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The Method Update Rule/2017: Penny Semberski (Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality) Arkansas Waterworks and Water Environment Association Presentation

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Ms. Penny Semberski undertook a presentation at the Arkansas Waterworks and Water Environment Association titled:

The Method Update Rule – 2017 (Does this affect me? How?)(“Presentation”)

Ms. Semberski is a Quality Assurance Officer in the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (“ADEQ”) Laboratory and Monitoring Service.

The Presentation explained the purpose of “standard methods” and further noted that “updated methods” refer to quality control sections citing:

1020 – Chemical and Radiochemical analyses

2020 – 2000 Methods (Turbidity, Acidity, Hardness, Solids, etc.)

3020 – 3000 (Metals) and 4000 (Inorganic Nonmetallic Methods)

9020 – Microbiology

Ms. Semberski described “Micro Methods” changes referencing SM 9222B (Standard Total Coliforms). Also described were SM 9222-D-2006 (Thermotolerant [Fecal] coliform Membrane Filter Procedure).

Updated United States Environmental Protection Agency methods referenced included:

- Pesticides and PCBs noting 608 is now 608.3 (The changes were described.)

The Presentation also addressed:

- VOA and SVOA Organics
- Volatiles (624 is now 624.1)
- Semivolatiles (625 is now 625.1)
- ASTM and USGS Methods
- Noting approval of new versions of currently approved ASTM Methods
- New USGS Methods for the “Colorimetric Determination of Nitrate Plus Nitrite in Water by Enzymatic Reduction, Automated Discrete Analyzer Method

- Approved ATPS

Various corrections made to the Code of Federal Regulations (40) were also identified.

As to MDL determinations, Ms. Semberski noted that basics remain the same:

- MDL – the lowest result that reliably indicates the analyte is in the sample
- Calculation is unchanged
- The entire analytical process is incorporated – extraction, digestion

Differences in terms of definition (slight change) were referenced.

Corrections also included:

- Alternative Test Procedures Section (error in 2012 Method Update Rule appeared to give State permitting authorities the authority to approve ATPS for limited use [stated to be never the intent])
- Description of the rationale for the new MDL determination procedure
- MDL Determination
- Description of what is different
- Inclusion of Method Blanks
- Initial Determination of MDL
- Spiked Samples

Discussion of ongoing data collection noting:

- Only use data associated with valid calibrations and batch QC
- Collection of MB Data
- Annual verification of MDL
- MDL Procedure Implementation Issues
- Different processes/new mind-set
- Remembering to analyze quarterly spikes
- Keeping up with the data
- Possibly hundreds of method blank results to consider
- Multi-analyte tests such as volatiles, semivolatiles a bit cumbersome
- Learn the calculation rules

[A copy of the Presentation can be downloaded here.](#)