

March 17, 2017

Chairwoman McGinn
Ways and Means Committee
Kansas Legislature

Dear Chairwoman McGinn:

The following is Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE) response to your request to provide specific laboratory information:

- 1: Cost of the Iowa contract:
 - During a 12 month period, KDHE spent approximately \$100,000 with the State of Iowa to analyze radiation chemistry samples.
2. Recruiting of radiation chemistry positions:
 - KDHE has not initiated the recruiting for these positions. KDHE initiated the contract with Iowa as a temporary action with the idea that it may become a permanent solution. KDHE evaluated the pros and cons of making this solution permanent last fall and determined that it serves Kansans best by keeping the capacity and capabilities here in Kansas.
3. Scope of the radiation chemistry testing:
 - KDHE receives the following types of samples to conduct analysis:
 - Public Water Supplies to meet Safe Drinking Water Act standards for testing potential radiological contaminants in drinking water.
 - Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Network to evaluate various lakes and streams for potential radiological contaminants (similar evaluation as performed for drinking water or source water for drinking water).
 - Surveillance Monitoring related to the Wolf Creek Nuclear Plant. This scope is defined by the Radiation Safety Office and includes various types of monitoring, including air, water and biological tissue. Please note that no surveillance is required for the K-State reactor based on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission License they carry and the "source term" is so low that it does not pose any risk outside the current location.
 - Emergency Response Readiness related to validation of some EPA rapid methods as well as ability to respond to testing needs in the case of a radiological incident.
4. Last 4 years of Environmental Laboratory Employee Turnover Data:
 - Attachment A is still being compiled: Position Information for Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories (KHEL) Environmental Section

5. In regards to a list of violations at KHEL:
 - The laboratory has not received any violations from any regulatory entity. With respect to lab waste management staff, KDHE's Waste Management program has been conducting compliance assistance visits to the lab for several years, providing training on proper waste disposal and management. The data management system used by the Bureau of Waste Management shows no history of violations identified by either KDHE or U.S. EPA. We are not aware that any violations have occurred.
6. Turnaround time (TAT) for laboratory results.
 - See Attachment B: Laboratory Turnaround Times for Environmental Testing. KHEL tracks closely its turnaround times to insure internal and external partner goals are achieved. As you can see by the attached table, KHEL's Environmental Section has consistently met or exceeded its goals.
7. In regards to whether there are/have been mandatory holiday parties where employees are required to attend instead of working
 - It is not a policy of KDHE to require employee attendance at holiday parties instead of working. Inquiries have been made to identify if any communication provided to employees would have required attendance at a holiday function and none have been found.
8. Job descriptions of positions in the lab and qualifications for those positions
 - Attachment A is still being compiled: Position Information for Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratory Environmental Section
9. Education/experience of individual currently working in the KHEL Environmental Section
 - Attachment A is still being compiled: Position Information for Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratory Environmental Section

One example of the work of KHEL is when KDHE and its laboratory provided a significant support role to the Kansas Division of Emergency Management (KDEM) during a chemical plant fire in Neodesha, Kansas over the 2016 Thanksgiving Holiday weekend. The fire required millions of gallons of water to be applied to suppress the fire. Much of this water drained into the Verdigris River, carrying chemicals from the company's property into the river, thus impacting the water supply of Neodesha and potentially impacting the downgradient cities of Independence and Coffeyville. To provide timely response to the incident, KDHE was required to open and staff its environmental lab from the evening before Thanksgiving through the Monday following Thanksgiving. Each evening KDHE Lab received the samples, processed the samples overnight and reported the sample results the following morning. Fourteen environmental lab team members worked to support this effort. Routine efforts to provide cross-training on instruments along with a common understanding of protocols provide a tremendous advantage in executing the work over the long weekend. The KHEL provided the data timely and accurately for KDHE to make critical water supply decisions for these communities.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Gary Mason
Deputy Secretary for Environment
Kansas Department of Health and Environment



Attachment A:
Position Information
for Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories
Environmental Section

DOCUMENT IS BEING COMPILED

Attachment B:
Turnaround Time (TAT) for Sample Analysis
for KHEL Environmental Section
Prepared on March 17, 2017

<u>Analysis Type</u>	<u>Regulatory Required TAT</u>	<u>Internal TAT Goal (Days)</u>	<u>Actual Avg. TAT</u>
Organic Chemistry	None	14	8.6
Inorganic w/o Stream Samples	None	14	17.1 (11.5)*
Inorganic Stream Samples	None	Considered Low Priority	22.7
Radiochemistry			
Drinking Water	None	45	28
Surveillance	None	14	4-10

*As a result of establishing the internal goal of 14, we were able to reduce the average turnaround time for the past 6 months to 11.5 days.