyzed by our contracted lab so that we can monitor for these in those areas where they are used in significant amounts.
- A detailed sampling plan will be presented at the next meeting of the ACS

The chair opened it up for questions. Mr. Ed Baker (Syngenta) asked how this data compared with the City of Austin data and concerns about atrazine, and whether they have seen this data yet. The Chair indicated these results don't really indicate any problem with atrazine contamination of water in Austin, and that he did not think the city has seen this data yet (Note: The city has received this data and is aware of the low detects of atrazine). Dr. Bruce Lesikar (TAES) asked where the data summary can be found, and the Chair responded that it should be in the provided handouts. Provided were one report on urban monitoring and one on Cooperative monitoring. Ms Kathy McCormack, the staff person helping to record the meeting, asked for a clarification of what the atrazine detections were and whether atrazine was considered to be an urban pesticide. Dr. Peters said that atrazine can be considered an urban pesticide, and that there was only one atrazine detection by laboratory in the Austin area, while there were no laboratory detections of atrazine in San Antonio monitoring. With no further questions, the meeting continued on the next agenda item.

VI. Announcements

Dr. Bruce Lesikar (TAES) announced that the Texas Plant Protection Conference will be in College Station on December 3rd and 4th (Joseph Peters will be attending this, representing the ACS).

Dr. Jones (TAR) has been assigned to the Agricultural Research Center in Dallas effective the first of the year, and his replacement on the subcommittee and committee is yet to be determined.

VII. Public Comment

No public comments were made. With no further announcements or public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

VIII. Adjournment

Recorded by Kathleen McCormack and transcribed by Alan Cherepon.

In their afternoon meeting, the decision was made by the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee that the FY09 second quarter meeting of the Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee will take place on 1/21/08 at 10:30 a.m., in TCEQ Building F, Conference Room 2210.

Attachments

Presentation on the 2008 pesticide sampling summary

Report on the 2008 Urban Pesticide Monitoring in Texas

Report on the 2008 Cooperative Pesticide Monitoring in Texas