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North Carolina
Secretaries' Science Advisory Board

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Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2026
Virtual Public Meeting
Archdale Ground Floor Hearing Room
10:00 am

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretaries' Science Advisory Board (SAB) met on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, in a virtual public meeting that was broadcast in person in the Ground Floor Hearing Room on the Archdale Building. SAB members in attendance were Chairperson Tom Augspurger, PhD; Rich DiGuilio, PhD; Gina Kimble, PhD; Elaina Kenyon, PhD, DABT; John Vandenberg, PhD, Jamie DeWitt, PhD; Tom Starr, PhD; David Howard, MPH; Detlef Knappe, PhD. DEQ Staff in attendance were Sushma Masemore PE; Richard Rogers; Frannie Nilsen, PhD; Jared Wilson, MS; Dylan Friedenberg; Perry Sugg; Angela Moore, PhD' Adam Ulishney, Michael Scott. DHHS staff in attendance were Zack Moore MD MPH; Kennedy Holt MSPH.

I. Call to Order meeting was called to order at 10:03am *(meeting recording)*

II. Review and Approve Agenda

III. Ethics Statement *(meeting recording @ 00:06:02)*
Read by Chairperson Augspurger; Dr DeWitt and Dr Knappe made statements.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2025
December meeting minutes were approved with minor additions/revisions.

V. DEQ / DHHS updates *(meeting recording @ 00:14:15)*

DEQ Updates - *Frannie Nilsen, Environmental Toxicologist, Secretary's Office, DEQ.*

General Updates:

1. The Chemours Consent Order Aquatic Toxicity Study final reports are available on DEQ's website: Consent Order Aquatic Toxicity Reports
2. DEQ remains committed to protecting the public from toxic contaminants in drinking water. PFMOAA is a PFAS compound that DEQ has brought to the SAB in the past, the EPA PFMOAA toxicity assessment is expected to be released soon, and we will provide a specific update when we have detailed information.

Division Of Waste Management:

1. DEQ / UNC Collaboratory work at Rural NC Fire Stations - DWM has been working with UNC Collaboratory researchers that sampled rural NC Fire Stations' water supply wells for PFAS. Based on this data, DWM has initiated private well sampling around six fire stations to sample private wells for PFAS. DWM has attended community and local meetings in Pleasant Garden, NC (Guilford County), Eli Whitney, NC (Alamance County) and Stokes

County thus far to discuss the PFAS groundwater data and future sampling plans. DWM is providing alternate water for private well owners and fire stations when PFAS above the MCLs are detected. DWM will also be offering well water filtration systems where needed. New Hope- have not hosted a community meeting yet and are working with Wake County on outreach in the community, initial data is coming in and DWM will be updating the UNC Collaboratory and scheduling a review with Wake Co and follow-up based on the data

2. DWM continues to work with the Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service and the Department of Agriculture on the EPA RCRA grant for Hurricane Helene. DEACS has received significant interest in their grant award from the region, and the Brownfields program is moving forward with selected contractors to perform assessment and remedial work in the region.

Division Of Air Quality:

1. As you've noticed, pollen season is underway and the Division of Air Quality is the State's Official pollen counter. If you're interested in receiving a daily pollen report from DAQ, you can subscribe to that email list online at https://www.deq.nc.gov/pollen On that site, you can also review pollen data, charts, and trends back to 1999.
2. Also, a popular website this time of year is the Air Information Reporter where you can get real-time ambient air quality data, past conditions, and tomorrow's air quality forecast. Please see: https://airquality.climate.ncsu.edu/air/

DHHS Updates – *Zack Moore, State Epidemiologist, Epidemiology Branch Section Chief, DHHS*

1. Regarding the State-wide measles outbreak- there have been no new cases since the end of December, there were 24 cases reported that are linked to outbreak in SC (~1000 cases). The CDC is currently monitoring wastewater and conducting sampling to detect the measles virus if it is present. Wastewater Data for Measles | Wastewater Monitoring | CDC
    a. The DHHS Dashboard that tracks all three viruses (COVID, RSV, Flu) shows that all are in decline. The data is updated and posted weekly- NC Respiratory Virus Summary Dashboard | Division of Public Health

2. The PFAS fish tissue data provided by DEQ last year is still being evaluated for fish consumption advisories in the lower sections of the Cape Fear River. The Great Lakes Consortium published best practice guidelines that balanced positive benefits of fish consumption with impacts of contaminant exposure. This guidance is being evaluated internally and in collaboration with academic experts. Great Lakes Consortium for Fish Consumption Advisories PDF.

3. DHHS is working with DEQ to host public meetings to inform communities about the PFAS testing that is being conducted around fire stations. DHHS is working to help communities understand health impacts, especially dermal exposures. Duke University is in the process of designing studies to examine inhalation exposures in fire station settings- DHHS will share more information about this study as it develops.

4. DHHS has concluded their review of the meta-analysis on Fluoride in drinking water exposures (Taylor et al. 2025 JAMA publication).

Informational Items:

VI. DWM Landfill PFAS Data Presentation *(meeting recording @ 00:40:57)*
Perry Suggs from the Solid Waste Section of DWM, presented the data submitted by landfill facilities across NC.

DWM Landfill PFAS Data Presentation

VII. DWR Biosolids Data Presentation *(meeting recording @ 01:12:36)*
Dr. Angela Moore, the DWR PFAS Coordinator, presented the data collected during the preliminary biosolids study across NC.

DWR Biosolids Data Presentation

VIII. Public Forum 11:55 *(meeting recording @ 01:54:35)*
One public comment was made and can be heard in the meeting recording.

IX. Adjourn 11:59am

The next NC SSAB meeting will take place on August 5, 2026, in the Ground Floor Hearing Room in the Archdale building in Raleigh, NC.