

THE INSTITUTE REVIEW



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It's Time to Reserve Your Spot at the Forum...

By Jerry Parr, TNI

The NELAC Institute's **2026 Forum on Environmental Accreditation** will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Boston, MA, from January 12-15, 2026. Some of the highlights for the week include:

- A training course on improving field sampling and measurement;
- An exam to become a certified Environmental Laboratory Quality Management Systems Professional;
- A meeting of TNI committees;
- A mentor session;
- An assessment forum;
- A general session with updates about TNI programs, including recent new initiatives; and
- A special session on "Technical Specialists", a new concept to replace the old Technical Manager in the current TNI laboratory accreditation standard.



All sessions and TNI meetings are open to all attendees according to your registration:

- Attendees can attend any session during the week of January 12 in person and view any session missed from January 19 to March 30, 2026.
- For those that do not plan to come to Boston, you can view a recording of any session from January 19 to March 30, 2026. Registration is by full conference, which includes all events, or daily, for the In-Person portion of the conference.
- For recordings-only registration, you may choose to register for the full conference or for selected days.
- The training course and exam on January 15 are available In-Person only and do not have a recordings option. You may choose to only register for and attend a training or add it on to your existing Forum registration.

TNI has secured a preferred rate of \$179/night when reservations are made by December 19, 2025, or until all contracted rooms are booked.

BOOK YOUR ROOM...

[Click here to book your room](#)

or copy and paste this link into your browser

<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/BOSTO/G-NEL6>, or

Call 617-912-1234 and reference Group Reservation Code G-NEL6.

REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE...

You may register now using our

[on-line registration system](#).

You can also view the [conference agenda here](#).

Visiting Boston for the TNI Forum on Environmental Accreditation

By Mike Delaney, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (retired)

Are you looking forward to visiting Boston, Massachusetts in January? As we townies say, if you don't like the weather in Boston, wait a minute. It could be bitter cold, snowy, icy, windy, or sunny, calm, and pleasant. The snow could be piled high, or more likely it will be slushy, or even non-existent.

The [Hyatt Regency Hotel](#) is conveniently located in downtown Boston at One Avenue de Lafayette, (aka Lafayette Street). For example, it's a 5-minute walk to the [Boston Common](#) and Public Gardens, a 10-minute walk to [Quincy Market/Faneuil Hall](#), a 5-minute walk to the Downtown Crossing subway station on the [Red Line](#), a 9-minute walk to the [Museum of African American History](#), and a 20-minute walk to the [New England Aquarium](#).

From the [Boston Common Visitor Center](#), you can walk the 2.5 mile [Freedom Trail](#) and visit 16 historic sites, including the [Paul Revere house](#), Old Ironsides ([USS Constitution](#)), and the site of the [Boston Massacre](#).

You can take a ride service or the T ([MBTA](#)) just about anywhere you would like to go. Here is the [T's visitor's guide](#). You could have an Italian dinner in the North End or have a lobster dinner in the Seaport District.

Museums are among my favorites, including the [New England Aquarium](#), [Boston Museum of Science](#), the [Institute of Contemporary Art](#), the [Museum of Fine Arts](#), the [Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum](#), the [Harvard Art Museums](#), the [MIT Museum](#), the [Boston Public Library](#), the [Massachusetts State House](#), etc.

One unique experience is the "[Mapparium](#)" at the Christian Science Mother Church (210 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02115). It includes a large, stained globe of the world that you walk through.

If you are into sports, there are several games to choose from:

Bruins. <https://www.nhl.com/b Bruins/> The Bruins have home games against the Calgary Flames on the 8th, the New York Rangers on the 10th, the Pittsburgh Penguins on the 11th, the Detroit Red Wings on the 13th, and the Seattle Kraken on the 15th, all at the TD Garden.

Patriots. <https://www.patriots.com/schedule/> In Week 18, around January 4th, the Patriots play the Miami Dolphins at home, but the schedule hasn't been finalized. The playoffs include the Wild-Card round from January 10-12, 2026, followed by the Divisional round on January 17-18. We will see if this involves the Patriots.

Celtics. <https://www.nba.com/celtics/> The Celtics play the Raptors on the 9th, the Spurs on the 10th, both at home, and then they hit the road.

One final note...the streets of Boston were laid out by cows walking to the Boston Common, so driving is not recommended. Parking can also be difficult.

I'm confident if you get out and experience Boston, you will want to come back for another visit.





Photo, courtesy of Durgin Park Restaurant, Boston, Massachusetts.



This is the George Washington statue in the Boston Public Gardens.

Photo, courtesy of Sean Sweeney

<https://unsplash.com/photos/man-riding-horse-statue-on-snow-covered-ground-during-daytime-6LOmOsHGQ9w>

Durgin Park Boston Baked Beans Recipe

Durgin Park was a famous “no frills” Boston restaurant in the Quincy Market/Faneuil Marketplace. Its origins went back to the American Revolution, or as they used to say, “since before you were born.” Tommy Ryan was the cook for 37 years and prepared their famous Boston Baked Beans recipe. Until they closed in 2019, they served 1,000 diners on an average Saturday evening. Here is their recipe.

Ingredients:

1 lb. dried navy beans
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 lb. salt pork
 1/2 medium onion (peeled and uncut)
 4 tablespoons sugar
 1/3 cup molasses
 1 teaspoon dry mustard
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper



*Photo courtesy of Durgin Park Restaurant,
 Boston, Massachusetts.*

Directions:

1. NOTE: Use navy beans, California pea beans, or small white beans.
2. Soak beans overnight.
3. In the morning, preheat oven to 325°F. Place the baking soda in a Dutch oven and fill halfway with water.
4. Bring to boil, add the beans & boil for 10 minutes.
5. Drain beans in a colander and run cold water through them. Set aside.
6. Dice the salt pork (available in the bacon section of the grocery store) into 1-inch squares.
7. Put half of the salt pork on the bottom of the bean pot, along with the onion.
8. Put beans in the pot.
9. Put the remaining salt pork on top of the beans.
10. Mix the sugar, molasses, mustard, salt, and pepper with 3 cups of hot water and pour over the beans.
11. Cover pot with lid and place the pot into the preheated oven.
12. Bake for 6 hours.
13. Check pot periodically to make sure the amount of liquid is okay.
14. Add water to the beans slowly as needed to keep them moist; DO NOT FLOOD THEM. Just "top them up".
15. Remove the pot from the oven and serve.



From: <https://www.food.com/recipe/boston-baked-beans-in-bean-pot-durgin-park-168437>

Environmental Measurement Symposium 2025

“Building a Quality Culture as the Foundation for Reliable Data”

By Earl Hansen, TNI

The 2025 Environmental Measurement Symposium was held in St. Louis, MO from August 4-8, 2025. For the twenty-first year, the Symposium consisted of a combined meeting of the 41st annual National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC) and The NELAC Institute’s (TNI) Forum on Environmental Accreditation. A total of 545 individuals attended the 2025 Symposium.

NEMC Breakout Sessions

The 2025 Symposium featured 19 NEMC technical breakout sessions with 131 oral and 27 poster presentations as summarized in the table below. These presentations will be available for download at the [Symposium website](#) after November 1.

	Oral	Poster
Air Monitoring, Methods, and Technology	6	
Analyzing Microplastics in the Environment	6	1
Automation and Innovation for Sample Preparation	9	6
Best Management Practices for Environmental Laboratories	4	
Community Science/Research	7	
Crafting Consensus Standards	4	
Drinking Water	8	3
Emerging Environmental Applications for High Resolution Mass Spectrometry	4	1
Ensuring Reliable Data	5	
Environmental Forensics	4	
Innovations in Microbiology	3	
Innovative Solutions for Reducing Methylene Chloride	4	1
Laboratory Informatics	5	
Metals Analysis	4	1
New Organic Monitoring Techniques	5	1
Optimizing Laboratory Operations	5	1
Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in the Environment	14	9
Sustainability in the Lab	5	
The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Environmental Analyses		1

The 2025 Symposium also featured two keynote presentations, one general session with five presentations on the conference theme, and one general session on regulatory updates as summarized below.

Keynote Presentations

- The Science of Brewing Beer; Bruce Hamper, University of Missouri - St Louis
- A New Paradigm for Environmental Monitoring to Fully Protect the Next Generation; David Schiessel, Babcock Laboratories, Inc.

Plenary Presentations

- Defining Quality Culture, Key Principles and Leadership's Role; Judith (Judy) Morgan, Pace Analytical Services
- Inspiring a Quality Culture Through Employee Engagement and Communication; Valerie Slaven, Pace Analytical Services
- Cultivating a Culture of Quality: Training and Development Strategies for Laboratory Excellence; Sabina Stankevicius, Quality Leadership LLC
- Maintaining a Quality Culture - Performance Metrics, Best Practices and QMS Elements; Scott Siders, Retired
- Quality Culture - A Tale of Two Laboratories; Elizabeth Turner, Eurofins Environment Testing

Updates on Methods and Regulations

- SW-846 Updates in 2025 and Beyond; Troy Strock, USEPA Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery
- Update on CWA and SDWA Activities; Jerry Parr, Catalyst Information Resources
- Overview of Standard Methods Activities; William Lipps, Shimadzu Scientific Instruments

The TNI portion of the Symposium consisted of an Assessment Forum, a Mentor Session, and TNI committee meetings as summarized in another article of the issue of The Institute Review. As in previous years, the 2025 Symposium had an Exhibit program with 51 exhibitors and an innovative New Technology Showcase with 10 organizations participating. The Environmental Monitoring Coalition (EMC) held an open forum to solicit feedback from attendees.

Nominations for 2026 Board of Directors

By Sharon Mertens, MMWD (retired)

The election for new Directors will begin soon and nominations for individuals to serve a three-year term on the TNI Board of Directors will be open starting November 1, 2025. TNI members may self-nominate or nominate another individual. There are up to six (6) open positions for 2026.

TNI is governed by an elected Board, including five (5) officers. Directors are responsible for decisions regarding TNI's goals, objectives, and allocation of resources. By law, Directors are obligated to 1) act only in the best interests of TNI and to avoid conflicts of interest; 2) act honestly, in good faith, and on an informed basis when making decisions; and 3) pursue the objectives of TNI's mission. TNI holds in high regard Directors who accept these obligations to serve as stewards of the organization.

Having a strong Board of Directors is vital to the strength and future of our organization. Our Board is balanced and has representatives from all recognized stakeholder groups.

TNI's Board culture is characterized by full and open participation by all Directors. We believe that this approach maximizes group energy to address major issues facing our profession and organization. We rely upon diverse perspectives to reach well-informed decisions that further our mission. Our Board exercises strategic leadership through its focus on policy, direction, and strategy.



Qualifications for Directors

The Nominating Committee seeks candidates for the TNI Board of Directors who demonstrate strong leadership, commitment, and contributions to the field of environmental laboratory accreditation. We need candidates who have a broad knowledge and awareness of issues facing TNI and are willing to uphold TNI's mission, goals, priorities, and Code of Ethical Conduct.

Directors must demonstrate a commitment to TNI's priority to be a highly functioning organization that is continually enriched by its commitment to balance and inclusion. Directors must also possess strong interpersonal skills with the ability to objectively consider various perspectives to guide major policy decisions.

In addition, Directors need to be able to make the necessary commitment of time and other resources to serve effectively as a Director and to serve as an effective ambassador for TNI and its principles.

Finally, a Director must be a current member of TNI.

These qualifications are designed to ensure that elected Directors are prepared to fulfill their designated responsibilities, including: exercising fiduciary responsibilities and stewardship regarding TNI's goals, policies, and allocation of resources. contributing to a policy governance model that provides leadership for TNI with a focus on mission; and identifying and cultivating future leaders.

Time Commitments of Board Service

Directors are elected for a term of three (3) years and are renewable. The Board meets by teleconference monthly and in face-to-face meetings, as necessary.

Directors receive detailed agenda materials for study prior to each meeting. From time-to-time Directors may also volunteer or be asked to serve on committees that may conduct business by email, conference call, or additional meetings.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, please complete the [TNI Board Nomination Form](#).

Special Note regarding Federal officials: *Federal laws prohibit individuals that work for the Federal government from serving on a Board of a non-profit organization in a fiduciary capacity. This law has been interpreted differently by various Federal agencies, but for the sake of consistency, TNI has decided that any Federal official that wishes to serve on the TNI Board can only do so in an Ex-Officio role. Currently, there are no Ex-Officio Directors representing any of our Federal partners on the TNI Board. If you are a Federal official and would like to serve on the TNI Board, please contact Sharon Mertens, the chair of the Nominating Committee, at skmertens@icloud.com.*

2026 Election Timeline

October 15 — December 15, 2025	Nominations accepted.
December 15 — 19, 2025	Nomination Committee will review the nominations and prepare a slate of candidates.
January 9, 2026	Voting opens with the announcement of the slate of candidates on the TNI website.
February 10, 2026	Voting closes.
March 19, 2026	Newly-elected Directors assume office.

Finally, all TNI members have the opportunity and responsibility to vote to select the TNI Board of Directors. The process is through our website and is easy and quick. Our membership is not large so each and every member's vote can make a difference.

2025 Charles W. Carter Award Recipient: Robert K. Wyeth!

By David Friedman, Friedman Consulting LLC

On August 4, 2025, at the Environmental Measurement Symposium, the Charles W. Carter Award was given to Robert K. Wyeth. Mr. Wyeth holds BS degrees in Chemistry and Physics from Illinois State University, and an MS in Chemistry from the State University of New York, College at Buffalo. From the early 1980's to 2025, he was a leader in expanding environmental monitoring from the CWA and SDWA types of monitoring to the much larger variety of samples that are characteristic of the RCRA/CERCLA monitoring, waste characterization, and site assessment programs. He was also active in helping to develop the national environmental laboratory accreditation (NELAC) standards and program.



Mr. Wyeth demonstrated expertise of the EPA testing methodology, laboratory quality assurance and control, and the impact governmental policy has on the laboratory industry (including the importance of transitioning from a state-by-state to a national environmental laboratory accreditation program). He also demonstrated the importance of maintaining efficient and effective communications and working relationships between the industry and government.

Mr. Wyeth has been an active participant, speaker, and session chair in the National Environmental Monitoring Conference. He has played an active and important role in leading the independent environmental monitoring environmental laboratory industry through his leadership and mentoring roles in the ACIL. He currently serves as a Program Administrator for the NELAC Institute where supports TNI's Asbestos, Chemistry and Proficiency Testing Expert Committees and serves as TNI's liaison to the American National Standards Institute.

New Certified Environmental Laboratory Quality Management Systems Professionals

By Jerry Parr, TNI

The individuals listed below all passed a comprehensive examination on August 8, 2025 and have earned the right to be considered a Certified Environmental Laboratory Quality Management Systems Professional for the scientific areas delineated in the table. Of the 150+ questions in the exam, the average score was 88% and the range was 76-94%. These individuals have an average of twenty-one (21) years of experience in environmental analyses and quality assurance. Fifteen (15) of the sixteen (16) individuals had college degrees in science, but one individual with only a high school degree scored very well.

Name	Organization	Certified for	Name	Organization	Certified for
Jennifer Bauman	City of Olathe	Chemistry	Ashley Malchow	Microbac Laboratories	Microbiology
Alison Boren	Vermont Department of	Chemistry and Microbiology	Heather Morgan	Alliance Technical Group	Chemistry
Jenny Cahoon	Legend Technical Services	Chemistry and Microbiology	Charles Morrow	SPL Laboratories	Chemistry and Microbiology
Alexander Chieh	San Jose-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater	Chemistry, Microbiology and Whole Effluent Toxicity	Fred Norris	City of Garland	Chemistry and Microbiology
Scott Giatpaiboon	Irvine Ranch Water	Chemistry	Matt Sowards	ACZ Laboratories, Inc.	Chemistry and Radiochemistry
Salima Haniff	Bureau Veritas	Chemistry and Microbiology	Prasad Subbanna	Tennessee DEC	Chemistry, Microbiology, and Radiochemistry
Ashley Jesernik	MWRDGC	Chemistry	Kate Verbeten	NEW Water	Chemistry and Microbiology
Bina Kapoor	Las Virgenes Municipal	Chemistry and Microbiology	Virginia Zusman	Metiri Group	Chemistry and Microbiology



Newly Certified Environmental Laboratory Quality Management System Professional Summer 2025

Comments from the attendees:

... ————— ————— ...

"I feel this is a valuable credential and demonstrates a commitment to function as a quality professional to the highest

... ————— ————— ...

... ————— ————— ...

"I took this exam to confirm my knowledge of the standards and have it documented by someone other than my opinion."

... ————— ————— ...

Highlights from TNI's 2025 Summer Meeting

By Paul Junio, TNI and Robert Wyeth, TNI

The 2025 Environmental Measurement Symposium was held August 4-8 in St. Louis, MO. As part of the Symposium, TNI had ten (10) sessions as summarized below. The presentations from these sessions will be made available this month on the TNI website.

The **Chemistry Committee** met and discussed their recent activities. The committee spent a considerable amount of time addressing recent Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs). The other principal activity was the review and development of proposed changes to the current version of EL V1M4 (Quality Systems for chemical Testing). After review of past SIRs and comments received regarding this module, the revised document (Draft Standard EL V1M4) was approved by the committee and posted on the TNI website for public comment. The committee, which was meeting with a full quorum, approved the justification document and had it posted on the website along with the Draft Standard. The committee requested all interested parties to submit comments, which will all be addressed during the Response to Comments.

The **Proficiency Testing Expert Committee (PTEC)** focused on review and development of draft standards (DS) for EL V3 and EL V4 EL V4, General Requirements for Accreditors of Proficiency Test providers. EL V4 was rewritten for consistency with ISO 17011, which allows for greater clarity and ease of use. The V4 DS was posted on the TNI website for public comments along with the justification document. Comments have been received and are being addressed through the Response to Comments (R2C) process. The final document will be forwarded to the PTEC for approval. The committee is also working to prepare and post a DS for EL V3, General Requirements for Proficiency Test Providers. The committee anticipates completion of the DS prior to the TNI Boston meeting. The PTEC has had no valid SIRs recently nor any unresolved SIRs.

The **Asbestos Expert Committee** did not meet at the Symposium. However, they are still keeping busy. Module 3 has been approved as of July, 2023. However, the committee is working to address issues with SRMs that are referenced in the Module.

The **Microbiology Expert Committee** presented its progress on reviewing previous comments, as well as comments that the committee itself recognized addressing. Of note during the meeting was the over-arching statement that it is important to not look at just a single line or sentence in any part of the Standard, but how that statement fits in total. Frequently, a previous statement in a section addresses a clarifying aspect later on (for example, by stating at the start of a section that ‘a laboratory shall,’ which applies for the rest of that section). It was mentioned that the Committee will do a review of the Standard for proper use of the terms Record and Document before the revised DRAFT Standard is posted. Finally, some great feedback was given regarding the term ‘verify,’ in that it can be done in various fashions. It may be that we have to specify something like ‘verify by analysis in the laboratory,’ or ‘verify by comparison of a COA against requirements.’

The **Radiochemistry Module** has been finalized since January 2023. Given the work relayed by the Quality Management Systems Expert Committee, Section 4 will not need to be added (all Technical Specialist language will be written in Module 2). The Committee is reviewing three (3) relevant definitions (Quality Systems Matrix, Calibration Curve, and Data Reduction) that are being removed from Module 2 to decide whether they need to be added to Module 6. They may be explained well enough in the text of the Standard.

The **Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC)** used its session to give an overview of the SIR procedures. This included a bit of history showing how many have been processed, what can happen with timeframes, and how an SIR might end up becoming Implementation Guidance rather than an SIR.

The **Quality Management Systems Expert Committee (QMSEC)** shared its most recent work during their session at NEMC. The Committee received comments from Attendees and NELAP ABs present. The language was worked on further during the August meeting and is nearing completion. The biggest news was some work that was done outside of the meeting session. Technical Specialist language was revised by Debbie Bond, Ilona Taunton, Kristin Brown, and Aaren Alger in between sessions (that’s the advantage of meeting in person – impromptu meetings that can result in great work products). The term “Analytical Disciplines” has been removed as a result of these discussions.

The **Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee (LABEC)** reviewed topics of concern as made clear during their review of the Draft Module. Some examples include:

1. Handling the need to assess and report prep methods when secondary states need this information;
2. Mobile Laboratory/Mobile Facility and certificates; and
3. Reviewing ISO/IEC language previously marked for removal. Since NGABs using the Standard are often assessing for both TNI requirements and ISO/IEC requirements, there may be a need to leave some of this language intact to best meet the needs of NGABs.
4. Review training requirements for assessors.
5. How to handle additional findings not originally noted at the closing conference, but that should be written into the final report.
6. Addition of language to support Technical Specialist language in Module 2. The Committee also finished its review of comments and is now working through discussions on final language in the Standard to address comments and topics of concern.

The **Whole Effluent Toxicity Expert Committee** held a brief meeting to begin considering comments. In the absence of the Committee Chair or Vice Chair, PA Paul Junio led the meeting with assistance from one (1) member and one (1) associate member in attendance. The comments that have been submitted were briefly brought up for discussion. Given the nature of the comments that were received, there will be an attempt to re-format Module 7 to address the concern that it is too narrative in form. Definitions were also a frequent target, and the goal is to make changes within the body to address how many definitions contained procedural information that is better addressed within the body of the Standard.

Nominations Open for the 2026 Dr. Charlie W. Carter Award

By Lara Phelps, USEPA

Dr. Charles (Charlie) William Carter dedicated over thirty (30) years to the environmental laboratory business and community. Considered a highly respected environmental testing genius by everyone fortunate enough to know him, he was brilliant and had relentless energy, work ethic, and passion for advancing the environmental testing industry by providing critical scientific expertise and support. Charlie was deeply involved in many environmental organizations and a frequent speaker at conferences, forums, and meetings. He was a leader in the industry and one you could count on, always pushing the envelope to help the environmental measurement, monitoring, and laboratory community excel in meeting the highest levels of integrity and quality.



This award was established to recognize a technically competent individual and leader in the environmental measurement, monitoring, or laboratory industry, embodying Charlie's strengths in scientific expertise, communication, and mentoring. One recipient is selected annually and recognized at the Environmental Measurement Symposium (Symposium). The recipient receives a free registration for the full Symposium and is presented with the award at the opening session.

Nominations for the 2026 award opened on Monday, August 4, 2025 and will close on January 31, 2026. [Go here to submit a nomination](#). Submissions must not exceed three (3) 8.5 x 11 inch pages of single-spaced, standard twelve (12)-point type with one (1)-inch margins.

All nominations must include the nominee’s name, affiliation, address, phone number, and email address, in addition to a written submission considering the following criteria:

- What technically innovative and impactful contributions has this individual made to the environmental measurement, monitoring, and/or laboratory industry?
- How does this individual demonstrate their understanding of the technology and policy implications these innovative and impactful contributions have on the industry?
- How does this individual communicate, mentor, and/or outreach throughout the community to share these contributions?
- In what ways does this individual demonstrate their leadership by giving of themselves?
- What professional organizational and/or community memberships does this individual hold in addition to leadership service within them?

Each nomination must also be accompanied by the name, affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of two nominators to complete the submission. Self-nomination is not permissible.

The Steering Committee, which is comprised of TNI staff managing the Symposium, in addition to representatives from federal government, state government, laboratory community, and industry, will serve as the independent review panel for award selection. The selected recipient and their nominators will be notified by March 15th of the award year.

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Previous Award Winners	
2016 Richard Burrows	2019 Judy Morgan
2017 Andy Eaton	2022 Ray Frederici
2018 Marlene Moore	2024 David Friedman

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NEMC 2026 Call for Abstracts

By Barbara Hansen, TNI

Organized by The NELAC Institute (TNI), the 2026 Environmental Measurement Symposium is a combined meeting of the National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC) and the Forum on Environmental Accreditation. It is the largest conference focused on environmental measurements in North America, and this year is planned as an in-person event for the week of August 3, 2026 in Houston, TX. This year's Symposium theme is *Strengthening Public Trust in Science*.

Topic Areas for Abstracts

The Symposium Steering Committee is inviting abstracts for oral or poster presentations in these specific topic areas:

- Air Monitoring, Methods, and Technology
- Analyzing Microplastics in the Environment
- Automation & Innovation for Sample Preparation
- Best Management Practices for Environmental Laboratories
- Community Science/Research
- Crafting Consensus Methods
- Drinking Water
- Emerging Environmental Applications for High Resolution Mass Spectrometry
- Ensuring Reliable Data
- Environmental Forensics
- Realtime Monitoring
- Innovative Solutions for Reducing Methylene Chloride
- Laboratory Design
- Use of AI with LIMS
- Metals Analyses
- New Organic Monitoring Techniques
- Non-Targeted Analyses
- Optimizing Laboratory Operations
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in the Environment
- Productivity through Software and AI

Deadline February 1, 2026

Please provide your abstract by **February 1, 2026**. Abstracts received after the deadline are not guaranteed to be reviewed due to the number of available time slots and the high number of quality and timely submissions received. More information and submission instructions are on the [Environmental Measurement Symposium website](#).

Jack Farrell Analytical Excellence Scholarship Update

By Sharon Mertens, MMWD (retired)

In The Institute Review — Spring 2025, we reported that the TNI Board of Directors voted to create the **Jack Farrell Analytical Excellence Scholarship** with 100% of the proceeds to provide need-based financial support to individuals seeking a TNI credential or digital badge. The responsibility for the funding and management procedures and policies for this have been assigned to the newly created Professional Development Program Executive Committee (PDPEC). The following is a brief update on the progress that has been made so far.

The scholarship fund has been established and will be included in the TNI budget and financial reporting. As of this writing, there is \$1000 in the fund. As of the January 2026 TNI Forum in Boston, \$5 of each conference registration will go towards the scholarship fund. The Exhibit prospectus for the Forum has been updated to give vendors an opportunity to donate \$150 in return for recognition in the conference program. The PDPEC will continue to explore other means of funding the scholarship.



Procedures and policies for eligibility, application, selection, and administration for the scholarship have yet to be written, however, the PDPEC is going forward with plans based on the following key principles.

- Awardees must be TNI members in good standing.
- Awardees must demonstrate financial need.
- Awardees can use the scholarship to cover course fees or test fees leading to TNI credentials or TNI digital badges.
- Applications will be accepted in a defined period that would be open, at least initially, once per year. The number of awardees will depend on the available funds. The goal is to announce the opening of the scholarship application at the winter meeting. Awardees would be publicly recognized at the summer meeting.

The PDPEC will continue to update TNI members on details as they are developed, and updates on successes, in future newsletters and on the TNI website.

Robert's Rules of Order and Best Practices for TNI Committee Meetings

By Patsy Root, IDEXX Laboratories

Parliamentary law originally was the name given to the rules and customs for carrying on business in the English Parliament. The kind of gathering in which parliamentary law is applicable is known as a deliberative assembly. A TNI committee meeting is a deliberative assembly. A "Deliberative Process" is used to facilitate the smooth functioning of an assembly to provide order, a firm basis for resolving questions of procedure, and organizational stability. For many organizations, that process is based on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 12th Edition (RONR). The rules are based on regard for the rights of the majority, of the minority, especially a strong minority, of individual members, of absentees, and of all these together.

Henry M. Roberts (1837-1923) was a Brigadier General in US Army Corps of Engineers and active in church and civic organizations. Without warning he was asked to preside over a church meeting. The meeting erupted into open conflict because of concerns about local defense, and he resolved to learn about parliamentary procedure before attending another meeting. In a severe winter tied up in a Milwaukee engineering project, he wrote the first rules in 1876. The rules

are loosely based on procedures used in the United States House of Representatives, but the rule book was not intended for use in national and state legislatures. The TNI Bylaws state: “The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and consistent with these Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, or any special rules of order the Board may adopt.” As described below, TNI has adopted some special rules for committee meetings defined in SOP 1-101, Operation of TNI Committees, and SOP 1-102, Voting Rules for TNI Committees, to address some of the attributes of virtual meetings and to expedite the process of conducting business.

The Deliberative Process as defined in RONR consists of three distinct phases, a Call to Order (Roll Call), establishment of a Quorum, and a Meeting. In RONR, a meeting cannot occur unless a quorum is present. TNI has adopted a special rule to allow an agenda to be approved or modified by the parliamentary procedure call “unanimous consent” whereby the agenda can be approved without a vote as long as no member in attendance objects. TNI has also adopted a procedure where discussion on a topic may occur if at least 4 committee members are present, but no motions or votes can be made.

The meeting, officially “Bringing Business Before the Assembly,” is conducted by a motion by a member. A motion is a formal proposal to take action. The basic form of a motion, the only one that brings business before the assembly, is the main motion. This general rule is one of parliamentary procedure’s most powerful tools for keeping business on track. A motion can be prefaced by a few words of explanation, although TNI committees may and frequently do have discussion on a matter prior to a formal motion being made. Another voting member must then second the motion. Members then debate, including Associate Members and the public, as appropriate. Subsidiary motions are allowed. Members vote (typically Voice or Roll Call, but Unanimous Consent is also allowed).

The above accounts for 99% of motions made in TNI committee meetings, but “Subsidiary Motions” are sometimes used as summarized in the table below.

Subsidiary Motions Used by TNI

MOTION	DESCRIPTION
Amend	An amendment is a motion to change, to add words to, or to omit words from, an original motion. The change is usually to clarify or improve the wording of the original motion and must, of course, be germane to that motion. A “Friendly Amendment” (not in RONR) may be offered by someone who is in sympathy with the purpose of the main motion, often to clarify the motion. A friendly amendment does not usually require separate voting by the assembly, but is simply accepted by the member who made
Refer	When it is obvious that an assembly does not have enough information to make a wise decision, or when it seems advisable to have a small group work out details, a member may move that the question be referred to a committee or work group. A motion to refer cannot interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is debatable only as to the advisability of referral, can be amended, can be reconsidered if the group to which the question has been referred has not begun work on the matter, and requires a majority vote. If a motion to refer is passed, the committee to which the matter is referred should report on the question at a subsequent meeting.
Call the Question	Vote immediately without further debate; requires a 2/3 majority in favor.
Table, “Lay on the Table”	Temporarily sets aside the matter with the intent to take it up later at some specified date. Adoption halts consideration without debate.
Postpone Indefinitely	Used when the body declines to take a position. Motion is debatable Adoption “kills” the motion and avoids a direct vote. This motion is useful in disposing of a badly chosen main motion that cannot be either adopted or rejected without undesirable consequences.
Point of Order	Point This is an administrative procedure that can be used when a member believes the rules of the assembly are being violated. It takes precedence over any pending motion, does not require a second, and is not debatable. The motion is ruled upon by the chair.

In conducting business, committee members must avoid personalities and under no circumstances question the motives of another member. No one is entitled speak a second time if a member who has not spoken desires to. Members must not disturb the debate by having side conversations or in any other way Committee members must avoid “Dilatory” motions. A motion is dilatory if it seeks to obstruct or thwart the will of the assembly as clearly indicated by the existing situation. Any main or other motion that is frivolous or absurd or that contains no rational proposition is dilatory and cannot be introduced. Whenever the chair becomes convinced that one or more members are repeatedly using parliamentary forms for dilatory purposes, he/she should either not recognize these members or he/she should rule that such motions are out of order.

The allowable methods to vote in TNI are by voice, by roll call, by email, or by unanimous consent. Usually, but not always, email votes occur after a motion and second have been made during the regular deliberative process. A member has no obligation to explain his/her vote. It is the duty of every member who has an opinion on a motion to express it by his/her vote. However, a member cannot be compelled to vote and a member can abstain from voting. Members who do not vote on a motion provided electronically are considered to have abstained. An abstention is not a vote and is not counted as such. The exception is that all voting members of Expert Committees must vote on adoption of accreditation standards. Abstentions are not allowed.

- Super Majority Votes that require a Roll Call are:
- Approval of new and revised Standards;
- Approval of all steps in the SIR process (including Expert Committee votes);
- All accreditation body recognitions;
- All matters of laboratory accreditation;
- Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) Tables; and
- SOPs related to standards development and accreditation body recognition.

The public, especially Associate Members, are encouraged to participate in the assembly. Such participation shall be controlled by the committee chair. For example, the chair may allow participation by Associate Members after committee member discussion. Time limits are 10 minutes for each speaker unless approved by the assembly.

The *chair* is the presiding officer of the assembly. The vice-chair is the presiding officer of the assembly in the case of the unavailability of the chair. The presiding officer shall have all of the power and duties of that office to:

- Open and call the meeting to order.
- Announce in proper sequence the business that comes before the assembly.
- Recognize members who are entitled to speak.
- State and put to vote all questions that legitimately come before the assembly.
- Protect the assembly from obviously dilatory motions.
- Enforce the rules relating to debate and those relating to order and decorum. Expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of the members.
- Decide all questions of order, subject to appeal.
- Respond to inquiries of members relating to parliamentary procedure.
- Declare the meeting adjourned.

The presiding officer is also responsible for maintaining decorum. The presiding officer may interrupt a speaker if decorum is not being observed. A member may declare a Point of Order to interrupt a speaker and, after getting recognized by the presiding officer, bring attention to another member who is failing to observe decorum. The presiding officer then directs the member to come into compliance. If a member fails to come into compliance, the presiding officer shall call the member to order. If a member continually fails to adhere to decorum, the presiding officer may consider his/her removal from the committee.

While not in RONR, experience has shown these to be best practices:

- Use Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings and screen sharing.
- Use Outlook, or other similar software to schedule meetings so that a calendar invite is added to Outlook.
- Committee agendas and related documents should be sent at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Ensure email votes are tracked and the result provided for the next meeting.
- Meetings on Mondays/Fridays have become unpopular. Consider moving meetings to the middle of the week.
- Strictly use the TNI requirements to remove inactive voting members.
- Having an odd number of committee members enhances the ability to achieve a quorum.

The business of TNI is conducted primarily by committees, which rely on Robert's Rules of Order to maintain decorum and fair participation. TNI's ongoing success depends on the active and engaged involvement of individuals who serve on these committees. The traditional and long-standing modifications to RONR and the procedures described here and in SOPs 1-101 and 1-102 have served the organization well over its history and are expected to do so far into the future.

Environmental Measurement Symposium (EMS) Plenary Sessions

By Scott Siders, PDC Laboratories

It was a pleasure, along with Elizabeth Turner, to co-chair the 2025 EMS Wednesday Morning Plenary Session. The Session was titled: ***Building a Quality Culture as the Foundation for Reliable Data***. We developed this session with the intent to cover key topics relating to building and maintaining a quality culture at environmental testing laboratories.

Judy Morgan spoke to how every quality program has to balance compliance requirements and operational demands. She emphasized that a delicate balance between quality and operations is essential, and that balance can inadvertently get tipped one direction or the other. Striking a balance between the two is ideal and leadership roles, collaboration, and support were the primary focal points of her presentation. Her talk included a candid discussion on the role of leadership in setting the foundation for a quality culture and went over the key principles that must be addressed to set a solid foundation for a quality culture.

Val Slaven spoke to how inspiring a quality culture starts with leadership conveying a clear vision and a common goal that fosters a strong sense of community. She went on to state how it doesn't stop there. Val emphasized that a true quality culture also requires open and transparent communication, empowered staff, and consistent employee feedback with public recognition. She went on to explore effective strategies for communicating and engaging with staff to ensure that a culture of quality remains strong and self-sustaining.

Sabina Stankevicius spoke to the critical role of training and development has in fostering a high-performing and successful environmental laboratory. She discussed key training areas, including technical skills development, QMS training, data integrity and ethics training, and leadership development that are essential. Furthermore, Sabina emphasized strategies for cultivating a culture of continuous learning and how employee empowerment drives innovation and can enhance overall laboratory performance. She explained how investing in the training and development of personnel is crucial for laboratories to maintain a competitive edge. She demonstrated how these types of initiatives enable employees to enhance technical proficiency, ensure compliance, and deliver the highest quality results to their clients.

I then spoke to what can help maintain an established quality culture. The presentation discussed performance metrics specific to the quality culture, best practices that complement a quality culture and the quality management system (QMS) elements that contribute greatly to maintaining the quality culture that a laboratory has worked hard to establish. I went on to indicate how the metrics used to evaluate and manage the overall performance of a quality culture can, and should, vary to some extent from those used for the QMS. These metrics were identified, explained, and contrasted to the

QMS metrics typically used at a laboratory. I then laid out certain best practices that can be utilized and put into place. Risk management, customer-centric focus, sustainable practices, digital tool, and employee recognition were all discussed. Further, QMS elements like internal audits, management review, CAPA and customer compliant processes, and data integrity were discussed, including how they contribute greatly to helping maintain the quality culture. Together, all these can help maintain your quality culture.

Lastly, **Elizabeth Turner** provided an imaginative look at two case studies related to quality culture and how techniques were used to foster quality culture improvements. Her case studies were pulled from direct involvement with laboratories over the past 25+ years. She showed in her case study how a transformation in a laboratory's quality culture began with leadership commitment, and incorporated a strong training program, utilization and measurement of key performance indicators, employee empowerment, and the removal of QMS and organizational silos to foster a strong quality culture at the case study laboratory.

Together, all these presentations, we hope, gave the audience a better roadmap and sense to what it takes to have or maintain a quality culture at their own laboratory.

TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard Volume 1 Module 2: Technical Specialist Update

By Debbie Bond, Alabama Power

As we revise the TNI Environmental Laboratory Standard Volume 1 Module 2, we are making exciting changes to the requirements for Technical Managers. The changes outlined here are the product of collaboration between the Quality Management System Committee, the Competency Task Force, the Technical Module expert committees, and the Accreditation Council. We were determined to improve what is in the current standard so it adjusts to changes in how laboratories work today, and leans into the risk-based approach that is the backbone of ISO 17025:2017 and this coming revision of TNI EL V1M2.

We started by changing the name of the position from Technical Manager to Technical Specialist to clarify the technical expertise needed rather than inadvertently implying that this is a managerial role. The management of a laboratory is important, but this role is responsible for understanding testing performed under the laboratory's scope of accreditation. These updates provide clearer authority, broaden qualification pathways, and ensure continuity, ultimately supporting higher data quality and operational efficiency in laboratories.

- **Role Structure Shift:** We clarified that laboratories can appoint multiple Technical Specialists, each focused on specific parts of the laboratory's scope of accreditation. This improves oversight by ensuring the Technical Specialist for has a good understanding of their specific part, and it allows us to spread out the workload in a way that works best for the laboratory.
- **Flexible Qualification Criteria:** We expanded qualification requirements beyond field-specific education to include various combinations of education and experience, valuing practical competence, and allowing professional certifications and vendor training to count. Laboratories can choose highly experienced staff, even if they lack a specific degree or coursework. Practical experience now carries significant weight without omitting education, which helps laboratories facing hiring challenges. It's easier to promote a skilled internal candidate to Technical Specialist under the new model. The four options are listed in a simple, easy to read format.
- **Explicit Authority for Quality Control:** We clearly defined the responsibilities of Technical Specialists and explicitly state their authority to halt testing, require reanalysis, and withhold results to manage nonconforming work. This clarity empowers them to uphold quality without hesitation. It aligns with best practices (and ISO 17025:2017) by ensuring someone with technical expertise can intervene immediately when criteria are not met. Laboratories benefit from potentially fewer quality incidents, and clients/regulators gain confidence that results

have been thoroughly vetted. This strengthens quality assurance and risk prevention by ensuring a technically knowledgeable individual is reviewing nonconforming work to identify when the product is usable, what limitations it may have, and when it is not usable.

- **Planned Continuity for Absences and Multi-Site Coverage:** We emphasized the need for laboratories to have contingency procedures for a Technical Specialist who is unable to handle responsibilities for longer than 15 (fifteen) days. The contingency procedures include laboratory-defined minimum qualifications for the temporary Technical Specialist and emphasize that one option can be to halt work in the area. By the time the temporary Technical Specialist has been in place for 60 (sixty) days, the laboratory must provide a plan to their accrediting body outlining a timeframe for having a qualified Technical Specialist back in the role. We replaced the term “absent” with “unable to perform responsibilities” because electronic records and video conferencing are expanding the coverage a Technical Specialist can have from afar.

Additionally, Technical Specialists can be responsible for testing in more than one laboratory. This multi-site coverage must be submitted to the accreditation body detailing how the duties will be covered across locations. In some instances, this could help a laboratory cover the responsibilities if one of their Technical Specialists is unable to fulfill their responsibilities.

These options allow laboratories to maintain compliance during short staffing gaps by using an experienced staff member as a bridge, rather than scrambling to find a fully qualified replacement in 2 (two) weeks. Work can continue under the oversight of the interim person or be limited.

- **Broadened Exceptions and Grandfathering:** The new Standard continues to preserve current Technical Managers and Technical Directors in their role, so no one is forced out of this position by the new criteria. It continues to allow the use of operator licenses to qualify. A new exception presented in this coming revision allows accrediting body-approved case-by-case exemptions. This introduces a more flexible, inclusive approach by allowing accrediting bodies to consider unique qualifications or hardships.

Conclusion:

The TNI EL V1M2 draft standard requirements for Technical Specialist lean into the risk-based approach of ISO 17025:2017 while continuing to set some boundaries for laboratories. The approach emphasizes competence, accountability, and flexibility, as well as open communication with accreditation bodies. Laboratory personnel will find clearer expectations for their roles and perhaps new opportunities for advancement. Accreditation bodies will have a more streamlined way to evaluate laboratories against these requirements. These changes provide significant advantages: they make the standard more practical to implement, bolster the technical rigor of laboratories, and ultimately support the production of high-quality environmental data.

TNI Consensus Standards Development

By Paul Junio, Pace Laboratories

All of the TNI Environmental Laboratory Standards are in some state of revision. Any TNI member or member of the public may comment on the proposed changes. In addition to any comments submitted, SIRs are reviewed to see if they should result in changes being made to the Standard. Comments that are submitted are ruled persuasive or non-persuasive, and those decisions are published. If a comment is ruled persuasive, it requires a modification to the proposed Standard, which is followed by another Draft Standard and comment period. The process of revision – committee approval – public comment – continues until there are no persuasive comments received.

Below is a brief summary of where each of the Volumes and Modules stands:

Volume 1: Management and Technical Requirements for Laboratories Performing Environmental Analysis

Module 1 Proficiency Testing is under development within the Proficiency Testing Expert Committee (PTEC). This is one of four (4) modules that the committee has in revision and is expected to be the last, or next to last, of the four (4) to be completed. Each of the four (4) Modules under revision will have changes made to ensure that each of these Modules are in alignment with the others.

Module 2 Quality Systems General Requirements is not yet complete for publishing as a Draft Standard, but it will likely be ready in time for the Forum on Environmental Measurement early next year in Boston. The Expert Committee has taken all language of ISO 17025:2017 and included any text in ISO 17025:2005 and TNI Module 2 2016 that is deemed worth keeping. Review has included removing duplicative requirements from either ISO 17025:2005 or TNI Module 2 2016. As a result, certain changes are made in the body of the Module without changing requirements in the Standard (the requirement still exists, it's just stated differently). The Committee has reviewed the entirety of this potential draft and taken previous suggestions into consideration. Technical Specialist language seems to be settled. A Technical Specialist is required for every Field of Accreditation. There need not be a single person who handles this role throughout the laboratory. The laboratory must clearly define how the Technical Specialist responsibilities align with the laboratory's scope of accreditation. The Committee's final review process involves a review of the definitions that are included in the current Standard, as well as those that may be added. The Committee hopes to have a Draft ready for discussion at NEMC in St. Louis.

Module 3 Quality Systems for Asbestos Testing has a finalized Module 3 effective July 2023. This revision was re-written from a technology standpoint and will still be reviewed as additional modules are completed to assure that no issues of implementation arise. It did not address Technical Specialist, so it may need to be re-opened depending on the direction taken with Technical Specialist in Module 2.

Module 4 Quality Systems for Chemistry Testing has undergone work by multiple Work Groups of the Expert Committee. Those groups included Method Validation and Verification, LOD/LOQ, Demonstration of Capability, Calibration, Quality Control, Data Acceptance, and Sample Handling. There was an extensive re-write with little change in intent. EPA's MDL Procedure is now the preferred procedure, and LOQ is unchanged. The Draft Module 4 was posted for comment on the TNI website, and comments are due by November 13, 2025.

Module 5 Quality Systems for Microbiology Testing has approved a Draft of Module 5. This Draft was posted on April 10, 2025, for its 90-day review by TNI Membership this spring. The Committee is currently reviewing 132 comments received. Many of those comments are on a limited number of items, so the work on this Draft Standard is not as difficult as the number of comments makes it out to be. The Committee itself recognized some items that it felt could be better written during the public comment period.

Module 6 Quality Systems for Radiochemistry has a finalized Module effective January, 2023. It also will be subject to a review to ensure that there are no issues with implementation, and may need to address any issues that arise with the Technical Specialist as written in Module 2.

Module 7 Quality Systems for Whole Effluent Toxicity was posted for its review by TNI membership on February 26, 2025. There were 74 comments received, many of which dealt with definitions. The committee has begun work on its Response to Comments.

Volume 2: General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Environmental Laboratories

Modules 1 & 3 will be combined into a new Module 1. The Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee is discussing the last few comments on their Draft Standard that were received during the comment period in June 2023. There have been revisions made based on these comments, so Draft Revision 2 will still be published.

Module 2 Proficiency Testing Requirements for Accreditation Bodies is among the four (4) modules previously mentioned under the purview of the Proficiency Testing Expert Committee. No substantive changes are anticipated in this Module, but (like Volume 1 Module 1) it is of a lower priority for the Committee.

Volume 3: General Requirements for Environmental Proficiency Test Providers is expected to have a draft version ready to discuss soon. Its changes need to be reflective of those made in Volumes 4, 1 & 2.

Volume 4: General Requirements for an Accreditor of Environmental Proficiency Test Providers was posted for comment June 23, 2025. The comment period closed after ninety (90) days. The committee is currently reviewing the comments that were received.

Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations Standards

Volume 1: General Requirements for Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations has finalized its Standard. The Standard was reviewed by CSDPEC and no implementation issues were found in it.

The Field Activities Committee has completed its overview of **Volume 2: General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations**. They are beginning the process of gathering comments from within the committee to consider in their review prior to posting a Draft for review by TNI membership.

As always, check for updates on these Modules by keeping an eye on the News section on the TNI website. You can also subscribe to any announcements of Standard activity [here](#).

Chemistry Expert Committee Advances Revisions to the V1M4 Quality Systems for Chemical Testing of the 2016 TNI Standard

By Michelle Wade, Wade Consulting

The Chemistry Expert Committee (CEC) has been diligently working on revisions to the 2016 TNI Standard, with formal efforts beginning in late 2021—though preliminary discussions began well before that time.

Prior to issuing the Notice of Intent to Modify Volume 1, Module 4 (NOI) in September 2021, the CEC thoroughly examined a range of critical topics. These included distinguishing laboratory-level versus analyst-level Demonstrations of Capability (DOCs), revising the Method Detection Limit (MDL) procedure, enhancing requirements for method validation and verification, and updating calibration procedures.

Following publication of the NOI, the committee organized into smaller workgroups to address the extensive updates required across multiple sections of the standard. These work groups focused on:

- **Sections 1.4 / 1.5** – Method Selection and Method Validation, including LOD/LOQ (Validation and Verification)
- **Section 1.6** – Demonstration of Capability
- **Section 1.7.1** – Calibration
- **Sections 1.7.2–1.7.4** – Quality Control, Data Acceptance, and Sample Handling

Each workgroup's proposed revisions were reviewed and refined by the full committee. The CEC also incorporated broader, overarching changes, such as removing the term "should" for greater clarity and addressing distinctions between documents and records.

Throughout the development process, the committee provided multiple opportunities for public engagement. Draft sections and proposed changes were presented at TNI meetings to solicit feedback from stakeholders, which the committee carefully considered when shaping the draft.

In August 2025, shortly before the CEC's session at the National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC) in St. Louis, the committee voted to release the draft revised standard for public review. The draft was officially published on **August 15, 2025**, initiating a 90-day public comment period.

The CEC will begin reviewing and responding to submitted comments during its **October 1, 2025** meeting. This review will continue at the **January TNI Forum on Environmental Accreditation in Boston**, as the committee works to finalize the updated standard.

Update to Chlordane Listings in Proficiency Testing Tables, Effective January 1, 2026

By Susan Jackson, South Carolina DES

The TNI Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee (PTPEC) has approved updates to the **Non-Potable Water (NPW)** and **Solid and Chemical Materials (SCM)** Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) Tables regarding the analyte **gamma/trans-Chlordane**.

Earlier this year, a discrepancy was identified between the FoPT Tables and the corresponding EPA methods for this analyte. The issue stems from longstanding confusion in the nomenclature of chlordane isomers, as noted in **EPA Method 8081B**:

"The nomenclature of the various forms of chlordane has been the subject of some confusion in both Agency methods and the open literature for some time."

Clarifying the Chemistry

Technical chlordane (CAS #12789-03-6) is a mixture primarily composed of:

- cis-Chlordane (CAS #5103-71-9)
- trans-Chlordane (CAS #5103-74-2)

The structure commonly referred to as **trans-Chlordane** has, at times, been mistakenly labeled as **gamma-Chlordane**, with a separate CAS number **5566-34-7**. This has led to inconsistencies across EPA methods and reference materials.

FoPT Table Revisions

Previously, the FoPT Tables listed **gamma-Chlordane** (CAS #5566-34-7) under **TNI Analyte Code 7245**. However, multiple EPA methods – including current revisions – refer to the analyte as **gamma- or γ -Chlordane** with CAS #5103-74-2, which is the correct registry number for **trans-Chlordane** (TNI Code 7972). Some methods refer to it directly as **trans-Chlordane**.

Additionally, it was confirmed that **gamma-Chlordane (CAS #5566-34-7)** is **not commercially available** as a Certified Reference Material or neat chemical.

Collaboration and Resolution

TNI collaborated with the Environmental Monitoring Coalition (EMC) to request clarification from the EPA regarding the true analyte of concern when gamma-Chlordane is referenced in methods, permits, and other regulatory documents.

The NPW and SCM FoPT Tables have been updated to reflect:

- **trans-Chlordane (CAS #5103-74-2)** as the correct analyte
- **TNI Analyte Code 7972**
- A footnote indicating: “Formerly listed as gamma-Chlordane (TNI Analyte Code 7245).”

These changes will take effect **January 1, 2026**, ensuring consistency with EPA methods and improving clarity for all stakeholders. For any questions regarding FoPT tables, please contact the PTPEC. For any accreditation questions, please contact your Accreditation Body.

Upcoming Plenary: Field Sampling and Measurements — Ensuring Reliable Results

By Katie Strothman, Sanders Laboratories, Inc.

When it comes to environmental data, reliability begins long before a sample reaches the lab. It starts in the field — in the way samples are collected, handled, and measured under real-world conditions. That’s the focus of the upcoming plenary session, **Field Sampling and Measurements: Ensuring Reliable Results**.

At the Hyatt Regency in Boston, this session will introduce the new TNI Field Sampling and Measurement Organization (FSMO) Volume 1 Standard — not as more paperwork to file, but as a practical guide to strengthening data quality where it starts. Because let’s be honest: real-world sampling isn’t always smooth. Weather changes, equipment quirks, last-minute adjustments, and documentation gaps can all put data integrity at risk. The FSMO framework is designed to help field teams navigate those challenges and deliver results that stand up to scrutiny.

Participants will:

- Gain an understanding of the framework of Volume 1 of the TNI FSMO Standard;
- Comprehend quality and data objectives for field activities; and
- Gain an understanding of a number of key elements of a management system for a field sampling and field measurement operation.

This plenary will connect those objectives to the daily realities of fieldwork — mislabeled bottles, resample headaches, and everything in between. By aligning with the FSMO Standard, organizations can reduce risk, improve efficiency, and provide defensible, reliable results to clients, regulators, and the public. Because in the end, strong science doesn’t start in the lab — it starts in the field.

What’s Next for FSMO Standards

The new FSMO Standards are nearing the finish line. Implementation dates for accreditation bodies are being finalized, with a three-year window currently under consideration. In addition, Volume 2 is still under review, and updates will follow as that process moves forward.

To support this transition, we are also developing implementation tools and providing clear guidance on how to achieve accreditation under the new standards. In the coming year, look for workshops and training opportunities designed to help organizations prepare, adapt, and succeed. These efforts ensure that the FSMO framework is not only timely, but also practical — giving sampling organizations the resources they need to put standards into practice with confidence.

ChairSpeaks: Musings from the TNI Chair

By Alfredo Sotomayor

“The Shadow of Their Smiles”

This and last year have been speckled with professional losses for many of us. At the Institute, we continue to mourn the passing of Jack Farrell, Lynn Bradley, and Jordan Adelson, stalwarts of our Board of Directors.

Jack, Lynn, Jordan...Considering them, I wanted to appraise their intelligence, disposition, contributions, and commitment to the Institute...I went to the Hegelian dialectic, not to reduce them to a weary formula, but to acknowledge their essence as it lingers with us.

Thesis

Jack was fearless, bold, and bared his mind and soul readily. He championed big ideas and was good at rallying others to action. When they ran the show, Jack sat in the back row of the theater watching, enjoying listening to the multiple variations of a theme he had composed. He was not an agent provocateur, but had a knack for planting seeds in fertile ground.

At a very low-numbered NELAC meeting, Jack half-summoned me and chomping on his cigar told me, “I like how you think,” no doubt reacting to a smarty remark I made about a now forgotten point. A few years later, after a follow-up at the bar, he asked me to critique a draft of a course he was creating for EPA. That led to a dry run in Arizona and many other collaborations.

At the Board, Jack was no less conventional and had opinions informed by his analytical expertise and sincere desire to make the Institute flourish. He used his strong powers of persuasion to try to make us, many times convincingly, to consider the future. Jack’s spark got us thinking and talking.

Antithesis

Lynn exuded quiet wisdom. Her voice was most often a compelling whisper tinged with Southern overtones. Her tenure at APHL and EPA informed her profound understanding of the institutional, and how to navigate the intricacies of the establishment to reach the right people, to get results. I knew her then, but I got to know her at another level when she came to work for TNI. She was the Program Administrator for several committees I led, and of course, she was staff to the Board.

Lynn was an expert listener, so when she spoke, we listened. Politely, almost tentatively, she would invite the Directors to consider an alternative or would explain the possible consequences of our thinking. Lynn’s was the practical voice that brought some of us back to Earth when carried away with premature overenthusiasm, saving us from drifting too far above.

I admired Lynn’s fundamental sincerity; she was constitutionally incapable of being false. She served me well as an advisor, especially when I had decisions that were not obvious at first glance. We had great conversations, many late at night. Conversations in which, in between deliberating about meaning and life, she gave me just the right direction. I miss and will miss that.

Synthesis

Jordan was the voice of elegant reason, never flustered, the approachable gentleman civil servant. He was the architect of the Departments of Defense and Energy (DOD, DOE) accreditation program, taking what was already there, modifying, and adapting it for DOD and DOE use. He led an ultimate melding, taking the TNI Standard and annotating it with gray boxes of explanations and additions to suit the agencies’ needs.

ChairSpeaks: Musings from the TNI Chair

“The Shadow of Their Smiles” cont.

Jordan had a great ability to combine different sources and reconcile them into workable blueprints. On the Board, on many occasions, he would actively listen to a discussion and then, serenely, offer a summary and a possible course for action. Jordan was not flustered easily. I appreciated his sense of proportion in considering alternatives and his convincingly good delivery.

Jordan’s sudden passing shocked us. He accomplished much, but was poised to do much more. I had planned to tap him for a special committee assignment. This loss of potential is all the sadder for being unfair.

The Cheshire Cat

Before reading Alice in Wonderland, I thought a Cheshire Cat was a breed, like a Siamese or a Main Coon. It turns out Lewis Carroll did not invent the cat; he appropriated an expression and converted it into a character, with a great twist.

To grin like a Cheshire Cat was to display all teeth in an emphatic smile. Carroll’s cat had a full grin that would remain visible as the feline’s body gradually disappeared. He (Carroll) inverted the usual by making smiles remain and bodies vanish. I find poetry in the conceit.

Remembering our friends, I beam. I feel their presence, their smiles lingering and popping up brightly on command or unexpectedly. Even though they are gone, the shadow of their smiles still color and light the Institute’s dawn, grinning, shining, individually, and collectively.

Only connect.

Alfredo

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