



## Local Government Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

May 15, 2020

11:00am-2:00pm ET

The Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee (SCAS) met on May 15, 2020 via conference call. The purpose of this meeting was to encourage engagement and to not fully cancel the planned in-person meeting. The meeting also served as a platform to vote on the Risk Communication Report. Administrator Wheeler, Associate Deputy Administrator Doug Benevento, five Assistant Administrators, Senior Agriculture Advisor Carrie Meadows, and all ten Regional Administrators presented. The committee and subcommittee then deliberated and voted on the Risk Communication Report.

Following welcoming words from LGAC Chairwoman Kitty Barnes and Vice-Chairman Jeff Witte, Administrator Andrew Wheeler started the meeting by addressing multiple topics with the committee members. He addressed how the Agency is dealing with COVID, mentioning how the Agency has donated thousands of pieces of personal protective equipment. He released a letter on March 27<sup>th</sup> asking municipalities to designate employees working in water treatment as essential. The Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention has been working on updating its disinfectant list of products that are likely effective against COVID-19. The list has increased from 60 products on March 5<sup>th</sup> to over 400 products today. On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the EPA announced an enforcement discretion policy for COVID-19. Administrator Wheeler explained the details behind the discretion enforcement policy, trying to clarify some of the misnomers.

One of the main focus areas of the Administrator has been to tear down silos between the EPA programs that have been established over the years. This is done to improve communication between separate programs. Through this the Agency can work towards one united EPA, as opposed to a water silo, air silo, chemical silo, a waste silo. The Agency is working to be as clear as possible and to be able to provide regulatory certainty. One way this is being done is by increasing attention to risk communication. Risk communication should be meaningful, understandable, and actionable.

Before taking questions, the Administrator went on to discuss Brownfield grants, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and information behind particulate matter and ozone review. He talked about the Final Navigable Waters Protection Rule, and funding for clean water and wastewater infrastructure. Following his discussion, Chairwoman Kitty Barnes asked for him to discuss the Agency's PFAS response, which he went into detail providing a background on. He finished his session by going back to the COVID-19 effort that the Agency has been working on.



Following the Administrator's remarks the meeting moved on with a roll call. 26 members of LGAC and/or SCAS were present at the time of the roll call. Associate Administrator for the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations Joseph Brazauskas, Assistant Deputy Associate Administrator Britt Carter, and Director of State and Local Relations Jack Bowles all gave brief introductions on behalf of the EPA and the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations.

The Assistant Administrator Panel started with Peter Wright of the Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM). Assistant Administrator Wright discussed OLEM's response to emergencies and how they partner with local governments. He outlined some important initiatives, such as the National Recycling Framework, and their response to COVID-19. Food waste was examined through a COVID-19 lens as well. Wright discussed America Recycles Day and went over several updates from the Brownfields Program.

Assistant Administrator Susan Bodine of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) started by discussing the enforcement digression policy released on March 26<sup>th</sup> to try and dispel some of the myths around the policy. The policy isn't an open permit to pollute and increase emissions, it's in place to help with routine monitoring in some circumstances for those who can prove that COVID-19 has impacted their ability to monitor. OECA is also working to get fraudulent products off the market that are claiming false efficacy against COVID-19.

Assistant Administrator Dave Ross of the Office of Water (OW) started by discussing the successes of the Office of Water in helping clean the nation's waterways in the 50 years of the Agency's existence. There is funding available to state and local governments to improve water infrastructure through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, or WIFIA Program, as well as the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loans. OW is working to minimize the effects of COVID-19 in water treatment and regulation, is working to regulate and mitigate PFAS in drinking water and communicate updates to the Lead and Copper Rule.

Assistant Administrator Anne Idsal discussed the improvements to air quality across the country since the inception of the Clean Air Act. She wished to communicate that the Agency is still working to regulate air quality during COVID-19 and mentioned the March 30<sup>th</sup> memo which discusses how to balance mission essential functions of ambient air monitoring with local orders. Idsal went into National Ambient Air Quality Standards implementation, providing details of where the Agency currently stands with those. She also discussed other projects going on in the office.

Assistant Administrator Alex Dunn went over the role that the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) is playing in the COVID-19 effort through regulating the products used to mitigate the virus on most non-human surfaces. The office recently released an online tool to help sort the disinfectant products to be used to fight COVID-19. OCSPP also



works on regulating agricultural pesticides, fungicides, rodenticides, and other toxic chemicals on the industrial side.

Senior Agriculture Advisor Carrie Meadows discussed how important agricultural concerns are at the Agency. The EPA is aware of issues that COVID-19 has on the food supply and agricultural supply chain and working to identify solutions. The Agency is soliciting nominees to serve on the farm, ranch, and rural communities committee.

Following the AA panel all ten Regional Administrators addressed the group. Each gave their personal background and discussed why they enjoy working in their position. They also recognized the members in their regions and thanked them for their contributions. There was no time for the Regional Administrators to get in depth into any big projects that they are working on, nor time for members to ask any specific questions.

Associate Deputy Administrator Doug Benevento thanked members for calling in and called out members from his home Region 8. He touched on COVID-19 related efforts, including the Office of Research and Development's research into a longer lasting disinfectants. He also discussed issues like PFAS, air quality improvement, and the overall importance of hearing from state and local stakeholders.

The meeting ended with a short discussion and then vote on the Risk Communication Report. With little discussion and no edits, the Report passed unanimously. Several members commended the effort of the Revitalizing Communities Workgroup for putting the Report together.



### **LGAC Members Present:**

1. Hon. Jose Aponte Dalmau
2. Mr. Rodney Bartlett
3. Mr. Bruce Bracker
4. Hon. Jeff Branick
5. Hon. Melissa Cribbins
6. Hon. Mark Fox (Representative sent: Lisa Longside)
7. Mr. Brian Fulton
8. Hon. Evan Hansen
9. Hon. Joan Lee
10. Hon. Carvel Lewis
11. Hon. Gabriel Lopez
12. Hon. Ryan Mackenzie
13. Ms. Ann Malley
14. Hon. Bill McMurray
15. Hon. Ron Poltak
16. Hon. Cynthia Pratt
17. Hon. Carmen Ramirez
18. Hon. Victoria Reinhardt
19. Sec. Michael Scuse
20. Hon. Matt Surrency
21. Hon. Libby Szabo
22. Mr. Jai Templeton
23. Hon. Paul TenHaken
24. Hon. Eric Thompson
25. Hon. Shawn Yanity
26. Mr. William Youngblood



*We hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the foregoing summary is accurate and complete.*

**Commissioner Kitty Barnes  
Chairwoman  
Local Government Advisory Committee**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kitty Barnes".

Date: *June 11, 2020*

**Joseph Daniels  
Designated Federal Officer  
Local Government Advisory Committee  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Daniels".

Date: June 11, 2020

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