WA CHEMICAL POLICY FORUM
MEETING #29 AGENDA
JUNE 10, 2025
1-2:30PM

Forum Purpose: Stimulate action and development of chemical and hazardous waste policy, research, and policy implementation through information sharing, networking, and collaborative problem solving.

Meeting Topic: Photovoice Exploration & PFAS in King County's Waste Systems

- Visit WAChemicalPolicyWorkgroup.org for information on previous meetings.

Meeting Desired Outcomes:

- Share overview and engage discussion around photovoice exploration project in King County and PFAS testing in King County

AGENDA

I. Welcome, review of agenda (1:00-1:05)
II. Roger Chin, Hazardous Waste Management Program: Through the Lens of Community: A Photovoice Exploration of Health and Environmental Connections (1:05-1:30)
    a. Description: Dr. Roger Chin with the Haz Waste Program in King County will be joining the workgroup to share findings and insights on a recent photovoice exploration study conducted in collaboration with Culture Shift Consulting and Coco Canary Consulting. This was a community-centric study to address service gaps identified in previous research conducted by the Program. The work emphasizes active engagement with community partners as co-creators rather than subjects of the research. By using collaborative feedback approaches, such as through photography and storytelling, community partners reflected on:
        i. Their personal interactions with hazardous waste and its impact on their communities
        ii. Their understanding of public systems' roles in addressing environmental contaminants
        iii. How they envision a more just and supportive society.
    b. Q&A (1:30-1:40)
        i. Logistical questions and the importance of working with consultants
            1. Haz Waste has resources to carry out research, but this is a community-centric project
            2. Consultants represent community partners and that community was comfortable providing honest feedback
        ii. How do you introduce a topic like hazardous waste to a community? Do you start with an invitation to an engagement session, or do you start with something before that? I imagine there are people who do not know about hazardous waste. How do you interact with them?

1. Provide some info on what hazardous waste, but don't want to share too much to influence their feedback

iii. What was the biggest surprise?
1. Photovoice is about letting go of control in the research
2. Biggest surprise was that food sovereignty is related to hazardous waste

iv. What do you get out of this approach compared to a more conventional audience research approach?
1. Photos can evoke different emotions and brought new conversation

v. Was it a stressful process?
1. The election didn't have too much of an impact and session was interactive. Community members were overwhelmed with amount of information, which was understandable. This helped us simplify our messaging. Going to try to codevelop public-friendly versions of resources as part of Phase 2 of project.

vi. People experienced fatigue about constant efforts to avoid hazardous products

III. Richard Jack & Erika Kinno, King County: Testing PFAS in King County's Waste Systems: Sampling results for 2023-2024 (1:40-2:05)

a. Q&A (2:05-2:15)

i. When you compare your results to BACWA, you show only the averages from your study but compare to average and range of BACWA results. How did your range of results compare to the variation seen in BACWA?
1. The samples have been pared down, but we do show the range of results in the presentation

ii. Also curious to know if the volume of landfill leachate from Cedar Hills disposed at South Plant is a significant percentage of daily waste water received at South Plant?
1. Depends on the season; the summertime may have less, but more in the winter

iii. Any thoughts or plans on studying other environmental compartment(s) related to landfills, for example ambient air near landfills?
1. Solid Waste division prioritizing groundwater currently in/around active and various inactive landfills in King County
2. In the immediate future, not likely to be looking at air emissions

iv. I'm curious what the variability was for biosolids as well. I've heard from another group in WA that Method 1633 gave some odd results with liquid slurry type biosolids

v. It might be helpful to keep in mind too, that the degradation of side-chain fluorinated polymers (SCFPs, the kind of PFAS applied on food packaging materials and textiles that result in FTOHs detection for these type of matrices) could be in the orders of a hundred up to a thousand years in landfill system

vi. Policy and permit conditions

1. One of weaknesses of Clean Water Act when it comes to wastewater facilities is that we were not able to regulate industrial inputs unless that input is impacting our effluent or biosolids to make either of those things violate a permit condition

vii. Any thoughts on what waste items/materials contribute the most leachable pfas? Few but large contributors vs widespread smaller but cumulative sources? What should we focus on getting out of circulation to minimize PFAS in our wastewater and other waste streams?

1. SWD and PHSKC are planning to collaborate on characterizing waste materials that go to landfill and may employ portable methods, like XRF, to screen and identify materials containing high PFAS

IV. Wrap-up (2:25-2:30)