

# **Advisory Committee on Mercury Pollution**

Meeting #80: Monday, January 7, 2008

Time: 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Location: Commissioner's Conference Room, Building One South  
Waterbury State Office Complex – Waterbury, Vermont

## **MINUTES**

### **Members Present:**

Michael Bender, Abenaki Self-Help, Inc.  
William Bress, Vermont Department of Health  
Gary Gulka, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Environmental Assistance Office  
Jennifer Holiday, Chittenden Solid Waste Management District  
Ruma Kohli, IBM (by phone)  
Neil Kamman, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Water Quality Division  
Mary Jean Rajda, Porter Hospital, Inc.  
Senator Richard McCormack, Vermont State Senate (phone)  
Eric Palmer, Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife

### **Guests Present:**

Matthew Levin, Vermonters for a Clean Environment  
Peter Taylor, Vermont State Dental Society  
Karen Knaebel, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Environmental Assistance Office

The Committee members and interested parties gathered at the Waterbury State Complex, Laundry Building. Neil Kamman called the meeting to order.

### **Agenda Item 1**

Review draft minutes from December 14, 2007 meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2007 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 2**

Committee member concerns as a standing committee item

Mary Jean Rajda provided Committee members with a handout from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research that contained a list of vaccines and the current status of their availability without the preservative, thimerosal.

Neil Kamman mentioned that EPA approved the regional mercury TMDL on December 20. In approving the TMDL, EPA did not approve or disapprove of the out-of-state mercury allocation, but the underlying message was that out-of-region mercury sources will have to be reduced in order to achieve the desired mercury levels in the Northeast region's water bodies.

Peter Taylor mentioned that the American Dental Association released two dental filling fact sheets the week prior. Mr. Taylor indicated that the Vermont State Dental Society (VSIDS) had reviewed these fact sheets and agreed to add a reference to mercury emissions from crematoria due to dental amalgam fillings. Mr. Taylor also indicated that the brochures will be modified for use in Vermont and a package will be sent to each member dental office with copies of the brochures and a plastic display. The letter will request that these brochures be made available in patient waiting rooms.

Michael Bender suggested that a subcommittee be formed to provide comment to VSIDS on the content of the brochures.

Mary Jean Rajda indicated that the summary fact sheet did not include some important information that was present in the six-page brochure – in particular, that placement of amalgam requires removal of some healthy tooth.

Bill Bress, Mary Jean Rajda, and Michael Bender volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

It was agreed that a meeting would be scheduled in Burlington in January to formulate recommendations on the content of the brochures. The meeting will be open to the public and interested parties. The subcommittee will bring back proposed recommendations to the Advisory Committee at its next scheduled meeting.

An update was provided on the development of mercury spill and broken fluorescent bulb cleanup guidance being developed collaboratively by the Vermont Departments of Health, Environmental Conservation and Efficiency Vermont. Work continues on finalizing Vermont spill cleanup guidance for the general public and for first responders to inquiries from the public on mercury spills and broken fluorescent bulbs.

### **Agenda Item 3**

Review draft and finalize report to the legislature

The draft Committee report was reviewed and the following comments/changes to the report were agreed upon:

- Page 3: Reference tuna steak after canned white tuna in paragraph one under Health Effects of Mercury to more closely align with the FDA advisory.

- Karen Knaebel indicated that a section has been added to Section 3 since the draft was mailed entitled “Clean-Up Guidance for Mercury Spills and Compact Fluorescent Bulbs.” This was handed out at the meeting.
- Michael Bender suggested a change to the third sentence of the above section to read: “Some media coverage broken fluorescent bulbs may have generated misconceptions.
- Neil Kamman mentioned that he had minor changes to Section II of the report that he would e-mail to Gary Gulka. He also suggested a change in the ordering of two of the sections within Section II that was agreed upon by the Committee.
- In Dental Mercury in Section III, a sentence was added: “ADA supports the installation of amalgam separators as a BMP.” There was discussion on the wording of the percentage of compliance by dentists with BMPs. Gary Gulka agreed to look at the language.
- Section III- Dairy Manometers and Maple Sugar Thermometers: add references to solid waste districts and Chittenden Solid Waste District’s involvement.
- Section IV - Dental Mercury rationale: Add a sentence at the beginning: “There are three major pathways that have been evaluated by the Committee of mercury release and exposure related to dental amalgam: 1) amalgam use; 2) wastewater discharges from dental clinics; and 3) crematoria emissions.”
- Section IV: Dental Mercury rationale: A suggestion was made to omit language related to Denmark in paragraph two or clarify the language.
- Mercury Thermostat Recommendations in Executive Summary: A suggestion was made to add a sentence at the end of the second bullet, currently in the rationale section of mercury thermostat recommendations in Section 4, that thermostat pilot projects in Vermont and elsewhere have demonstrated the effectiveness of financial incentives.
- Section IV - Thimerosal recommendations: In second bullet, replace “in the next few years” with “by 2012”.
- Section IV - Fish mercury monitoring recommendation: In second bullet change to “\$40,000 per biennium” rather than per year.
- Section IV- Mercury-containing lamps recommendation: In second bullet, change to read: “6) innovative technologies such as light-emitting diodes (LEDs) that are mercury-free and use less toxic or non-toxic materials, have significantly longer life, and are more energy efficient than mercury containing lamps.”
- Section V - In Mercury-Containing Lamp bullet: add reference to the “entire life cycle of mercury-containing lamps.”

- Section V -In Mercury Emissions from Crematoria add: “and make recommendations for options to reduce emissions.”

A motion was made and seconded to accept the report with today’s changes. The report was accepted unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item 4**

Set date and agenda for next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for February 4, 2008 at 1:00 pm at the State House.

Agenda items for the next meeting:

Review of dental brochures and subcommittee recommendations

Develop annual committee work plan