

METHODS COMMITTEE REPORTS**Committee on Environmental Quality****KAREN S. HARLIN, CHAIR**

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Committee Actions

The committee has undergone a reduction of members and General Referees since the 2001 AOAC Meeting. There exists a great potential to work with EPA if the new method categories allow more flexibility in the numbers of laboratories and categories for acceptance as some form of AOAC approved method.

Additional discussion centered on increasing committee responsiveness and organization of the committee. It was agreed that since Viorica Lopez resigned as organic General Referee and no General Referees are in place, the committee should reorganize along 3 areas: environmental chemistry, environmental microbiology, and bioassay methods.

The topic "Environmental Microbiology" was moved to Committee J. Although it has no General Referee, study directors, or studies under way, the area is viewed as an important new area for method development. A potential General Referee for this topic will be contacted. The committee will contact ASTM with regard to their activity in the area of *E. coli* in drinking water to investigate the potential for a joint effort to develop a harmonized method.

Environmental Microbiology, Vacant

Susan Boutros and Josephine Pompey will contact Jay Vasconsalis (EPA Region 10) with regard to becoming General Referee for this topic area.

Environmental Chemistry, Vacant

(1) *Determination of Nitrates in Soil*: Study Director Robert Miller, Colorado State University, Soil and Crop Sciences Department, Fort Collins, CO 80535, Tel: +1-970-493-4382, Fax: +1-970-426-5820. Continue study.

(2) *Cation Exchange Capacity of Soils*: Study Director Saman Amarakone, Canadian (Atlantic) Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada, Hugh John Flemming Forestry Center, PO Box 4000 Fredericton, NB E3B-5P7, Canada, Tel: +1-506-452-3562, Fax: +1-506-452-3525. Continue study.

(3) *Low Hydride Metals*: Study Director Vacant. Continue study.

(4) *Volatile Emission Potential of Liquid Pesticides*: Discontinue topic.

(5) *High Resolution GC-MS Method 1668a for Coplanar and Toxic PCB (new topic)*: Study Director Vacant. Continue study.

(6) *Non-Nutritive Metals and Plant Nutrients*: Topic Advisor Peter Kane, Office of the Indiana State Chemist, Purdue University, 1154 Biochemistry Bldg, W. Lafayette, IN 47907-1154, Tel: +1-765-494-1560, Fax: +1-765-494-4331, E-mail: kanep@purdue.edu. Continue study.

(7) *Radiation (new topic)*: General Referee Vacant.

Bioassay Methods, Marion Kelly

Whole Effluent Toxicology Bioassay (new topic): Study Director Marion Kelly, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ariel Rios Bldg, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20460. Continue study.

Other opportunities exist for cooperation in several areas. Possible new methods were discussed; they included persistent metals in soil, perchlorate in fertilizers, and other biological methods.