

## MEMORANDUM

To: Groundwater Advisory Council  
From: H. Bokuniewicz  
Concerning: Minutes of the meeting of 8 April 2002  
Date: April 10, 2002

### PRESENT

N. Bartilucci  
H. Bokuniewicz  
J. Milazzo  
B. Nemickas  
M. Nofi  
D. Paquette  
W. Prospect  
K. Randazzo  
P. Ramirez  
S. Robbins  
K. Roberts  
W. Spitz

### REGRETS

S. Jones  
L. Koppelman  
G. Proios  
M. Schoonen

1. There were no comments on the minutes of the last meeting.
2. The Suffolk County Legislature held a hearing on pesticides. It was hoped that this would help publicize the results of the Health Department's pesticide work. They were interested to learn that there are no U.S. standards for many of these compounds although some have standards set in Europe and some pesticides in use here are banned in Europe. There will likely be a second hearing in May.

There was some discussion about whether or not the local government could set their own standards without pre-empting higher authorities. It may be that they can if the existing standards do not originate with the state but are imposed by the federal government (EPA). The legislature might consider imposing Suffolk County standards perhaps based on European studies or push for the generation of local standards.

As we had discussed at previous meetings, the concern is over private wells. Private well owners out east might be prudent to have their wells tested. However, the Health Department's testing costs about \$250 well while a private company might run \$1,000 to \$2,000. The legislature might consider some form of well-owner assistance. This has not been an issue in Nassau County.

The report is now being revised. The Suffolk County Department of Health Services is a contractor to the NYS DEC. Some of the revisions requested by DEC include the

distinction between banned pesticides and those still in use, and avoidance of recommendations about inadequate standards. There were not many violations of existing standards and most exceedences were from the older pesticides, however, as we have discussed previously, many compounds fall under the “50 ppb” unspecific standard.

The revisions seemed to be based on a difference in agency perspective. The DEC may be viewing the study as an environmental project while the Health Department sees it in terms of a potential public health risk. It would be prudent to take some measures for health concerns, but it’s difficult to declare a problem without some plan of action. Several remedial courses of action had been discussed: more exhaustive sampling, filters and “filter districts”, expansion of the public water supply, or merely advising private well owners to use bottled water for drinking. Testing will be expensive and likely to confirm the extent of the problem. There is uncertainty about how well filters handle multiple breakdown products. Some laboratory test would be appropriate. Since these pesticides are registered on LI, there is probably some requirements that they not impact groundwater. If compounds are above MCL’s, there may be a case for the industry sponsoring a filtering program, even if it is on a voluntary basis. Such a settlement was reached with Union Carbide for temix. Unfortunately, the industry might be expected to willingly support filtering in a few isolated cases but not on a large scale.

It may be that transporting public water from the Pine Barrens is now cost effective. This probability probably needs to be re-examined but it will certainly be seen unfavorably as “growth inducing”. It was suggested that the Master Plan done in 1987 under the Comprehensive Water Research Study should be revised in order to specifically deal with these issues. Although the ’87 plan was never adopted by the legislature, a revised plan may help to move towards a resolution of the problem.

3. The SWAP public meetings were held a few weeks ago, but poorly attended by the public. Doug has provided a copy of the Power Point presentation of the Health Department on SWAP. I can send it along electronically to the committee members who would like to see it. The water suppliers may be out of touch with the project because they don’t see potential impacts. Maybe interest will pick-up when some results are generated.
4. The idea of a centralized database was briefly discussed. While this is still a good concept, it is resource limited. We’ve taken a very small step with the precipitation data (Joy Dike’s project). Parts of that data have been provided to SWAP but there are still a few problems getting it on the WEB and the Islip/MacArthur data is still missing for the most part.
5. NY City is in the first stage of a drought emergency. The old Jamaica water district is now pumping 10 MGD. They are allowed to pump 60 MGD and plan to go to 50 MGD over the next 4 months just for the drought emergency. Thirty-six wells would be involved. Wells capable of producing 21.7 MGD are already permitted. Three more wells capable of 4 MGD have to be resampled to earn DOH approvals. Nine wells require upgrades but could eventually provide 10.3 MGD and eleven others (15.4 MGD) need new treatment facilities. Customers in the service area have been resisting any increased reliance on groundwater. There is concern over the quality of

the water. In the past, aesthetic issues like odor, staining of laundry, etc. were raised. The rates were also inequitable; groundwater costing the consumer more.

Nassau and Suffolk are still officially at the first level of drought warning. The warnings were not upgraded with those for NYC. Water levels are down, but there are no public water supply problems. Over-irrigation, however, may become a supply problem this summer and forest fire watches are appropriate. The SWAP include model results for 10 and 60 MGD at the Nassau border but there is no special SWAP process yet for Brooklyn and Queens.

In the long term, there remain concerns in NYC about using Hudson River water in drought emergencies because of the zebra mussel invasion. As a result use of the Lloyd aquifer is being considered. There are a few wells on LI drawing from the Lloyd in Long Beach, Manhasset and, perhaps, Lake Success.

Dan Cohen (Malcolm Pernie in Queens), and Bill Yulinski (NYC-DEP) organizing a trip to visit Station 6 next Wednesday.

6. The cuts in the federal budget for the USGS will not have big impacts for Long Island, although NWQA and National Toxics program remain cut. The USGS currently has cooperative programs with Brooklyn-Queens and in Suffolk for monitoring. Nassau does some of its own. The SCWA coop in Suffolk is up for renewal next year.
7. Dr. E. Mike Thurman, Director of the U.S.G.S's Organic Geochemistry Research Group based in Kansas will be visiting the University early in May. I will notify everyone of his visit and seminars and I'll try to arrange time for anyone who wants to meet with him.
8. The meeting in May will be devoted to the seepage experiment in Shelter Island. It will be held in the evening on Shelter Island but the date is a little uncertain, either Wednesday the 22 or Thursday the 23. More later. Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday 17 June.