

## **Laboratory Certification & Registration Standards Review Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, September 23, 2025**

### **Attendance (30)**

- *9 Council members (9)*: Kris Rigotti (industrial rep), Jon Anderson (commercial rep), Matt Schmeichel (public water utility rep), Shawn Keesey (small WWTP rep), Na Zhang (WSLH rep), Jennifer Buchholz (solid & hazardous waste disposal rep), Christine LesCamela (Chair – large WWTP rep), Tony Roche (demonstrated interest rep), Alex Zenner (livestock farmer rep)
  - Absent: None
- *6 DNR staff (5)*: Zana Sijan (manager), Tom Trainor (chemist), Brenda Anderson (auditor), Rebecca Fahney (lab coordinator), Matthew Stowe (auditor)
  - Absent: Patty Doerflinger (auditor)
- *Public Guests (16)*: Amanda Kordus (Badger), Autumn Farrell (WEC), Juli Bowling (WEAL), Jessica McCammon (Madison MSD), Julie Klimek (Davy), Mike Tienor (NLS), Paul Junio (Pace), RT Kruger (NLS), Kristen Hannon (WSLH), Royce Rissen (WSLH), Rick Mealy, Andrew Dennerlein (Racine WWTP), John Larson (Badger), Meredith Polar (AgSource), Steve Hefter (NLS), Alfredo Sotomayor (Milw MSD)

### **Agenda Repair**

- No agenda repair.

### **Review and approve minutes from April 22, 2025**

- Alex made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Shawn seconded the motion. No oppositions were received from the Council members. Christine indicated that the minutes were approved as written.

### **Council operation changes and council member updates**

- Council operation changes
  - Zana, with the help of DNR's Chief Legal Counsel, reviewed WI State Statute requirements and WI Open Meetings Law on Statutory Council operations. Three changes are being implemented to the operations of the Council to better align with WI State Statutes and WI Open Meetings Law.
    - 1) Meeting minutes will include detailed record keeping of motions made. This includes recording who initiated and seconded the motion, the outcome of any vote on the motion and if a roll-call vote, how each member voted.
    - 2) Council meeting information which includes a call for agenda items, program metrics, final agenda, and the previous meeting draft minutes will be emailed to Council members only, before an upcoming meeting.  
Final agendas, final meeting minutes, and upcoming meeting logistics will continue to be available on the Laboratory Certification website- Laboratory Standards Review Council page.

- 3) Public participation on agenda items may be presented to the Council during the public comment period. Public comments are to be kept to 5 minutes. The public is encouraged to communicate with their Council Representative on topics that they would like to have added to future meeting agendas to be discussed by Council Representatives.

Any questions on Council operations should be directed to Zana.

- Council members update
  - Zana announced that Brooke Klingbeil has taken a new role with the WDNR, stepping down from her role as the Council's Demonstrated Interest Representative.
  - DOA has appointed Tony Roche from WRWA to Council's Demonstrated Interest Representative.
    - Tony introduced himself. He is a wastewater technician at Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA), covering the western portion of WI. In his role, he provides technical assistance on report writing and documentation, including emergency response and CMONs, and he also supports laboratories with any lab issues, such as help with calibration curves.
- Council members Vice-Chair election
  - Christine opened the floor for Vice-Chair nominations. Christine made a motion to elect Jon Anderson to Vice-Chair. Shawn seconded the motion. There were no Council member oppositions. Christine announced that the nomination of Jon Anderson as the new Vice-Chair of the Council was approved.

#### Lab Cert program auditing status report

- Large Scope Labs: July 2024 – June 2025 (FY25 completed)
  - 97% labs were audited, 91% reports were submitted, 80% audits were closed.
  - 97% of reports were submitted in 60 days.
- Small Scope Labs: July 2024 – June 2025 (FY25 completed)
  - 115% labs were audited, 98% reports were submitted, 103% audits were closed.
  - 98% of reports were submitted in 30 days.
- Large Scope Labs: July 2025 – August 2025 (partial FY26)
  - 80% labs were audited, 40% reports were submitted, 20% audits were closed.
- Small Scope Labs: July 2025 – August 2025 (partial FY26)
  - 89% labs were audited, 167% reports were submitted, 133% audits were closed.
  - 100% of reports were submitted in 30 days.
- Audit backlog has increased from 8 labs to 13 labs for large scope audits. Audit backlog has decreased from 23 labs to 19 labs.
- There are two labs with audits that are still open that are older than 1 year from report submittal; both are waiting on lab response.
- 13 large scope labs are overdue for their audit; 11 of these have been scheduled. 19 small scope labs are overdue; 15 of these have been scheduled.

## Other business

- Lab Cert staff update
  - Zana provided an update on the vacant auditor position. The Program recruited for an advanced chemist to fill the Lab Auditor vacancy. Three individuals made it to in-person interviews, and an offer was extended to the top candidate. The candidate declined the offer. As this was a failed recruitment, the Program plans to repost and complete another round of recruitment with the goal to have the new auditor start in early 2026. The Program will continue to experience workload challenges in 2026 due to being understaffed and accounting for the time that it will take to hire and train a new auditor.
- EPA SDWA CO chemistry course update
  - Zana notified the Council that Brenda and Matt attended the EPA Safe Drinking Water Training Course for Chemistry (inorganics and organics) from July 21-24, 2025. Both auditors passed the course and are now officially certified drinking water certification officers.
- WWOA annual conference
  - Zana provided an update that the Program will be presenting at the WWOA conference. Zana and Brenda will be in-person leading two presentations on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. “Stuff Happens. Don’t cover it up, write it up!” will be presented at 1:45 pm, followed by “Ask the Auditor” at 2:30 pm. DNR travel is limited at this time due to budget constraints. Other Program staff will attend virtually.
- New labs to Lab Cert program
  - Tom notified Council that no new large or small scope labs have been added to the program since the last meeting. Two new Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) testing labs have applied, and audits have been completed for RMB Burnsville (MN) and ALS Holland (MI). RMB Burnsville is now certified for WET testing in WI and ALS is approximately 1 - 2 months out from being certified to perform WET tests.
- Labs withdrawing from Lab Cert program
  - Tom notified Council of several labs that have decided to withdraw from the program between April 1 – September 30, 2025: SRN Testing Services (IL), Eurofins Burlington (VT), Hazel Green WWTP and Public Health Madison-Dane County.
- 2025-2026 Renewal
  - Tom provided an update on the 2026 accreditation year, which was completed on August 31, 2025. Several labs had to withdraw parameters due to failed PTs to continue with their accreditation. Tom will be sending out an email to labs in February 2026 to ask for updated billing and main contacts.
- 2025 annual summary of approved PT providers and required PTs
  - Tom provided an update on PT providers. Currently there are seven Wisconsin approved PT providers, this will drop to six as of January 1, 2026, as the New York Department of Health is discontinuing all PT business. The list of required PTs is provided on the Lab Cert website, there have not been any significant changes.

## Council member issues

- Christine asked for clarification on the training process for a new auditor and the time frame for when they would begin completing audits. Zana said that the DNR follows an extensive training regime for new auditors. The new auditor starts by shadowing each current auditor at both large and small scope laboratories. Then the roles are reversed, and the new auditor takes the lead on auditing large and small scope labs and is then shadowed by each current auditor. The Program's goal is to recruit this position as an advanced chemist, which requires professional experience in a laboratory setting. The goal is to hire someone that has the required skill set and can come up to speed quicker. The Program expects that a new hire may start to audit laboratories independently after 3-4 months of training. However, as the new auditor is learning, audits may be slower and often take more effort to review, including answering questions and training on the job.
- Public comment period
  - No comments from the public participants.

Next meeting date November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 9:00 AM