

RAIN NEWS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

DECEMBER, 2008

REGIONAL MEETINGS A SUCCESS!

The River Alert Information Network (RAIN) was awarded \$5000 from the League of Women Voters this past year. Three strategically located events were held within the region to promote the goals of establishing an early warning spill detection system on the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Youghiogheny rivers.

The first event was held at California University of Pennsylvania on August 22nd. We had a great turnout and our dynamic speaker, Professor Mueller reached out to the region's political officials in explaining the great need for a spill detection system. Among the attendees were California Borough Mayor Durdi-

nes and Jefferson Borough Mayor Dulik, as well as representatives from Senator Murtha's office and Representative Peter Daley's. Although RAIN's focus has always been public health, Mayor Durdines expressed interest in having California's new wastewater treatment plant as RAIN's first wastewater member. We are continuing to explore how RAIN can expand its vision to include such endeavors.

The second event was held at River Forest Country Club in Freeport on September 19th. Tom McCaffrey, PA DEP, and Emily Buka, Riverside Center for Innovation, spoke to



Early Warning Detection
for Safe Drinking Water

the importance of establishing a collective regional effort in protecting our source water. An informal discussion period brought people from the US Army Corp of Engineers, Emergency Management Agen-

(CONT. Page 4)

GRANT PROGRESS

RAIN is currently seeking US Army Corp of Engineer and FEMA grant funding. Our main objective is securing \$4 million to establish the early warning detection system at various sites along the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Youghiogheny Rivers.

RAIN submitted a letter of intent to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) on October 27th. Nancy Piotrowski, USACE program manager, has placed RAIN on a national list of prospective projects that the Corp would like to fund. We are scheduled to meet

in early February to discuss our organization and its mission in relation to the USACE grant. The purpose of the USACE program is

(CONT. Page 2)

SPECIAL POINTS OF
INTEREST:

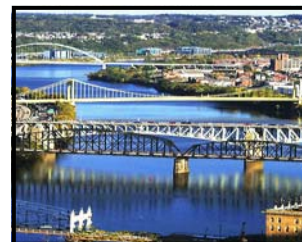
REGIONAL MEETINGS
A SUCCESS!

GRANT PROGRESS

TDS IN THE MON

WHAT'S NEXT?

CLICK ON A PIC TO
VIEW OUR WEBSITE



GRANT PROGRESS (CONT.)



“to provide technical assistance to non-Federal entities to prepare comprehensive plans to manage water and related land resources”. Typical maximum funding is \$100,000 annually with a 50% cost sharing basis.

The Port of Pittsburgh is the fiduciary agent for the FEMA funds. We met with James McCarville, Executive Director in late October. RAIN submitted a proposal for \$50,000 on November 14th.

This grant program focuses on the security of our waterways against terroristic and criminal activities. Although our main objective is public health, we touted our communication network as a fundamental factor in mitigating and managing risk. We also plan on applying for another round of funds in February.

These funds, if awarded, will be used to strengthen the network’s communication, assess structural damage at

the plants, and manage the daily operations of RAIN.

Thus far, RAIN has received \$12,500 from the League of Women Voters (WREN) and Pa American Water.

For more information about the US Army Corp of Engineers or Port of Pittsburgh Commission, visit:

www.usace.army.mil/

www.port.pittsburgh.pa.us

“DEP HAS ASKED THE RAIN MON MEMBERS IF THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO COLLABORATE”

MON RAIN MEMBERS MEET WITH DEP

PA DEP officials and Monongahela River RAIN Members met recently to discuss the Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) issue within the Mon Basin. PA DEP put out a Press Release in early October when it was discovered that TDS levels in the river had exceeded 500 mg/L. Reasons for this historically high TDS (a few samples exceeded 900 mg/L) were: abandoned mine dis-

charges, gas well development wastewater, high TDS levels at WV/PA border (~500 mg/L), seasonal low-flow conditions in river, and the pooling action of the locks and dams.

Though the immediate actions of PA DEP, WV DEP and the US Army Corps of Engineers, along with an increase in precipitation, has resulted in

more normal TDS levels in the river, PA DEP has asked the RAIN Monongahela River Members if they would be willing to collaborate long term with State and Federal Agencies in real-time monitoring of specific river water quality parameters. This monitoring effort would provide State and Federal Agencies necessary response time to react to increasing TDS



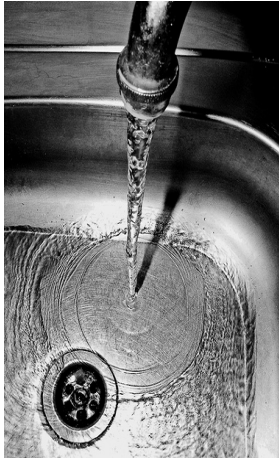
and other associated parameters so as to prevent a repeat of such historically high levels as seen these past couple of months.

RAIN presented DEP with a proposal on December 19th, 2008. RAIN System Members present at this meeting included: Southwestern PA Water Authority, Tri-County

Water Authority, PA American Brownsville, Washington Township Municipal Authority, Belle Vernon Municipal Authority, Authority of Borough of Charleroi, PA American Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.



SOURCE WATER PROTECTION TECHNICAL PROGRAM



PA Department of Environmental Protection established the Source Water Protection Technical Assistance Program (SWPTAP) to enhance development of voluntary, local source water protection programs. The program was developed to more efficiently provide technical assistance and accelerate adoption of local, voluntary source water protection programs throughout the commonwealth. Through improved raw water quality and reduced risks at the source, a Source Water Protection Program supports sustainable infrastructure, reduces or maintains operation and maintenance costs, and improves public health protection.

The purpose of SWPTAP is to provide a contractor, Spotts, Stevens and McCoy Inc., the same consulting firm that created your Source Water Assessment Reports a few years ago, to assist community water supply systems interested in developing local source water protection programs. The assistance provided will address all DEP Minimum Elements of a local, voluntary source water protection program up to and including: steering committee formation, education, delineation, contingency planning, new source planning, management objectives and ordinance development. Financially supported by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, SWPTAP requires no water supplier subsistence (matching funds). What is expected of the water supplier is a commitment to better protect their sources of public drinking water through the development and implementation of a protection program.

Interest in SWPTAP is spreading rapidly across the State, and more and more water systems are taking advantage of the opportunity. As a result, competition for the limited resources is increasing. RAIN Members currently engaged in a SWPTAP project include: Moon Township Municipal Authority, Pa American Water Co – Pittsburgh, Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County’s McKeesport and Youghiogheny systems, North Fayette County Municipal Authority, and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority. For more information on SWPTAP, please contact Tom McCaffrey of DEP at 412.442.4051.

“THE PURPOSE IS...TO ASSIST COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS...IN LOCAL SOURCE WATER PROTECTION”



CALL FOR PICS

IN THE NEWS

WHAT’S NEXT?



Send us your digital pictures! We’d like pictures of the rivers, your employees, and your water treatment plant to add to a new photo gallery at www.3rain.org.

The Herald Standard featured RAIN on August 25, 2008. Dr. Mueller, Cal U, was interviewed.

And Adam Fleming of the City Paper in Pittsburgh wrote an article on the much “needed river monitoring” proposed by our organization.

Please contact us if you would like a copy.

We need your input! Log on to our website and leave a message or contact us directly at 412-322-3523. RAIN needs to understand what’s happening at your plant so that we can streamline funding to where it’s needed most. You are considered members and your participation in these efforts is crucial.*



RIVER ALERT INFORMATION NETWORK

700 River Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
Phone: 412-322-3523
Fax: 412-322-3513

Our email is on the website under "Contact Us".
Your message will be directed to the most appropriate RAIN board member.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.3RAIN.ORG

AN EARLY WARNING DETECTION SYSTEM FOR SAFE DRINKING WATER

RAIN Members

ABC Water
Albert Gallatin Municipal Borough
Allegheny Energy
Armstrong Power Station
Belle Vernon Borough Municipal Authority
Brackenridge Borough
Dunkard Valley Joint Municipal Authority
East Dunkard Water Association
Emlenton Water
Harrison Township Water Authority
Kittanning Suburban Water Authority
Masontown Municipal Water Works
Moon Township Water Authority
Municipal Authority of Buffalo Township
Municipal Authority of New Kensington
Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County
Municipal Authority Township of Robinson
Newell Municipal Water Authority

North Fayette County Municipal Authority
Oakmont Borough Municipal Authority
Parker City Water Authority
Pennsylvania American Water
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority
Point Marion Boro
Rowlesburg Water
Shaler Water
South Western Pennsylvania Water Authority
Tarentum Water
Tri County Joint Municipal Authority
Washington Township Municipal Authority
West View Water Authority
Wilkesburg-Penn Joint Water Authority

REGIONAL MEETINGS A SUCCESS! (CONT.)

cies and community groups together to recognize the importance of the Allegheny River and its much needed political and financial support.

The third and final event was held here at Riverside Center for Innovation (RCI) in Pittsburgh. As testament to our success at promoting RAIN's name and efforts, we had many people come to both, if not all three events. Although many of these people were very aware of the threats to our waterways and hence drinking water, many people assumed that such equipment was already in

place. Our public awareness efforts explained the gaps in drinking water safety. Again, as testament to our success, one audience member spoke up saying, "Well, this is a no brainer", and the crowd nodded in agreement.

WREN's assistance for the development of a website, a logo, brochure, displays and banner helped us accomplish our goals of outreach. Through this, we have established sound relationships with other prominent water organizations such as the Center for Healthy Environments and Communities, Pa Rural Water Association,

Three Rivers Wet Weather, Port of Pittsburgh, Institute of Politics at the University of Pittsburgh, the US Army Corp of Engineers, Department of Homeland Security, Carnegie Mellon University and numerous watershed organizations. In addition, we have garnered the political support necessary for future state and federal funding.

*This is an internal document. All correspondence in relation to this newsletter will be held confidentially.



Allegheny Wharf