

OPERATIONS & WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY MINUTES
March 4, 2020
4:15 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Director: Judy Huang (Chair)

Staff: Robert Shaver, Kurt Arends, Robert Ells, Mike Wickham, Yan Yang Xu, Linnea Hoover, Cynthia Ha, Ranga Sampath, Sharene Gonzales

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Overview of Valve Insertion Technology: Kurt Arends, Manager of Operations and Maintenance, began the meeting by introducing the topic of valve insertion technology and how this technology is being used by water districts and water companies to repair and replace valves in their distribution systems. Mr. Arends then introduced Robert Ells, Distribution and Maintenance Manager, who provided a short presentation of the valve insertion technology used by water utilities. Mr. Ells began the presentation by explaining the methods and technologies used to insert valves into the distribution system. The technology is capable of inserting four to twenty-four inch valves into a pressurized distribution system without the disruption of water service to the customer. It was explained how it can also be used as a temporary line stop on water mains to lessen water service interruptions and can be used on a wide variety of pipe material. Mr. Ells explained how this technology can benefit customers by reducing the number of customers to lose service for a shutdown or shortening the duration of service interruptions. The ability to insert new valves can also provide better control of the distribution system and providing increased strategies for emergency repairs and replacements in the distribution system. Mr. Ells provided a demonstration video of the valve insertion technology and how it is in line with the District's Strategic Goals in regards to maintaining infrastructure and improving emergency preparedness and response capabilities. Director Huang expressed concerns of sole sourcing due to the patent protected valve insertion cartridges and asked that staff keep an eye on pricing for future purchases.
2. Update on Fire Hydrant Maintenance: Mr. Arends provided a brief update on the issue of non-mechanical fire hydrant maintenance. He indicated that staff was continuing to work with the City of Fremont as there had been a retirement on City staff and new people were getting up to speed. Mr. Arends indicated that the District would continue to work with City of Fremont staff on potential options before bringing the issue to the Board.
3. Water Quality Regulatory Update: Cynthia Ha, Environmental Engineer, provided an overview of the potential new and upcoming water quality regulations expected over the next three years (2020 through 2023). She presented the regulations in three categories that represented the level of staff effort required to comply with the new regulations: high impact that significantly increases staff workload; low to medium impact; and unknown impact. The regulation changes included both federal and state drinking water regulations. Ms. Ha began

with an update of drinking water regulations that have near-term regulatory deadlines and have significantly increased the workload of staff. These regulations include the Lead Service Lines Inventory (SB 1398), proposed revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule, Water Loss Control Regulations (SB 555) and the American Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). Ms. Ha emphasized that the District has a low probability of finding lead service lines within its service area and that the District's Emergency Preparedness Group is in the process of meeting the AWIA requirements.

Regulations that have low to medium impact on the District include the state drinking water regulations on Cross Connection Control (AB 1671), the revised Total Coliform Rule, federal drinking water regulations on the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5 (UCMR 5), and the Perchlorate Rule. Regulations that have an unknown impact on the District include Lead exposure, child day care facilities and family day care homes (AB 2370). Ms. Ha reviewed the compliance timelines for each of the regulations, the regulatory progress, potential impacts on the District, and the approach staff will be taking to comply with these regulations. Director Huang asked whether cross connections occur in our service area and if they are more typical in older communities. Mr. Arends responded that actual cross connections are very rare in our service area. Director Huang asked if there are enough operational changes to justify updating a hydraulic model. Ms. Ha responded that the current model is in need of updating since it was prepared prior to decommissioning of the Mission San Jose Water Treatment Plant in 2015 and the expansion of the Desalination Facility in 2010.

Ms. Ha then described existing regulations that are being reviewed for revision by regulators but currently don't have exact timelines established for implementation. These include regulatory developments for perfluorooctanic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS) compounds which have had a medium impact on the District. Both the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) have had recent regulatory activity for these compounds. Ms. Ha then reviewed the Chromium VI (Cr VI) regulation, which is in development and expected to have low impact on the District since Cr VI has not been detected at the entry point to the distribution system (EPTDS). Ms. Ha also shared information regarding regulations that have unknown impacts on the District since there is insufficient information currently available to determine what the impacts will be on the District, such as regulations in development on microplastics. Director Huang asked whether the detection limit for Cr (VI) will be changed. Staff responded that the details of the proposed regulation have not been available yet. Director Huang asked if any methodologies have been developed for testing microplastics and whether the State Water Project has detected microplastics in the water sources. Staff responded that SWRCB is still developing those regulations and no samples have been collected at the District's water sources yet.

4. Update on Constituents of Emerging and PFAS Sampling: Mike Wickham, Water Production Manager, provided an update on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS. Mr. Wickham discussed their widespread usage in the manufacture of several commonly used items, the regulatory history and the recent widespread public attention these compounds have received due to their persistence in the environment, and

potential health effects. Mr. Wickham provided a regulatory update on PFAS from both, the Federal EPA and the State of California's Division of Drinking Water (DDW), including the DDW's recent lowering of the notification and response levels for these constituents of concern. He also discussed the progress of analytical methods over time which are able to detect several more PFAS compounds and at lower detection limits. Mr. Wickham described ACWD's previous sampling for PFAS under UCMR 3 and the finding of no detections above the reporting limits, and what other agencies in the Bay Area have done regarding sampling for PFAS. He also discussed ACWD's draft PFAS sampling plan that will be implemented in late Spring or early Summer of 2020. Mr. Wickham explained that to eliminate any cross contamination issues, given that PFAS are found in many daily items used, robust sampling protocols must be adhered to and we have therefore, decided to hire an outside contractor for sampling and testing. Since coordinating an outside service and establishing the proper protocols takes time, this timeframe would be the earliest possible for field sampling.

Director Huang asked, if we detect any PFAS in our waters, how would we notify the public, and what regulatory thresholds exist to compare the detections to? Mr. Wickham responded that the recent DDW notification and response level directives require specific notification protocols which will be followed. He also indicated that while PFAS are currently not regulated, the establishment of EPA's lifetime health advisory and DDW's notification and response levels are the only available regulatory thresholds at this time.

Director Huang inquired if we would use EPA Method 533, which is a more recent method and detects more PFAS compounds than the currently widely used EPA Method 537.1, which detects only 18 PFAS compounds. Mr. Wickham and Ms. Linnea Hoover, ACWD's Quality Assurance/Quality Control Officer responded that most commercial laboratories are not yet fully certified for EPA Method 533 and therefore, EPA Method 537.1 is the de facto method used by all agencies. Director Huang also asked if the State Water Project source was tested and the response was yes and the detections were very low.

Director Huang also asked about PFAS in fire-fighting foams. Mr. Bob Shaver, General Manager, responded that in his conversations with the Fremont Fire Department, they indicated that there are no PFAS in their firefighting substances.

Director Huang inquired about potential treatment options if PFAS were detected. Mr. Wickham explained that blending, reverse osmosis, and granular activated carbons are all techniques that can treat PFAS and explained that ACWDs production well water is currently treated at the blending facility and the Newark Desalination Facility.

5. Public Comments: There were no public comments received.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Topics discussed by the Committee were informational only, and no recommendations were made.