Message

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Subject: ORD Weekly Update
Attachments: ORD weekly Update June 15.docx

Administrator,

Bob Kavlock is in Paris this week, so I am providing our weekly update.

This week ORD's Bruce Rodan participated in the State Environmental Health Directors 10th Annual Meeting organized by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO). ORD presented on state research priorities and collaborative efforts with ASTHO and ECOS on environmental health initiatives. Thirty states attended, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and several NGO partners. The meeting identified opportunities and strategies to strengthen state-EPA environmental health partnerships and help build state-level environmental health capacity.

Hot issues

National Academy of Sciences STAR Report release

Today, the National Academies of Sciences (NAS) is releasing a final report on its review of EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) grants program. Findings and recommendations include:

- EPA has high-quality procedures for priority setting that allow STAR to be integrated within EPA's research program.
- STAR's procedures to develop funding announcements and award grants ensure that the program sponsors research of high scientific merit.
- EPA should continue to use its procedures for strategic planning and for setting priorities for STAR research However, EPA should consider developing a mechanism to allow public input to the STAR research agenda or the submission of unsolicited proposals.
- The STAR program should maintain the procedures that it has in place. However, it should provide comments to applicants whose applications were not awarded because of lack of relevance so that they can improve their ability to prepare future grant proposals.

NAS leads provided a briefing on the report details to ORD and the Senate Energy and Environment Budget Committee and Senate Environment and Public Works Committee yesterday.

Village Green Station-Houston Ribbon Cutting

The Village Green project is a community-based activity demonstrating the capabilities of new real-time monitoring technology and sharing these data with residents and citizen scientists to increase public knowledge of local air quality. On June 15th, the newest site, a 3rd generation of the Village Green station, will be unveiled at the John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science (The Health Museum) in Houston, TX. In addition to measuring ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and meteorological conditions (e.g., wind speed, temperature, humidity), this station is piloting three new sensors to detect and measure black carbon, nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and total volatile organic compounds (tVOCs). Houston is the 8th U.S. location selected for the Village Green Project joining stations located in Durham, NC (South Regional Library); Washington DC (Smithsonian's National Zoo); Philadelphia (Independence National Historical Park); Oklahoma City,

(Myriad Botanical Gardens); Kansas City (South Branch Public Library); Hartford (Connecticut Science Museum); and Chicago, IL (Jane Addams Elementary School).

Community Multi-Scale Air Quality web site
On June 30th, the latest version of the Community Multi-Scale Air Quality (CMAQ) Modeling System (CMAQv5.2) will be released. CMAQ is a computational tool used for air quality management that simultaneously models multiple air pollutants to help air quality managers determine the best air quality management strategies. The major new features of CMAQ in version 5.2 include new treatment of organic aerosols, a new windblown dust model, and a new gas-phase chemical mechanism. The CMAQ team will also announce the tool's new website. The site is set to make this valuable tool more accessible for U.S. air quality managers and anyone else interested in air quality modeling.

Region 4 reaches out to ORD about GenX analyses
In November 2016, Environmental Science and Technology Letters published an ORD article, *Legacy and Emerging Perfluoroalkyl Substances Are Important Drinking Water Contaminants in the Cape Fear River Watershed of North Carolina*. This article describes a study investigating the occurrence of new types of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in surface water and finished drinking water from North Carolina's Cape Fear River. This article recently has garnered interest from news media and several articles (e.g., See 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and press inquiries have followed. Region 4 has contacted ORD to inquire about the methods used to analyze the PFAS, GenX, in this study. ORD will be working with Region 4 to answer analytical questions and, if needed, analyze additional samples.

Upcoming public events

Tribal Science Council
On June 19-23, The Tribal Science Council, in coordination with EPA's Regional Tribal Operations Committee, will hold its summer business meeting in Rapid City, SD. The Oglala Sioux Tribe is hosting the meeting. Topics will include priority solid waste issues affecting tribes in Region 8 and a panel discussion on Children's Health and Lead.

EPA Tools and Resources webinar
On June 21, ORD will host its monthly webinar for representatives of state environmental and health agencies, tribes and other stakeholders on the public health impact of wildfire smoke emissions. This webinar will highlight recent updates to the Wildfire Smoke Guide, and feature Smoke Sense, a mobile application that gets air quality information to people impacted by wildfire smoke and provides guidance to protect against smoke exposure.

ORD Meeting with Unilever
June 24-29, ORD scientists will meet with Unilever's Safety and Environmental Assurance Center staff to discuss the cooperative research project underway to evaluate new approaches for assessing the risk of chemicals. EPA and Unilever have developed a series of case studies based on five chemicals of mutual interest. If successful, research from this collaboration will result in better ways to evaluate the potential health effects of new ingredients and chemicals we currently know little about. These methods could be used by both industry and governmental agencies to reduce the costs associated with safety testing and ultimately address the thousands of untested chemicals in our environment.

Collaborative oil spill field experiment in Gulf of Mexico, Venice, LA
June 26-30, ORD will participate in a field experiment to test oil plume and slick monitoring tools in the Gulf of Mexico. This is a collaborative effort with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Interior – Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Agencies and partners are using a chronic oil slick in the northern Gulf to test satellite, aerial, and in situ monitoring approaches to estimate slick thickness and track plume and slick movement.

Advanced Septic System Nitrogen Sensor Challenge
On June 29, 2017, ORD will attend and speak at the Advanced Septic System Nitrogen Sensor Challenge Showcase Day at Region 2. Phase 1 of the Septic System challenge was an extensive collaboration with states, academia and the Nature Conservancy that advanced the development of a low cost sensor to monitor the functioning of septic systems. The Showcase is the opportunity to announce the winners of the Septic System Sensor Challenge and to launch the Phase 2 of the challenge.

Last week Highlights

Tool Developed by ORD Helps Manage Water Flow

An easy-to-use, Excel-based Rapid Benefits Indicators Tool recently received the imprimatur of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The publicly available tool provides a step-by-step worksheet for evaluating potential benefits of geographically defined projects, such as reduced flooding, enhanced scenic views, recreational bird watching, and environmental education.

Hundreds Attend Duluth Celebration

Last Wednesday's 50th Anniversary Celebration of ORD's Mid-Continent Ecology Division prompted record public attendance. More than 400 visitors met with scientists, took part in tours and hands-on science activities, and witnessed a rededication ceremony. The event was commemorated by a special proclamation from the Mayor of Duluth and a letter from a U.S. Senator.

Toxicity of PCBs Meeting

On June 7, ORD, Region 2 and leaders of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe met regarding the toxicity of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), specifically in the context of the tribe's exposure to PCBs and the impacts that those exposures have had on their community located in upstate New York. ORD's presentation described the IRIS process for evaluating the non-cancer toxicity of PCBs, including the role of systematic review and available approaches for addressing health risk from PCB inhalation. Ken Jock from Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Environment and Tribal Council Chief Beverly Cook found the discussions at the meeting "very useful". Region 2 also thanked ORD and characterized the presentation as excellent and "a thoughtful approach that really resonated with the tribal leaders".

Tire Crumb

On June 12, 2017, the *Federal Register* Notice for the Information Collection Request for the Tire Crumb Exposure Characterization Study was published. This begins a 30-day public comment period, as well as review by the Office of Management and Budget. Once the OMB review is complete, the field work can begin. This activity is part of the Federal Research Action Plan on Tire Crumb, which is being co-led by EPA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Superfund Technical Support

ORD's Engineering Technical Support Center is working with Region 7 to review a removal action design to manage surface water at the Big River Mine Tailings/St. Joe Minerals Corp. Superfund site near St Louis, MO. The design, developed by the potentially responsible party (PRP), is intended to reduce surface water discharge through a mine tailings impoundment at the site. ORD's Groundwater Technical Support Center is also reviewing a PRP-design for remediation of the Chamberlain Manufacturing RCRA Corrective Action site in Iowa where decades of industrial activity have contaminated soil and groundwater.

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