



**Water Communication Workgroup**  
**Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 | 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:** Tegwyn Brickhouse (VCU- School of Dentistry), Brenda Davy (Virginia Tech, Department of Human Nutrition), Bob Edelman (VDH- Office of Drinking Water), Beth Leftwich (Department of Social Services), William Mann (Olde Towne Medical and Dental Center), Barry Matthews (VDH- Office of Drinking Water), Natalie Pennywell (VCU Health Hub at 25<sup>th</sup>), Hannah Robbins (Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth)

**Staff:** Sarah Holland, Ericca Facetti, Chloe Van Zandt  
Meeting recording [link](#)

**Proceedings:**

***Desired Outcomes***

- Shared understanding of workgroup’s mission and purpose
- Build consensus on workgroup’s strategy to best meet the mission
- Develop future meeting structure and timeline

***Discussion***

Welcome and Introductions

Build consensus around the Water Communication Workgroup mission: to improve the trust of tap water and water literacy in the commonwealth.

- Changing “improve” to “increase” will make the mission more measurable
- Are we focusing on water access in this workgroup?
- Water access continues to be a main priority of the greater Water Equity Taskforce, and is being addressed in the other WERV workgroup. Water access is beyond the scope of this specific group.
- Using “promote” could be another way of wording the mission

Health Behavior Change

- We have the potential to change behavior across the state for better health outcomes, takes interventions: increase knowledge/understand and increase self-efficacy to trust their tap water and drink it.

Develop workgroup strategy

- In small and medium waterworks, the waterworks operator interacts with the public, and often have expertise in technical water treatment. Larger waterworks have a designated public information officer who is an expert in water communication. Could use a public health water toolkit with promotional strategies, that lifts up building a relationship with water customers and water operators.
- Need for a call to action before dispersing such toolkit. How are we communicating to the public?
- Additional players: ODW staff- small waterworks rely on ODW staff to complete CCR’s on their behalf. ODW puts together approx. 95% of CCR’s for small waterworks. Technical assistance



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providers- SE Rural Community Assistance Project (SERCAP) does 80-150 CCR's for small waterworks annually.

- Can one person from each group join this WCW group? Do these partners see water comm as an identified area of improvement.
- Barry will reach out to Andy Crocker at SERCAP, Virginia Program Manager
- CCR's can be improved, but there is more room for the opportunity to spread the improved message more broadly, improve relationship between water utilities and their customers
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Project Wet Network, develops teaching materials for children, teaching them about water
- Audiences: water operators, public information officer (PIO), sometimes PIO is SERCAP

Workgroup timeline and future meetings

- Group will meet approximately every 6 weeks with a 12-month commitment
- Doodle poll will be sent for future meetings

**Action Items**

- Respond to doodle poll with availability
- Map out partners relevant to CCR writing, communication, and distribution
- Barry Matthews will invite Andy Crocker to our next meeting

**Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.**