



Pharmaceuticals and Efforts To Reduce Impact On Water Quality

Three of Metro JPA's participating agencies who are also members of the Regional Solid Waste Association (RSWA) will soon participate on a program to reduce pharmaceutical impact on wastewater systems. RSWA member cities are Poway, Del Mar and National City. Other County cities who are members are Encinitas, Escondido, Solana Beach and Vista.

According to Jim Howell, MetroTAC representative from Poway, "The committee is working from a 'white paper' right now but we are attempting to establish a comprehensive plan. One focus will be community outreach, whereby large pharmacy outlets such as COSTCO will be asked to instruct their customers not to dispose of old or unused medicines down sinks or toilets." Scott Tulloch said he will ask Alan Langworthy at the City of San Diego to share their efforts with the group.

During the past decade, there has been a growing concern about pharmaceuticals and their infiltration into wastewater. As testing technology improved there has become a greater awareness of prescription drugs such as hormones, antidepressants and antibiotics; over-the-counter medicines such as pain relievers, cold/flu remedies and antiseptics; and veterinary medicines in all water supplies. According to experts, it is not the concentration within the water but the consistency of its presence. Two key points are shared by most agencies: 1) unwanted medications should not be disposed down sinks, drains or toilets; and 2) unwanted or expired medications should be disposed of as hazardous waste.

"I believe that it is important for all agencies to participate in the findings of this program," said JPA Chair Henry Abarbanel. "It seems to me that this could be a precursor to potential legislation, so to organize the San Diego region would behoove us all."

El Cajon Mayor Mark Lewis suggested that the group contact waste companies such as Allied Waste Co. because, "they handle the contracts with the cities and any mitigation measures that RSWA might suggest would be more successful if they had 'buy-in' from the disposal companies first."

The Metro JPA established an ad-hoc committee of Merrilee Boyack of Poway, Henry Abarbanel of Del Mar and Augie Scalzitti of Padre Dam Municipal Water District to participate and report back to the Metro Commission.

For more background information, please refer to the July 2005 issue of *Western City* magazine and its article by Karin D. North called, *Keeping Surface Waters Drug Free: The New Water Quality Challenge*. www.cacities.org

MWWD's Scott Tulloch will Become Chula Vista's Director of Engineering in December



Metro Wastewater Director, Scott Tulloch who has been credited with reducing record sewage spills will leave the City of San Diego for the City of Chula Vista to become director of engineering. Tulloch will manage infrastructure planning and will oversee a major bay-front development in Chula Vista.

"I can speak for all of the commissioners on the Metro JPA in that we have really valued working with Scott," said Henry Abarbanel, chairman. "His calm and collaborative style has been an asset to our organization. We hope that we will see him as a representative to the Metro Commission for the City of Chula Vista, and perhaps Chula Vista will see fit to join the Metro JPA."

Next Meetings Scheduled

The final meeting of 2006 for the Metro JPA and Commission will be Thursday, December 7 at 12 noon in the Metropolitan Operations Center (MOC II) auditorium, 9192 Topaz Way. The Technical Advisory Committee (Metro TAC) will meet at the same place Wednesday, November 15 at 11 a.m.

Metro Commissioners

Councilmember Henry Abarbanel, Del Mar - Chair
 Councilmember Mayda Winter, Imperial Beach - Vice Chair
 Mayor Steven Padilla, Chula Vista *
 Councilmember Frank Tierney, Coronado
 Mayor Mark Lewis, El Cajon
 Councilmember Ernest Ewin, La Mesa
 Councilmember Jerry Jones, Lemon Grove Sanitation District
 Councilmember Luis Natividad, National City
 Councilmember Merrilee Boyack, Poway
 Mark Robak, Otay Water District
 Augie Scalzitti, Padre Dam Municipal Water District
 Supervisor Dianne Jacob, County of San Diego
 * Member of Metro Commission but not Metro JPA

Metro JPA News Brief Editors:

Julie Walke, 858/729-9933, juliewalkecomm@sbcglobal.net
 Roger Conlee, 619/795-7785, rconlee@cox.net