



Water Environment Research Foundation  
*Collaboration. Innovation. Results.*

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JUN 17 2008

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
Pollution Control Board

Dr. G. Tanner Girard  
Acting Chairman & Member  
Illinois Pollution Control Board  
Suite 11-500  
James R Thompson Center  
100 West Randolph Street  
Chicago, IL 60601

PC66

Re: *Peer Review of Epidemiologic Study of Recreational Use of the Chicago Area Waterways*

Dear Dr. Girard:

The Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) is a nonprofit organization that helps utilities, local governments and other stakeholders preserve the water environment and protect human health by providing science and technology research to enhance management of our water resources. In Spring 2007, WERF was asked by Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC) to coordinate an independent peer review of its *Epidemiologic Study of Recreational Use of the Chicago Area Waterways*. Peer review is a service that WERF provides upon request, and in this case at WERF's expense, to its subscribers. It is our understanding that this epidemiologic study is intended to provide scientific support for a recreational water quality standard for the Chicago Area Waterways. It is in this context that I am writing this letter to make you aware of WERF's efforts.

WERF assembled a panel of recognized experts to provide an independent review of the study which is being conducted by investigators at the University of Illinois-Chicago's School of Public Health (UIC). The reviewers have backgrounds in epidemiology, infectious diseases, water microbiology, microbial ecology, risk assessment, public health, and waste water management. The reviewers include professionals from academia, local government, consulting and federal government agencies. Several members of the panel are currently conducting related epidemiology, microbiological and other research studies. WERF's role is strictly in a coordination capacity as the technical advice is provided by the panel members. WERF has no direct control over, nor direct input into, the UIC epidemiologic study.

To begin the peer review process, the research team at UIC provided the peer review panel with a detailed research plan and quality monitoring procedures in advance of the panel's first meeting held at UIC on July 17-18, 2007. In keeping with the approaches used by national scientific organizations, all panelists reviewed documents that described general aspects of the study, while specific sections of the research plan and quality assurance plan were assigned to

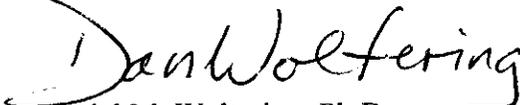


individual reviewers based on their areas of expertise. All elements of the study were reviewed, ranging from the study objectives, to aspects of recruitment of study participants, health monitoring, water sampling, water analyses and statistical methods. The peer review panel provided input including suggestions to UIC to further strengthen certain technical aspects of the study. The final study plan reflects modifications that were advised in the peer review process. The peer review panel was satisfied that the proposed study design is sound and thorough and that the UIC research team, under the leadership of Dr. Samuel Dorevitch, is well qualified to conduct the study.

The peer review panel met with the UIC Team again on February 27, 2008 to review the data from the first season of sampling and to refine the study plans for the upcoming study season. The peer review panel liked the progress they saw and agreed with the refinements made by the UIC research team to the study plans for the second season of sampling.

The UIC's study has been designed to provide information that is valuable in the area of health risks associated with secondary contact recreation, and address potential deficits in the current knowledge of the health risks associated with limited contact water recreation and the measures required to protect the public. WERF intends to continue to coordinate the peer review efforts over the course of the study as the independent experts provide input to the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data.

Sincerely,



Daniel M. Woltering, Ph.D.  
Director of Research

cc: Peer Review Panel Members  
Dr. Samuel Dorevitch, University of Illinois – Chicago  
Thomas Granato, PhD, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago