

2012 Annual Report

Safe Drinking Water Workgroup

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Safe Drinking Water Workgroup

Summary

Work is progressing on the Safe-to-Drink Portal as a welcomed addition to the My Water Quality web sites. The Safe Drinking Water Workgroup has met and agreed upon eight questions on which to focus content, with concurrence of the California Water Quality Monitoring Council, to answer “Is my water safe to drink?” To date, a draft Storyboard has been developed by the Water Education Foundation (WEF) based upon answers to the focus questions, the basis provided by workgroup participants, with a visual site mockup constructed by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP). It is anticipated that a presentation of the storyboard will be presented to the Council at their March meeting.

Background

Efforts of the Safe Drinking Water Workgroup began in November 2011 at which time a vision of the portal design and content was presented by the Drinking Water Program (DWP) at the Department of Public Health (CDPH). Highlighting each member agency’s role in bringing safe drinking water to the user, including water supply reliability, source water quality assessment and protection, water treatment, and finished water quality testing, the workgroup identified a key concern of obtaining sufficient resources to effectively design the site, such as a funding mechanism involving a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) tied to one or more Cal/EPA enforcement actions. Identification of a potential SEP project proved ineffective, and with good fortune, for ‘Budget Dust’ from the State Water Board’s FY 2011-12 budget in the amount of \$50 K has since provided sufficient monies with which to fund the project. The WEF, as a subcontractor to SCCWRP, is tasked with the design of the site – to tell the story of how safe, clean, potable water is provided to California consumers.

Work Efforts

The SWRCB has augmented an existing contract with the SCCWRP to include site design, construction, and launch of the Safe-to-Drink Portal. Key staff to the effort includes representatives of the CDPH Drinking Water Program, this program supplying key information about the quality of drinking water and characterization of drinking water providers. An agreement was also entered into with the WEF for researching,

procuring, and copywriting site content as well as facilitating the eventual marketing of the site to various audiences.

The Workgroup met in July to formulate focus questions, per the Council's portal guidelines, and decided on developing content in answer to the following questions:

- Is my tap water safe to drink?
- What is the source of my water?
- What is in my drinking water?
- How is my drinking water treated?
- How is my drinking water made safe?
- What are the government standards?
- What agencies are involved with water quality protection?
- How safe is groundwater? Surface Water?
- Drinking water FAQ
- Who do I contact about my water?

Questions and example content was presented to the Council at its January meeting; the question focus points being ratified. Since the time of the meeting, proposed site content and navigation has been developed and a preliminary site mockup template constructed based upon this content and navigation schema. As of early February, the proposed content and schema will be released to the Workgroup for comment and subsequent modification. It is anticipated that this will form the basis for the storyboard that will be presented to the Council for approval at their March meeting.

The CDPH DWP has been in the process of finalizing the data intake mechanism that will be required to keep the site current. This work effort includes:

- Procuring, configuring, testing, and launching the hardware infrastructure that will be necessary to host the portal, the hosting location at the UC Davis, Information Center for the Environment – the cost of operation borne by the CDPH DWP
- Development of the hosting environment that will be based upon the DotNetNuke (DNN) content management system architecture
- Characterization of the business processes that will supply information in support of the portal

Next Steps

Anticipating that the WEF, SCCWRP, and the workgroup are successful in presenting an adequate storyboard at the Council's March's meeting that would authorize construction of a mockup Safe-to-Drink web portal, the next steps are anticipated to be the following:

- Construction of the portal page templates that will be used as the base in which content modules will be placed
- Training of WEF, SCCWRP, and workgroup staffs on methods and procedures populating the portal with new and modified content
- Dynamic integration of datasets serving as the information base of the portal site content
- Implementing internal and external navigation schemes
- Release of the site to the workgroup for review and comment with subsequent modification
- Documenting processes and procedures that will facilitate site sustainability
- Release of the site to the Council for review and comment
- Formulation of the marketing campaign advertising availability of the site for use by the public and other stakeholder audiences

With very little good fortune, it is anticipated that the contract end date of June 30, 2013 will be met with at least availability of the site for review and comment by Council members.