



Technical Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting

September 26, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Present: Jeff Freeman, MWCOG/EEI; Derek Hiland, DeKalb County; Kevin Fecske, Village of Barrington; Kevin Kerrigan, Lake County Division of Transportation; Judith Thomas, USGS; Brad Merkel, Village of Sugar Grove; Devin Mannix, ISWS; Matt Asselmeier, Kendall County; Faye Sinnott, BACOG; Amy Gahala, USGS; Tony Speciale, Retired Village of Sugar Grove/Sugar Grove Township Water Authority; Bob VanGyseghem, City of Geneva; Katie Piotrowska, CMAP; Claire Dillon, CMAP; Kelsey Pudlock, CMAP; Jeff Walter, Village of Elburn; Caleb Apker, Burns & McDonnell; Wei Han, IDNR; Scott Kuykendall, McHenry County; Margaret Schneemann, IISG; Mike Adam, Lake County Health Department; Natalie Karney, BACOG; Jonah Schein, WaterSense; Joe Munder, City of Aurora; Angie Smith, EEI.

Jeff Freeman called the meeting to order at 10:02 A.M.

Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions: Jeff (MWCOG/EEI) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda Changes and Announcements: No changes on the agenda.

Approval of July Meeting Minutes: Tony (SGTWA) made a motion to approve. Amy (USGS) seconded. Minutes approved.

NWPA Sustainability Plan: Residential Retrofits Strategy: Kelsey (CMAP) gave a presentation on the potential residential retrofit water savings that can be accomplished within the NWPA region. She provided background information on water use throughout a home, and presented the methods utilized to estimate the cost savings. Margaret (IISG) presented the more detailed water savings values for toilets, showerheads, and faucets. The preliminary estimates suggest a regional reduction of 10.6 MGD could be accomplished if the region were to utilize WaterSense labeled fixtures. The 10.6 MGD reduction would be over 8% of the total regional water use of 126 MGD.

Following the presentation, Kelsey and Margaret led a discussion of how the strategy could be implemented. The first prompt was:

Q. How can NWPA achieve the estimated water savings of 10.6 MGD? What incentives (e.g., rebate programs, policies) are most appealing/favorable to NWPA communities?

The responses were: rebates and incentives; communication and consumers/municipality; codes requiring use of WaterSense products for new construction; use grade school presentations; new construction must be WaterSense; rebate programs for toilets; ordinances for new homes; education; outreach; discount vouchers; codes; ordinance; cost-sharing/rebates; public education; work with ComEd on their incentive program nudges;



rebates; education; everyone else is doing it so should you; flume devices - communities that have devices in place already give some incentives to get them to use this technology to their fullest potential.

The second prompt was:

Q. What are the potential barriers to implementation?

The responses were: Cost; lack of interest or understanding of the why from residents; funding; administrative burden to confirm installation and program advertisement; local funding; distrust; inconvenience to the residents; concern about low-flow toilets creating clogs in laterals; concerns over the quality of faucet or toilet flow (low pressure); contractors not understanding the importance of using the WaterSense devices; lack of water efficiency expertise and bias against conservation among plumbers and contractors.

The third prompt was:

Q. What type of framing or additional information is needed to help build the case for retrofitting devices?

Responses: Educating contractors and residents; education with demos; TikTok influencers; addressing the perceptions about performance; FAQ to address fallacies; suppliers input on products available; is there a way to use leadership by example framework – in other words, community leaders showing that they have these devices and they work; social marketing; emphasis on end-user benefits.

Presentation: “WaterSense Labeled Homes”: Jonah Schein, WaterSense, National Program Manager for Homes & Buildings, WaterSense Program, US EPA presented Version 2.0 of the WaterSense Labeled Homes certification program. First, Johan provided background information on the WaterSense Program. Program highlights include the fact that there are 43,000 product models that have earned the WaterSense label, 7.5 trillion gallons of water have been saved by the program since inception, and the program has saved \$171 billion in water and energy bills .

The WaterSense Labeled Home program encompasses the an entire house, not just the products within the house itself. Version 2.0 reduces water use in homes by at least 30% compared to code-built homes. The homes are third-party, with oversight from EPA, certified using existing certification infrastructure. Version 2.0 offers more flexibility relative to Version 1.0 while maintaining or increasing efficiency. It is able to better respond to market and climate changes.

Version 2.0 was piloted in the Las Vegas region in the summer of 2020. During the pilot process, 568 homes were certified. The pilot primarily focused on new construction, however, it can be used on existing homes as well.

Sensible Salting Committee (SSC) (Update): Scott (McHenry County) reported that the group is doing the *Best Management Practices Talking Tour* on the new manual. It will be held on October 24th from 8 AM – 1 PM at



Ringer's Landscaping. There are currently 16 people registered to attend. Registration will be opening up to school districts and municipalities where they have operations managing parking lots and sidewalks. It will be the full class with the Salt Smart Collaborative folks and then a tour of the Ringer's facility.

The McHenry County Water Forum was held two weeks ago. Approximately 150 people attended the event to learn about water conservation. It was filmed and it will be on the County's YouTube channel.

CMAQ (Update): Kelsey (CMAQ) reported no updates at this point.

IISG (Update): No update.

ISAWWA (Update): Jeff (EEI) reported the call for abstracts for WATERCON2024 is out. They are due by Oct. 15th. There is Water Loss Training on Oct. 19th. The Annual Regulatory Update is on October 26th. It can be attended in person at Harper College or virtually. In the evening of October 26th there is a No Water No Bourbon event in Algonquin that starts at 5 PM. There is a No Water No Hockey event on Nov. 12th at the Chicago Wolves game.

ISWS (Update): Devin (ISWS) will be starting a project that will include water quality sampling in their monitoring network. If funding can be found, they will try to incorporate testing for PFAS and/or chlorides.

IDNR (Update): Wei (IDNR) reported that ISWS is working with the US Army Corp of Engineers on the Fox River Habitat and Connectivity Study which is evaluating the benefits of dam removal along the Fox River. IDNR is close to be able to publish dam removal guidelines. Wes and Wei plan to attend the meeting next month and if people are interested, they can share the guideline details at that time.

USGS (Update): Amy (USGS) reported that the Illinois statewide PFAS sampling report has been published. It is entitled, "Statewide Sampling to Determine Spatial Distribution, Prevalence, and Occurrence of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in Illinois Community Water Supplies, 2020–21 (usgs.gov)". Amy will be summarizing the report in presentations to the Illinois Groundwater Association on October 6th and Illinois Section of the American Water Works Association on Oct. 26th.

Judith (USGS) commented on their next-generation water observation system and the Illinois River Basin that was completed in February. The USGS will be working closely with ISWS and ISGS to interpret this data and incorporate it into their groundwater model.

SGTWA (Update): No update was given.

Margaret reported that they have launched Kane County's website: <https://conservewaterforkane.org/>

Other Business:

Pending regulations and/or legislation: Jeff (MWCOG/EEI) commented on the Title 35, Part 663 proposed regulations which will define the guidelines for issuing loans from the State Revolving Fund for lead service line replacement (LSLR) projects. Project scoring will be based on the Median Household Income within the project



area rather than the community as a whole. The new approach will most likely be in place by July 2024. Jeff also noted that the IEPA is working on modifying the existing Part 662 regulations, which will extend loan terms out to 30 years.

The next meeting will be held on October 24, 2023, in person, at the Elgin Centre. Scott will be unable to attend due to the Salt Smart training but will send an update prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 PM.

Submitted by _____ Angie Smith, EEI