

## **Lake Erie West Regional Council Community Water Resource Advisory Group Meeting**

July 23, 2026

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Lake Erie West (TMACOG) Boardroom

300 Martin Luther King Jr Drive, Suite 300

Toledo, Ohio 43604

### **Welcome and Introductions –**

Melissa called for round table introductions.

### **Attendance**

Ryan Gierhart , OEPA  
Kris Barnswell, OEPA  
Laura Sullivan, Ohio EPA  
Paul Fletcher, Kleinfelder  
Melissa Hopfer, Lake Erie West  
Kari Gerwin, Lake Erie West  
Tiara Gonzalez, Lake Erie West

### **Virtual:**

Elizabeth Buening, Ottawa County Sanitary Engineer  
Archie Lundsey, Ohio EPA  
Jenna Morse, Monroe County Drainage Commission

### **Staff Update – Operator Training Recap**

Kari gave an overview of the operator training that was held in June. Topics covered during this training included source water protection, financing, microplastics, PFAS, and various regulatory updates. We provided up to 6.5 contact hours for a mix of water and wastewater OEPA contact hours. Thank you to Ottawa County for hosting the event.

### **Staff Update – 208 Plan**

Melissa gave an overview of the current work being done to update the 208 plan. Kingsley is currently working on the vulnerability chapter which will incorporate water, wastewater, non-point source, HSTS, and stormwater infrastructure. Kingsley is also working on SWAT

modeling for the non-point source chapter. This modeling will also be incorporated in the non-point source mapping tool.

Lake Erie West has been working on public engagement on this plan, including a survey, focus groups, and tabling across the region.

### **Staff Update – FPA Updates**

Kari gave an overview of the upcoming FPA update with Sandusky County. Kingsley will be reaching out to DMAs within the county to begin discussing these updates. Any DMA is welcome to submit updates to us at any time.

Annual updates include any changes to DMA responsibilities, primary contact information, FPA boundaries and maps, package sewage treatment plants, critical sewage areas, sanitary sewage service availability maps, Publicly Owned Treatment Works data and facility needs, Capital Improvement Plan tables, and any other data and information changes relevant to FPA.

### **Topics for Discussion – Service area boundaries for water and wastewater**

Lake Erie West is interested in mapping service area boundaries for both water and wastewater. Kari asked the group how water and wastewater service area boundaries are currently defined, and how Lake Erie West could support DMAs by using GIS to map service lines and service area boundaries.

There was a consensus that ***mapping waterline data would be a good starting point*** but there could be a significant difference between the current service area and a potential service area. It is important to note that residents are not required to tap into a main water line if one becomes available, whereas they are required to tap into a sewer line if one becomes available.

Ohio EPA Division of Drinking and Ground Water currently tracks service line data under the lead and copper rule. This data is not currently available publicly, but Laura will ask about sharing it with Lake Erie West.

When determining service area boundaries, Ottawa County typically uses township boundaries, and they currently have all of their service lines mapped using GIS. They do not have their service area boundary mapped. Monroe County similarly has their service lines mapped but not their overall boundary. Lucas County currently maps both their service lines and service area boundary.

If Lake Erie West were to begin mapping service area boundaries, greater support will most likely be needed for smaller villages/DMA's. It would be most valuable for this data to be accessible to Ohio EPA and DMA's, but not publicly available.

### **Topics for Discussion – Capital Improvement database development and management**

Lake Erie West is looking at using a new approach to capital improvement data updates. This would allow DMA's to regularly update Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in an interactive dashboard and also allow them to click on the map and see all ongoing CIPs. Melissa asked the group if we should keep these updates as they are or make adjustments?

It was recommended that the current three-year cycle is too long, so annual would better capture changes and updates. Ohio drinking water facilities are required to review and update their CIP on an annual basis, so an annual cycle would make sense. From July-September Ottawa County is reviewing their capital improvements.

The group agreed that the approach of DMA's updating their own capital improvement data would be preferred.

**Melissa and Kingsley will begin reaching out to individual DMA's to get their input on this new approach.**

### **Regulatory update – OEPA**

Ohio Division of Drinking and Ground Water has launched a new tool so operators can search for courses that offer contact hours. On May 18<sup>th</sup>, US EPA proposed an extension to PFAS rules and the removal of four PFAS chemicals. Emerging contaminant initial monitoring will continue next year. Another round of mini-grants will be opening this fall around September. Ohio EPA Division of Drinking and Ground Water website has gone through a number of updates to make things easier to find.

Ohio Division of Surface Water has decided not to move forward with the Data Center General Permit. If a data center needs to be permitted, they will need to apply for an individual permit. They will also begin interim reporting for the Maumee General Permit in the next year.

Ohio EPA has been addressing a fertilizer spill that occurred on July 3<sup>rd</sup> south-west of Napoleon into Houston Creek. A nearby resident called emergency response, which began working on containing and removing the spill. A significant rain fall a few days later caused one of the containment dams to fail. The resulting release caused a fish kill in the Maumee River. Napoleon's water intake was switched to their reservoir for a few weeks but was able to switch back to the river intake this week.

## **Partner Updates**

Ohio EPA has several vacancies in their NE office as well as several IT retirements in the Drinking and Ground Water. If you are working with any folks in those offices, please be patient.

A University of Toledo has a current project

Kleinfelder won bids on three projects with the City of Toledo updating infrastructure and pump stations. They will also be working with Port Clinton on sewer replacement/improvements.

Ottawa County regionalization with Marblehead projects are open for bids. They also will begin construction this fall on the Allen feed phosphorus removal improvement project.

## **Public Comments**

No members of the public were present.

## **Recommendations for Water Quality Council**

None provided

## **Adjourn**

2026 Community Water Resources Meeting Dates: Jan 22, Apr 16, Jul 23, Oct 22

2026 Water Quality Council Meeting Dates: Feb 9, May 11, Aug 10, Nov 9