Toxic Contaminants Workgroup

Wednesday, January 14th, 2026
1:00 – 2:50 PM

Visit the meeting webpage for meeting materials and additional information.

Purpose: This is the monthly meeting of the Toxic Contaminants Workgroup (TCW). Main agenda items included a presentation of an Accumulated Wastewater Map Viewer in the Potomac River watershed, a presentation of a 6PPD-q Heat Map Tool, and an update on Beyond 2025 and upcoming plans for TCW.

Minutes

I. Welcome and Announcements

Lead: Tony Timpano, TCW Co-Chair

Keith Bollt, TCW Coordinator shared that the Clean Water Goal Team (CWGT, which the WQGIT is transitioning into) has a call for Co-Chair nominations out until January 16. He shared two recent publications linked in the agenda. Petra Baldwin, TCW Staffer gave an update on the Toxic Contaminants Policy & Prevention (TCPP) Indicator, which was updated in 2025 with data from jurisdictions' 2024 Integrated Reports. The update is published temporarily on ChesapeakeData while ChesapeakeProgress is being transitioned to fit the revised *Watershed Agreement*'s goals and outcomes. A blog post for the TCPP indicator update will be published soon and the Bay Barometer is expected to be published in mid-February.

Decisions:

1. TCW members approved the October 2025 TCW/LLWG Joint Meeting Minutes.

II. Co-Chair and At-Large Member Nominations

Lead: Tony Timpano, TCW Co-Chair

Tony shared that a call for nominations was sent to fill the 5 vacant at-large member positions and 1 vacant co-chair position on the TCW. The two nominees received so far for at-large member positions were introduced and their bios are posted. Keith shared that we have been asked to postpone confirmations of new membership until the structure and governance changes to CBP moving forward after the revised *Watershed Agreement* are worked out more.

Actions:

1. The call for nominations for the vacant co-chair position and vacant at-large member positions will remain open. If you're interested, please email Petra (Baldwin.Petra@epa.gov)
2. TCW members will vote to confirm nominees at a future meeting.

III. Potomac Accumulated Wastewater Viewer

Lead: Sam Miller, USGS

Sam gave a presentation on an accumulated wastewater model to estimate the proportion of wastewater in the Potomac River watershed and estimate the contributions for pesticides and PFAS concentrations from point-sources. The PFAS study also incorporated a non-point source modeling tool to examine catchment vulnerability scores to PFAS contamination. Sam gave an overview of the two studies that supported this work, including background context, sampling sites, methods, and results. He then gave a demo of the map viewer built from these studies which shows USGS stream gauges' median annual accumulated wastewater, wastewater outfalls, and modeled predictions of PFAS and pesticide loads and concentrations from wastewater.

Materials: Presentation, Map Viewer, PFAS and Wastewater Paper, Pesticides and Wastewater Paper, Potomac Wastewater Mapper

Actions:

1. If you have any questions on the studies or map viewer Sam shared, please reach out to him (smiller@usgs.gov).

Discussion:

- Norm Goulet, NVRC asked (in chat) if VADEQ's PFAS monitoring data was used to compare the predicted values and shared that there has been a good deal of PFAS monitoring in Northern Virginia for the drinking water program.
    - Sam responded that the sites in the studies were chosen to include both USGS gauges and VADEQ monitoring sites. He added that the increase in PFAS data in recent years is very helpful, especially having more data from wastewater facilities.
    - Tony Timpano and Amanda Shaver, VADEQ shared VADEQ's PFAS Dashboard for people to learn more about the PFAS monitoring occurring in Virginia.
- Sean Lynch, MPEN asked (in chat) whether the workgroup is aware the MDA has adopted the OPP definition of PFAS for pesticides and whether this would impact reporting of PFAS. Tony responded that he's not sure we have the answer to the latter at the moment, and we'll likely find out going forward as we continue to monitor and report.

IV. 6ppd-q Heat Map Tool

Lead: Stephanie Gordon, USGS

Stephanie presented a spatial heat map tool that shows where likely sources of 6PPD-q exist across the US to help prioritize sampling efforts and pinpoint locations with susceptible fish and relevant sources. The tool looks at sources and landscape characteristics, which were summarized and normalized at the small watershed scale, weighted based on their predicted impact and contribution and then summed together into a heat index. Where available, modeled fish presence was also included in the map to assess vulnerability to fish. Stephanie gave a demo of the mapper,

noting that additional data can be imported to view your own data or monitoring locations alongside the heat index.

Stephanie shared preliminary results from studies occurring in the Chesapeake Bay, including a spatial study of sites from the Non-Tidal Network with selection based on EBTJV trout streams and Index values to evaluate occurrence and distribution of 6PPD-q. A study in DC is also looking at high temporal sampling with autosamplers during storms at urban sites. Stephanie shared some directions for future work, including refining regional and species-specific focal areas, incorporating more data on tire dump locations and traffic counts, expanding communication of the tool, and piloting incorporating field data to move into predictive modeling.

Materials: Presentation, Mapping Tool, Sources and relative heat index of 6PPD-quinone

Actions:

1. If you have any questions on the heat map Stephanie shared or ideas for future considerations and data to incorporate, please reach out to her (sgordon@usgs.gov).

Discussion:

- Multiple people shared desire to collaborate on work with this heat index, including Carys Mitchelmore (UMCES), Luanne Steffy (SRBC), and Kelly Smalling (USGS).
- Tony Timpano asked if there were plans for future studies and when updates to the mapper with new data may occur.
    - Stephanie responded that there is an upcoming study planned in 2027, which Rebecca Gorney is leading. Data will be added to the mapper when it is available and in the future there will hopefully be regular updates.
    - Rebecca Gorney, USGS added that they are looking to focus on brook trout susceptibility in the 2027 study, so are looking for sites where populations are at risk/decline.
- Tony asked what the general range of heat index values was for the Chesapeake Bay region. Stephanie responded that there were some outliers nationally in the Detroit, MI area so the overall scale goes much higher than any values found in the Chesapeake. In the Chesapeake, the highest values went up to approx. 2 on the index.

V. Beyond 2025 Updates and TCW Planning

Lead: Tony Timpano, TCW Co-Chair and Keith Bollt, TCW Coordinator

Keith presented recent updates from CBP including the adoption of a revised *Watershed Agreement* at the Dec 2, 2025 Executive Council meeting, the time horizon and intermittent checkpoints for the commitments in the revised *Watershed Agreement*, expected changes to the Program's structure and governance, and the language for the new, combined Toxic and Emerging Contaminants Outcome. Tony then walked through a preliminary framework of how TCW may frame our actions towards our outcome and maximize value to partners. Tony led a discussion with workgroup members on initial ideas for the role of TCW and potential topics and products to focus our information sharing target.

Actions:

1. If you have any thoughts on TCW's focus and role, especially on what topics and products should come through and from our information sharing, please email Tony (Anthony.Timpano@deq.virginia.gov), Keith (Bollt.Keith@epa.gov) and Petra (Baldwin.Petra@epa.gov). This conversation will continue as we have more clarity on TCW's place in the new CWGT and direction on Management Strategy development.

Discussion:

- John Cargill, DNREC shared a desire for going beyond sharing lessons learned to producing actionable products and work that can be used by other jurisdictions and groups, e.g. building on the ARP (Advance Restoration Plan) framework that EPA worked on with Delaware.
- Keith Bollt, TCW Coordinator noted the importance of being in alignment between workgroup members and higher levels of CBP leadership to ensure there is buy-in from both ends to make the work we do successful.
- Kelly Somers, EPA R3 asked (in chat) how similar or different data collection and interpretation of toxic data is among jurisdictions and how much of a challenge that poses to aggregating and interpreting toxics data (e.g. PFAS) throughout the watershed.
    - Emily Majcher, USGS noted (in chat) that USGS is doing that aggregation work for PFAS already. Kelly responded she mentioned PFAS since it is noted as a potential information sharing target, so it's great that synthesis is already occurring.
    - Tony responded that the challenge and need for comparability and consistency across the watershed is a prime example of the types of efforts that the workgroup can collaborate on to ensure we're all speaking the same language to each other and to stakeholders.
- Tony reflected on the current TCPP Indicator and noted the importance of also having standard categories and definitions of things like "impairment" is difficult when aggregating data across jurisdictions. A transformation of the indicator for our new outcome will be important for this reason and because it was previously only for Policy and Prevention. Future discussion can explore what tracking information sharing could look like.
- Amanda Shaver, VADEQ suggested that, if appropriate, leads should be identified in Management Strategies to ensure someone is tied to specific actions for accountability and sustained progress on it. She also noted the schedule of 1-3 years for check-ins on progress is a good timeline for projects.
    - Tony responded that leads for actions will hopefully manifest organically, but if not then identifying leads and being more deliberate and structured with our effort can help so we know what we've done and can communicate it well.
- Kelly asked what level of specificity, e.g. calling out specific contaminants like plastics, is expected for the actions. Kelly works in the plastics space and is on the Plastic Pollution Action Team (PPAT).
    - Tony responded that the outcome language calls out a list of multiple contaminants, but it seems it is up to us to determine if we want to pinpoint specific contaminants within that list for concerted time periods or keep things broad.

- Kelly added that if specific contaminants are focused on, we will want to consider the commitment of resources that will be required for work within those areas.
- Tony recognized that for the short term in our regular meetings we will focus on the broader list of priority contaminants identified in the outcome. Potentially, an assessment of work done could accumulate what contaminants or topics workgroup members had priority concern for and how the workgroup addressed those gaps and enabled jurisdictions' work on those contaminants.

VI. Wrap-Up

Lead: Petra Baldwin, TCW Staffer

VII. Adjourn

Next Meeting: February 11, 2026

Attendees:

Tony Timpano, VADEQ (TCW Co-Chair)
Keith Bollt, EPA CBPO (TCW Coordinator)
Petra Baldwin, CRC (TCW Staffer)
Sam Miller, USGS
Stephanie Gordon, USGS
Cassie Davis, NYSDEC
Amanda Shaver, VADEQ
John Cargill, DNREC
Sakinat Ahmad, DNREC
Nick Murray, WVDEP
Len Schugam, MDE
Josh Lookenbill, PADEP
Maggie Woodward, CBC
Raffy Marano, EPA R3
Sushanth Gupta, MWCOG
Kelly Somers, EPA R3
Emily Majcher, USGS
Rebecca Gorney, USGS
Kelly Smalling, USGS
Carol Howe, USGS
Vicki Blazer, USGS
Zack Hopkins, USGS
Rachael Lane, USGS
Lisa Ragain, MWCOG
Carys Mitchelmore, UMCES
Tony Cario, VADEQ
Tish Robertson, VADEQ
Max Wheeler, VADEQ
Tom Parham, MD DNR
John Healey, EPA
Sean Lynch, MPEN
Luanne Steffy, SRBC
James Shallenberger, SRBC
Lisa Ochsenhirt, AquaLaw
Andrew Heyes