



Editor-In-Chief, Elizabeth Turner
North Texas Municipal Water District

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The Institute Review

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First Quarter 2012

Environmental Measurement Symposium

By Lara Phelps, USEPA and Jerry Parr, TNI

For the sixth year, the Environmental Measurement Symposium, which represents the combined meetings of the National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC) and the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation (the Forum), will be meeting at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill in Washington, DC from August 5 – 10, 2012.

Some of the highlights for the week include:

- ◆ Over 175 technical presentations and posters on a variety of cutting-edge environmental monitoring issues;
- ◆ Twenty meetings of The NELAC Institute (TNI) Committees to further TNI efforts on environmental laboratory accreditation, proficiency testing, and accreditation of field sampling and measurement organizations;
- ◆ An exhibit program showcasing the latest innovations in environmental monitoring;
- ◆ Six different training courses from methods to field activities to quality systems;
- ◆ Three special keynote presentations on topics of general interest;
- ◆ A special half-day session about Collaboration in Method Development and Validation; and
- ◆ An open meeting of the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board.

ENVIRONMENTAL MEASUREMENT SYMPOSIUM
AUGUST 5—10, 2012
WASHINGTON, DC

Register Today!

Deadline for pre-registration for the August 2012 conference is **July 13!**

Forum on Laboratory Accreditation

The NELAC Institute's (TNI's) semi-annual meeting is an integral part of the Environmental Measurement Symposium (Symposium). Throughout this issue of The Institute Review, multiple articles are provided to prepare you for the meeting: the mentoring sessions, the Assessment Forum, training courses, and the National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC), which is held jointly with the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation under the Symposium. This article summarizes the meetings of TNI's four (4) core programs. As these sessions become further developed, additional details will be available on the TNI website at <http://www.nelac-institute.org>.

Proficiency Testing Program: Wednesday, August 8

On Wednesday afternoon, TNI's Proficiency Testing (PT) Executive Committee will have a session devoted to PT issues. Some of the topics to be discussed include:

- ◆ Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for adding analytes to Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) tables;
- ◆ Changes to the existing FoPT tables; and
- ◆ PT database for review of PT Providers.

Consensus Standards Development Program: Monday – Thursday, August 5 – 8

The purpose of this program is to develop consensus standards for use by TNI's other programs. This program also has a support role in assisting other programs with activities such as guidance and standards interpretation. All six (6) of the Expert Committees in this program will be meeting in Washington, DC.



Environmental Measurement Symposium (cont.)

- ◆ The Environmental Measurement Methods Expert Committee (EMMEC) has approved several items to be included in the calibration section of the environmental laboratory standard. Draft language for a proposed Working Draft Standard (WDS) is being prepared, and it will be presented to the membership.
- ◆ The Field Activities Committee (FAC) plans to present a new draft standard for accreditation of Field Sampling and Measurement Organizations (FSMOs).
- ◆ The Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee (LABEC) will be presenting a number of ideas, including a draft generic laboratory accreditation application and information on how TNI can support the use of third-party assessors by an Accreditation Body (AB).
- ◆ The Proficiency Testing Expert Committee (PTEC) expects to have a proposed Working Draft Standard (WDS) for all four (4) PT standards before the August meeting.
- ◆ The Quality Systems Committee will present all comments on the 2012 Voting Draft Standard (VDS).
- ◆ The Stationary Source Audit Sample (SSAS) Committee will be discussing the latest developments in the TNI SSAS Program in response to the privatization of the EPA's Stationary Source Compliance Audit Program (SSCAP).

National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP): Monday, August 6

The NEFAP Executive Committee will meet on Monday afternoon with a session devoted to discussions for implementing an accreditation program for FSMOs. Topics will include:

- ◆ A new checklist for assessing FSMOs;
- ◆ Changes to Policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); and
- ◆ Status of implementing this program.

National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP): Thursday, August 9

On Thursday morning, a session is devoted to discussions on NELAP. Topics include:

- ◆ Use of third-party Accreditation Bodies (ABs);
- ◆ Update on recognition of NELAP ABs;
- ◆ Update on Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs); and
- ◆ Status of implementing the 2009 TNI Standard.

National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC)

The National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC) provides the principal forum for addressing policy and technical issues affecting monitoring in all environmental media (i.e., water, air, soil, and waste) and across all environmental programs. NEMC is sponsored by TNI under a cooperative agreement with the US EPA. The technical program is organized by a committee of environmental experts from government and private industry, bringing together a balance of technical and policy topics for each year's symposium that are of interest to all.

NEMC 2012 will feature over 175 presentations and posters organized into concurrent technical sessions from Monday through Thursday with a general session on Wednesday morning. A keynote address on a major topic will kick-off each day.

Technical Sessions for NEMC 2012 include:

- ◆ Field Measurements, Sensors, In-Situ Monitoring
- ◆ Air – Three Different Topical Sessions
- ◆ Advances in Sample Preparation/Clean-up
- ◆ Academic Research Topics in Environmental Measurement and Monitoring
- ◆ Collaborative Efforts to Improve Environmental Monitoring



New Directors Elected

The NELAC Institute held an election for individuals to serve as members of the TNI Board of Directors for terms beginning on April 11, 2012. The individuals listed below were elected by the membership.

NEWLY ELECTED DIRECTORS

Scott Siders

Illinois EPA
NELAP Accreditation Body

Susan Wyatt

Minnesota DOH
NELAP Accreditation Body

RE-ELECTED DIRECTORS

Joe Aiello

New Jersey DEP
NELAP Accreditation Body

Aaren Alger

Pennsylvania DEP
NELAP Accreditation Body

Judy Duncan

Oklahoma DEQ (retired)
Other

Jack Farrell

Analytical Excellence
Other

David Speis

QC Laboratories
Laboratory



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr

Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org

URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Environmental Measurement Symposium (cont.)

- ◆ Innovative and Emerging Technologies for Analysis of Environmental Contaminants
- ◆ Shale Gas Exploration – Hydraulic Fractionation
- ◆ Operational and Advocacy Issues Impacting the Environmental Laboratory Industry
- ◆ Topics in Forensic Chemistry
- ◆ Drinking Water
- ◆ Microbiology
- ◆ Data Management
- ◆ EPA Methods Update
- ◆ Geospatial Tools for Linking Monitoring and Modeling
- ◆ Contaminated Sediments

The Wednesday morning General Session will feature four (4) presentations regarding collaboration on method development and validation from:

- ◆ Mike Shapiro, US EPA Office of Water
- ◆ Richard Burrows, TestAmerica, Inc.
- ◆ Kory Kelly, Phenomonex
- ◆ John Gumper, Standard Methods

Please take a few minutes to look over the preliminary program and register today. To view abstracts, the preliminary program, and conference arrangement details, visit <http://www.nemc.us>. We look forward to seeing you in August!

Training Courses at the Environmental Measurement Symposium

By Jerry Parr, TNI

As part of the Environmental Measurement Symposium in Washington, DC from August 5 – 10, 2012, six (6) training courses on a variety of topics are being offered. A brief summary of each of the courses is provided below; however, more information about these courses can be found at <http://www.nelac-institute.org/meetings.php>. Please remember to register for each course you wish to attend as seating is limited. An additional charge from the general registration fee may apply.

1. Basic Chemistry and Operation of Currently Approved Wet Chemical Methods

Interact with your peers, share information, and learn secrets and shortcuts for analyzing some important analytes by approved methods. The class will cover fundamentals of the chemical reactions and basic “theoretical” operation of the analyzers used to perform the methods. This course is designed with the analyst in mind. Be prepared to discuss problems you have experienced and obtain solutions from the teacher and other members of your class.

2. Being Audited for the Correct Use of Standard Methods

The class will cover changes for users of Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater in the current 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 136 Method Update Rule and how it differs from the current 40 CFR Part 141 requirements. The participant will review the differences between water and wastewater method requirements for Standard Methods and how to either prepare for an audit or be audited. Curriculum includes:

- ◆ Reviewing the CFRs;
- ◆ Determining what Standard Methods edition you should use;
- ◆ Reviewing the method changes as they apply to 136 or 141;
- ◆ Reviewing places to correct your standard operating procedures (SOPs)/Policies;



Upcoming Meetings of Interest to Members

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality **Trade Fair**
May 1–2; Austin, TX
<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/>

American Public Health Laboratories **Annual Conference**
May 20–23; Seattle, WA
<http://www.aphl.org>

Florida Society of Environmental Analysts **Spring Meeting**
May 23–25;
Clearwater Beach, FL
<http://www.fsea.net>

Texas Water Environment Federation **Laboratory Topics Seminar**
June 6–7; Austin, TX
<http://www.weat.org>

New York and Pennsylvania Association of Accredited Environmental Laboratories **Annual Meeting**
July 22–24; Cortland, NY
<http://www.nyaael.org>

The NELAC Institute **Environmental Measurement Symposium**
August 5–9; Washington, DC
<http://www.envmeasym.org>

Virginia Water Environment Federation **Good Laboratory Practices Conference**
August 6; Charlottesville, VA
<http://www.vwea.org>

If you know of any upcoming meetings of interest to environmental laboratory professionals, please contact Jerry Parr at jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Training Courses (cont.)

- ◆ Balancing lab practices to meet both 136 and 141 samples/methods; and
- ◆ Preparing a pre-audit check list.

3. Accreditation Demonstrates Competency for Field Activities

In the development of environmental data collection activities, the competency of the organization involved requires demonstration. Accreditation of field activities ensures that the field organization is competent and provides data of known and documented quality. The accreditation provides the project team with assurance the sampling information is appropriate for the data collection activity. This presentation provides an overview and example of how accreditation using the TNI FSMO Standard demonstrates competency using independent third-party assessments.

4. Getting Ready for NEFAP

The objective of this course is to provide FSMOs with the concepts found in the TNI FSMO Standard and NEFAP requirements. The concepts are presented from the field sampler or technician perspective. Fundamental concepts include handling of proficiency testing (PT) failure, addressing assessor questions, and quality control and assurance dictated by the TNI Standard. This course centers on how to implement a management system for performing field work and demonstrates how sample collection planning (TNI Volume 1, Section 5.7), a data collection activity, ensures data of known and documented quality.

The examples used in the course are practical examples of the implementation of the TNI Standard. The information presented provides all attendees with an understanding on why NEFAP accreditation is important, what accreditation adds to quality, and how it ensures sampling and field data are of known and documented quality. Content will include information on TNI, NEFAP, and how accreditation is achieved. The steps and mechanism for preparing the application for accreditation are included. The TNI FSMO-V1-2007-Rev 0.1 and FSMO-V2-2007-Rev 0.1 will be the basis for the training.

5. A Practical Foundation in ISO/IEC 17025:2005

This interactive and practical foundation course is designed to provide attendees with a general understanding of laboratory accreditation. ISO/IEC 17025:2005, General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, is the internationally-recognized standard for the independent accreditation of laboratories. It specifies criteria for the development and assessment of management systems and laboratory technical controls that provide confidence in the results obtained. The standard can be applied to a wide range of laboratory activities including analytical, clinical, forensic, destructive/non-destructive testing, and instrument/equipment calibration.

6. How to Manage an Effective Quality Management System

The objective of this one-day course is to provide quality assurance managers with tools and suggestions on how to manage an effective quality management system. The material will be based on the requirements outlined in the V1M2 of the 2009 TNI Standard and will include lectures on basic quality control assessment tools, delegating responsibility, identifying root cause, and implementing effective corrective action strategies. Participants will also take part in group activities that will refine their skills as a quality manager.

Accreditation/ Certification Program Profiles

Accreditation/certification program profiles are now available!

In addition to our currently available Laboratory Accreditation Management System (LAMS), we now have a separate compilation of state accreditation/certification program profiles.

These profiles provide detailed information about the certification and accreditation programs operated by our fifty (50) states. For each state, it lists the type of program, the various media for which certification/accreditation is offered, the fees involved, and extensive contact information. There are also links to each state's environmental website (<http://www.nelac-institute.org/abdb.php>).





Special Cooking Class

In addition to the six (6) training courses, TNI has arranged for the Head Chef of the Hyatt Regency Washington to put on a cooking demonstration on Tuesday evening. This class will be on how to prepare a reception and the participants will get to taste the foods prepared.

Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Accreditation Body Task Force (ABTF) Update

By Judy Duncan, ABTF Chair

The Accreditation Body Task Force (ABTF) presented its preliminary report with eight (8) recommended options for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of TNI's National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) at the summer meeting in Seattle (2011). In September, the recommended options were forwarded to various TNI committees. Input and assistance was requested in the development of an implementation plan for the recommended options. Specifically, the committees were asked to identify any impediments to the recommended options and to suggest a plan for implementation. The committees presented draft plans of action at the Sarasota meeting and solicited additional input on these options.

After review of the input received in Sarasota, the ABTF presented a recommended plan of action for the ABTF options to the TNI Board for approval on March 14, 2012. The TNI Board approved the plans of action for the recommended options as listed below:

Option 1: Training

Have TNI develop assessor training, both for technical training and assessment techniques. The Technical Assistance Committee (TAC) will identify training needs, priorities, best delivery methods, learning objectives, and content. TAC will not develop training, but will provide information so that others can do so. TNI staff will be responsible for arranging appropriate delivery of training in accordance with the Educational Delivery System (EDS).

Option 2: Administrative Support Services

Develop a number of support services (e.g., tracking proficiency test data) that TNI could provide to ABs to relieve some of their workload. The Laboratory Accreditation Body Expert Committee (LABEC) will take the lead and focus on development of a standard (generic) application form for lab accreditation that can be completed online, using the Minnesota Environmental Laboratory Data-Online (ELDO) database as the framework. LABEC will work on the generic application along with other tools for tracking PTs, corrective actions, etc. In addition, the TNI Board will develop an action plan to promote the implementation and use of the ELDO database by the NELAP ABs where appropriate, and where it will provide the greatest benefit.

Option 3: National Database

Implement the national database of accredited laboratories to enhance reciprocal accreditations. Implementation of the National Database should remain with the Information Technology Committee and continue to be an ongoing high priority.

Option 4: Third-Party Assessors

Enhance the process by which NELAP-recognized ABs can use third-party assessors, especially to assess laboratories in states that do not participate in NELAP. The LABEC will develop a process to identify qualifications for third-party assessors. This process will involve developing criteria for states to use to evaluate third-party assessors, but does not include a separate credentialing process at this time.

Option 5: Use of Assessments from other Organizations

Use the laboratory assessments performed by the Department of Energy (DoE) or the Department of Defense (DoD) Accreditation Bodies in lieu of assessment performed by the NELAP AB. This option could be implemented in the short term. This recommendation will remain with the NELAP AC for additional evaluation. The AC will review examples of DoD and/or DoE reports before making a final determination on implementation.

Option 6: Sharing of Information and Resources

Develop a system so that NELAP ABs can better share information and resources. The Laboratory Accreditation System Executive Committee (LASEC) will take the lead for implementation of on this option. They have developed an implementation plan for sharing



Advocacy Activities

TNI's Advocacy Committee is charged with promoting TNI's core programs by establishing relationships with other organizations and developing outreach materials to promote national accreditation. Recent activities of the Advocacy Committee include preparing articles for publication in the Water Environment Federation's Lab Solutions newsletter, and establishing a policy on the use of TNI presentations. This will allow TNI members access to a library of presentations on TNI activities.

The Advocacy Committee is also developing a plan for outreach to non-NELAP states in conjunction with the NELAP AC. This plan will include inviting non-NELAP states to participate in a NELAP AC conference call, sending a direct mail piece to states inviting them to attend the summer meeting, and possibly developing a series of webinars. The Advocacy Committee will also monitor EPA's final adoption of the Method Update Rule and will make recommendations for any outreach that may be necessary to facilitate implementation.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Accreditation Body Task Force (ABTF) Update (cont.)

form letters and related documents. However, they feel that more discussion is needed on sharing of assessors from multiple states.

Option 7: Surveillance Assessments

Develop a process to allow the use of surveillance assessments to extend the time frame for a reassessment to beyond two (2) years. The LABEC will take the lead on implementation and consult stakeholders to develop a plan of action.

Option 8: Non-Governmental Accreditation Bodies

Develop a process to allow non-governmental ABs to offer accreditations that would be accepted through reciprocity by the existing NELAP-recognized ABs, especially in states that do not operate a NELAP accreditation program, or where an existing state program may be privatized. The Task Force agreed that accreditation by a non-governmental AB is a viable option. It has the potential to alleviate workload problems for NELAP ABs and there are no insurmountable impediments to its use.

The TNI Board voted to form a new task force to specifically address implementation of Option 8. The new task force will be composed of representatives from the LASEC, the NELAP Accreditation Council (AC), and the original ABTF. The purpose of this new Task Force (AB Task Force II) is:

- 1) To propose an implementation plan to allow non-governmental ABs to grant accreditation in accordance with the TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standard;
- 2) To develop a concept for a national accreditation program that incorporates both governmental and non-governmental accreditations; and
- 3) To facilitate mutual recognition among all recognized accreditation bodies.

The new task force will bring their plan back to the Board for its consideration and approval to proceed with implementation of Option 8.

Regulatory Update

By Jerry Parr, Catalyst Information Resources

This article was prepared to provide TNI members information about events at the national level that may be of some interest. This information was provided to TNI by Jerry Parr, Catalyst Information Resources, and covers the period of January 1, 2012 through March 9, 2012. This will become a regular feature in The Institute Review.

EPA Publishes Supplemental Report on Detection and Quantitation

EPA has published a report that describes a laboratory study EPA conducted to evaluate procedures recommended by the Federal Advisory Committee on Detection and Quantitation (FACDQ). The FACDQ procedures described an approach and set of steps for calculating detection limits (DLs) and quantitation limits (QLs) for two different types of methods. In this study, EPA tested the two (2) versions of the FACDQ procedure and another quantitation procedure evaluated by the Committee known as the lowest concentration minimum reporting level (LCMRL). These procedures were tested on two (2) analytical methods in three (3) laboratories each. The report includes a statistical analysis of the analytical data and provides a detailed discussion comparing the study results to the four (4) measurement quality objectives (MQOs) established for this study.

EPA concluded that none of the procedures tested consistently generated accurate estimates of the lowest concentration at which the study MQOs were achieved. Further, none of the procedures achieved all the desired characteristics of a procedure, as defined by the FACDQ. The Agency also conducted an analysis of method detection limit (MDL) data and calculated minimum level of quantitation (ML) data. This data had been collected as part of the laboratory qualification process for the study. Based on the comparison of the statistical analysis of the



New Notification System for FoPT Table Updates

The PT Executive Committee (PTEC) has developed a new notification system to automatically notify people when updates are made to the FoPT tables. They will continue to post FoPT tables that are in effect, and will now start posting tables that have been approved, but have a posted effective date in the future. This will provide everyone with earlier information on the approved tables.

Follow this link to the FoPT webpage and sign-up to place your name on the FoPT Update Notification List: <http://nelac-institute.org/subscribe-fopt.php>.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Regulatory Update (cont.)

results, the FACDQ procedures may offer an improvement over the MDL/ML procedures as they met the MQOs more often than the MDL/ML. However, because the FACDQ procedure was analyzed for only two (2) methods, EPA is not prepared at this time to adopt the FACDQ procedure for broad application in Clean Water Act programs. They believe more development and testing of the FACDQ procedure is warranted. EPA will revisit this issue when and if new data provides greater support for the adoption of a new procedure. http://water.epa.gov/scitech/methods/cwa/det/upload/fac_report_2009.pdf

EPA Describes Fundamental Changes to EPA's Research Program

Former EPA Science Advisor, Paul Anastas, published an article stating that environmental protection in the United States has reached a critical juncture. EPA has recognized this need for systemic change by implementing a new research paradigm called "The Path Forward." This paper outlines the principles of the Path Forward and the actions taken since 2010 to align EPA's research efforts with the goal of sustainability. <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/es203881e>

EPA Publishes Method 218.7 for Hexavalent Chromium

Method 218.7 provides a procedure for the determination of hexavalent chromium in drinking water using ion chromatography. Samples are analyzed by direct injection. The Lowest Concentration Minimum Reporting Levels (LCMRLs) ranged from 0.012 to 0.036 ug/L. http://water.epa.gov/scitech/drinkingwater/labcert/analyticalmethods_ogwdw.cfm

EPA Publishes New Guidance for Validation of Dioxin Data

EPA has revised the National Functional Guidelines for Chlorinated Dioxin and Furan Data Review to offer guidance on technical evaluation and review of data for chlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (CDD) and chlorinated dibenzofurans (CDF) based on EPA Methods 1613 and 8290A. <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/clp/guidance.htm#dioxin>

22nd Edition of Standard Methods Published

The Water Environment Federation announced the release of the 22nd Edition of Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater. One significant change in this edition is an emphasis on quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) practices. The Standard Methods Committee feels strongly that QA/QC is necessary to ensure that each method produces accurate results. In total, more than forty percent (40%) of the book is new or updated. <https://www.e-wef.org/Home/ProductDetails/tabid/192/productid/17997/Default.aspx>

TNI Educational Delivery System Update

By Ilona Taunton, TNI

In 2011, TNI started a new process for providing training called the Educational Delivery System. Training may be provided by TNI or TNI contractors at TNI meetings in the form of webinars or webcasts, or in conjunction with regional meetings with TNI partners such as the Florida Society of Environmental Analysts (FSEA) or the Water Environment Federation (WEF) of Texas. This training can take different approaches:

- ◆ **TNI-Assisted Training:** TNI supports the training course, and if requested, will help with publicity and registration. TNI does not review the course material nor approve the course in any manner.
- ◆ **TNI-Approved Training:** TNI promotes the training course and helps with publicity, registration, and other activities. TNI reviews and approves the course material before the training occurs and the material usually contains the TNI logo.

A number of training courses are in development and/or scheduled to be offered in 2012. This article summarizes plans that are underway. To see the current list of courses being provided, go to the TNI Educational Delivery System webpage (<http://www.nelac-institute.org/eds-home.php>). You can also access an application form from this webpage, if you would like to provide a training course.



EPA Finalizes "Method Update Rule" for Water Program

EPA has published a pre-publication notice of a final rule that approves new methods, or changes to existing methods, that affect 16 EPA methods, 26 Standard Methods, 7 ASTM methods, and 8 alternate test procedures in 40 CFR Part 136. The rule also contains a number of clarifications relating to approved methods, sample preservation and holding times, and method modifications. Among the more significant changes is a new Section 136.7 that would require "essential" quality control activities for all analyses. The prepublication notice can be found at: http://water.epa.gov/scitech/methods/cwa/update_index.cfm.

The Joint Editorial Board of Standard Methods is working on an article discussing how Standard Methods plans to respond to the EPA decision on how Standard Methods are cited in EPA regulation. This article will be posted on the TNI website in May.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

TNI Educational Delivery System Update (cont.)

TNI Assisted Training Courses

TNI is supporting the efforts of Advanced Systems, Inc. (ASI) to provide assessor training for TNI's National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) and National Environmental Field Activities Program (NEFAP). Courses currently scheduled are:

- ◆ NELAP Basic Assessor Training, May 7-9, Richmond, CA
- ◆ NELAP Basic Assessor Training, June 19-21, Harrisburg, PA
- ◆ NEFAP Basic Assessor Training, June 11-13, Ft. Meade, MD
- ◆ NELAP Technical Assessor Training - Assessing Organic Chemistry, May 10-12, Richmond, CA

Registration for any of these courses is available on the TNI EDS website.

Training Courses at Regional Meetings

TNI has arranged for the following courses to be held in conjunction with several regional meetings this year:

Course	Meeting	Date	For More Information
Requirements for the Use of Test Methods by Accredited Laboratories	Florida Society of Environmental Analysts	May	http://www.fsea.net
Internal Audit, Management Reviews, and Corrective Actions	Water Environment Federation of Texas	June 6	http://www.weat.org
Gas Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry Analysis and Data Review	Pennsylvania Association of Accredited Environmental Laboratories	June 11	http://www.paael.org/
How to Modify a Method Through an Alternate Test Procedure: Meeting the Regulatory Requirements for Federal Compliance	New York Association of Accredited Environmental Laboratories	June 23	http://www.nyaael.org
Tools to Calculate & Evaluate Measurement Performance	New York Association of Accredited Environmental Laboratories	July 23	http://www.nyaael.org
Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater; Part 1000: Compendium Use and Data Quality	New York Association of Accredited Environmental Laboratories	July 24	http://www.nyaael.org

Webinars and Webcasts

TNI is in the process of finalizing a number of training courses that will be held first as a webinar, then as a downloadable webcast. The courses under development are:

- ◆ Theory, Practical Concepts and Implementation of the TNI Requirements for Detection and Quantitation
- ◆ Closing Corrective Action Findings: Once and For All
- ◆ Defining Legally Defensible

Webinars are also planned for 2012 for training on the standards development process and committee chair responsibilities.



Want to Hold A Training Event?

TNI is building a curriculum of training courses that can be provided by various trainers at meetings such as those described above. If you have any interest in having TNI work with your organization to put on such training, please contact Ilona Taunton at ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org.

Changes for PT Requirements for WETT Laboratories

In accordance with TNI's [Procedures Governing Standards Development](#), a Tentative Interim Amendment (TIA) has been adopted by the Proficiency Testing Expert Committee that affects laboratories that perform Whole Effluent Toxicity Testing (WETT). The TIA clarifies that WETT laboratories only need to analyze one PT sample per year, provides information on required corrective actions for PT failures, and changes the time frames for WETT PT Studies. A copy of the TIA can be found at http://www.nelac-institute.org/docs/standards/2012/TIA-PT/WET%20TIA_11%2003%2009%20revised4-4-12-12.pdf. The LASEC has formally recommended the TIA to the AC at its 4/18/12 meeting. The NELAP Accreditation Council is expected to adopt this TIA into NELAP in May.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

TAC Activities to Develop Training Courses

By Betsy Kent, Reedy Creek Improvement District

Late last year, TNI's NELAP Technical Assistance Committee embarked on an effort to identify training needs, priorities, best delivery method, learning objectives, and content for training courses for laboratories and assessors. TAC will not develop the training, but will provide information so that others have the opportunity to develop and conduct the training courses. TNI staff will then be responsible for arranging appropriate delivery of training in accordance with the Educational Delivery System (EDS). While there may be a few opportunities where committees or TNI staff may develop training, the expectation is that Request for Proposals (RFPs) will be issued. The process is intended to be open.

TAC has started this effort by defining key elements for potential training courses. Courses were selected based on last year's training survey in addition to courses that have been offered and well-attended in the past. More than fifty (50) topics have been identified with the expectation of adding more.

Summaries are being developed for trainers to use as guidelines for course development. Reference to the TNI Standard and analytical methods, key definitions, and interactive training materials are being included in each summary. Delivery methods include webcasts, webinars, mentoring sessions, and workshops. The posting of a simple PowerPoint presentation is also an option.

TAC is currently working on training course summaries for assessors. Training course summaries for laboratories will be developed in 2013. Each assessor training topic has been prioritized with the highest priority being given to Microbiology, Metals, Root Cause Analysis, How to Write a Deficiency Report, and How to Track Corrective Actions (resulting from an on-site assessment). All of these summaries, with the exception of Microbiology, are in final draft format and under review for submission to the AB Task Force.

Other assessor training summaries to be developed in 2012 include:

- ◆ Organics;
- ◆ Data Review;
- ◆ TNI Standard Volume 2;
- ◆ How to Audit to the TNI Standard;
- ◆ General Chemistry;
- ◆ Professional Conduct and Ethics;
- ◆ Auditing of Laboratory Records;
- ◆ Asbestos, Radiochemistry;
- ◆ Whole Effluent Toxicity; and
- ◆ Quality Manual Review.

There are some openings on the TAC committee. If you are interested in joining the committee, complete an application on the TNI website. The committee is also seeking volunteers to help write and/or review the training summaries needed, so that assessors will have the knowledge and tools to accurately and effectively implement the TNI Standard. Volunteers from laboratories are encouraged, so that input from those being assessed is also included. TAC membership is encouraged, but not required. Contact Betsy Kent (bkent@rcid.org) with any questions.



New Officers for TNI

On April 11, 2012, the TNI Board of Directors elected the following as Officers of TNI for 2012:

- ◆ Sharon Mertens, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, **Chair**
- ◆ Aaren Alger, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, **Vice Chair**
- ◆ Alfredo Sotomayor, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, **Secretary**
- ◆ David Speis, QC Laboratories, **Treasurer**

Steve Arms will take on the role of Past-Chair, replacing Judy Duncan.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org

URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

NELAP Accreditation Council (AC) Update

By Lynn Bradley, TNI Staff

There are now seven (7) Accreditation Body (AB) evaluations completed, with renewal recommendations approved. Six (6) more are underway and the remaining two (2) will begin later this year.

Status of AB Evaluations

Completed	Underway	Pending
Florida DOH	California DPH	Illinois EPA
Kansas DOH	Louisiana DEQ	Minnesota DOH
Louisiana DHH	New Jersey DEP	
New Hampshire DES	Oregon DOH	
New York DOH	Texas CEQ	
Pennsylvania DEP	Virginia DGS	
Utah DOH		

Discussions with the American Council for Independent Laboratories (ACIL) members at the conference in Sarasota brought forth some issues that the AC will address in the coming months. Specifically, ACIL representatives stated that labs do not give negative evaluations to their AB for fear of retribution. Labs truly want wider fields of accreditation across all ABs. The third item is the longstanding hope for uniform application of the Standard, which is now being addressed in the LAB Expert Committee (LABEC).

The "fear of retribution" for honest evaluations of the assessment process was unexpected, as virtually all state governments are expressly prohibited from such behavior. Still, the AC will seek to establish a process where meaningful feedback can be provided, while assuring the desired sense of protection for the labs. Harmonizing fields of accreditation is now a goal, as well. AC Chair Aaren Alger and Judy Morgan, Chair of the ACIL Environmental Sciences Section and TNI Board member, have agreed to work together to address the identified issues, along with joint stakeholders such as the non-NELAP states. In May, the AC will invite all of the non-NELAP state ABs to join in a discussion. They want to talk about whether they use aspects of the NELAP program, specifically recognizing NELAP accreditation, using the state standard certification processes, and changes that might make participation more likely.

The AC's assignment from the AB Assistance Task Force to explore using assessment reports from the federal agencies, Departments of Defense and Energy, has stalled waiting for "example" reports that can be shared across the AC. Individual ABs will be able to obtain assessment reports from the accredited labs, but until the entire AC can learn how those reports document the assessment, a uniform use decision cannot be made. Thus far, it seems the assessment reports will be useful as a tool to guide development of the audit plan by the NELAP AB. Also, joint assessments may be a tool to minimize disruption at the lab. In order to arrange these, the lab itself will need to advise the affected ABs that a joint site visit is permissible. If this seems like a viable option for your lab, please notify the non-governmental AB and your NELAP AB that you'd like them to conduct a joint site visit.

In order to reduce the longstanding backlog, the AC has committed to reviewing a few of the outstanding Standards Interpretation Requests at each teleconference.

The TNI Board asked that the AC report every six (6) months about the status of implementing the 2009 TNI Environmental Laboratory Sector Standards. Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah implemented the 2009 Standard in 2011. Louisiana DHH intends to implement the Standard this year. The remaining ABs are on an implementation schedule of 2013 or later. If there are any questions, labs should check with their primary AB. The commitment to maintain reciprocal recognition, regardless of which Standard is in use by any individual AB, remains as does the commitment to preventing the dual standard usage from causing any problems for the laboratories.



NELAP

Accreditation Bodies

CA Dept. of Public Health
www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ls/elap/default.htm

FL Dept. of Health
www.doh.state.fl.us/lab/EnvLabCert/WaterCert.htm

IL Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.state.il.us/labs/index.html

KS Dept. of Health & Environment
www.kdhe.state.ks.us/envlab/index.html

LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/490>

LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/PublicParticipationandPermitSupport/LouisianaLaboratoryAccreditationProgram.aspx>

MN Dept. of Health
www.health.state.mn.us/divs/phl/accreditation/index.html

NH Dept. of Environmental Services
<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/dwgb/nhelap/index.htm>

NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection
www.nj.gov/dep/oga/

NY State Dept. of Health
www.wadsworth.org/labcert/elap/elap.html

OR Public Health Division
www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/orelap/index.shtml

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
www.depweb.state.pa.us/labs

TX Commission on Environmental Quality
www.tceq.state.tx.us/compliance/compliance_support/ga/env_lab_accreditation.html

UT Department of Health
www.health.utah.gov/lab/labimp/

VA Department of General Services
www.dgs.virginia.gov/dcls



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SSAS News

By Maria Friedman, TestAmerica, Inc.

The TNI Stationary Source Audit Sample (SSAS) Program is in full throttle, and the TNI SSAS Expert Committee is happy to announce the following recent accomplishments and work-in-progress:

1. On January 31, 2012, A2LA approved Environmental Resource Associates (ERA) as an Accredited Audit Sample Provider (AASP). EPA will publish, on the EPA website, this recognition of ERA's approval as an AASP. The list of available audit sample/method combinations that is available from ERA will be posted on the TNI website until additional AASPs become accredited, per the TNI SSAS Standard. Organizations which are currently supplying PT samples or standard materials (non-PT Providers) have expressed interest to be AASPs, so this adds excitement to the ongoing progress in the TNI SSAS Program.
2. The SSAS Expert Committee approved the Audit Sample Calculation Tool (<http://nelac-institute.org/ssas/calctool.php>) that can be used to help participants determine the ideal concentration range for their audit sample orders.
3. Regulators are in the process of being assigned contact and user IDs to access the SSAS Central Database, and the repository for upcoming audits sample results. This is required by EPA's Final Rule affecting stationary source testing. Stationary Source Testers have been requested to sign up for the SSAS Central Database. Provider Accreditors (A2LA and ACLASS) will follow.
4. The SSAS Table subcommittee is completing a proposal that will result in an update to Method 25 concentration ranges and acceptance criteria. Once completed, the SSAS Expert Committee will study the proposal, reach a decision and update the SSAS Table.
5. The SSAS Expert Committee is developing a Standard Operating Procedure for managing the SSAS Table, focusing on how to add new analytes to existing methods, add new methods, and update concentration ranges of available audit samples.

TNI Quality Systems Standard Update

By Paul Junio, Northern Lake Services

The TNI Quality Systems Committee voted to move the Working Draft Standard to a Voting Draft Standard prior to its monthly conference call in December. Once the Voting Draft Standard was published, voting and comment on the Standard is allowed for thirty (30) days.

The Quality Systems Committee held a working meeting at the Forum on Laboratory Accreditation in Sarasota, Florida on January 31, 2012. During that meeting, the Committee addressed the negative-with-comment votes that had been cast to that point. Each of those points was addressed to the satisfaction of the Committee. Once the negative-with-comment votes were addressed, the Committee began discussion on the positive-with-comment votes. Where possible, the discussion revolved around potential changes to the language in the Standard for those comments deemed persuasive. If agreeable language was not implemented, the comment was tabled for further discussion in a future conference call.

During upcoming conference calls (i.e., the 2nd Monday of each month), discussion on the received comments will continue. Each comment must be ruled persuasive or non-persuasive by the Committee. If a comment is ruled persuasive, the Committee will make changes in the Standard to reflect the comment. As a reminder, Committee conference calls are open to all TNI members. If you are interested in joining the discussion, please contact me in advance of a call and I will forward the call-in information to you.

At NEMC in Washington, DC in August, the Committee will have a full day's session. At this session, results of our discussions on the comments made on the Voting Draft Standard will be presented. TNI members will be able to participate in discussions regarding the Committee's work. At the close of NEMC, the Committee should be ready to present a Final Standard.



NEFAP

Accreditation Bodies

ANSI/ASQ National Accreditation Board/ACCLASS

www.aiclasscorp.com

American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA)

www.a2la.org

Laboratory Accreditation Bureau (L-A-B)

www.l-a-b.com

Perry Johnson Laboratory Accreditation, Inc. (PJLA)

www.pjllabs.com



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute

P.O. Box 2439

Weatherford, TX 76086

Jerry Parr

Executive Director

Phone: 817.598.1624

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URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

ACIL Environmental Sciences Section Activities

By Judy Morgan, Environmental Science Corp.

ACIL is the trade association representing independent, commercial scientific and engineering firms. Its members are professional services firms engaged in testing, product certification, consulting, and research and development. Affiliated membership is available to manufacturer's laboratories, consultants, and suppliers to the industry. The association was founded in 1937, as the American Council of Commercial Laboratories. It was later incorporated in the State of New York, as the American Council of Independent Laboratories. For more information about ACIL, go to <http://www.acil.org>.

ACIL's Environmental Sciences Section continues to be very active on a number of fronts. These include advocacy; collaboratively working with government to improve monitoring methodology; and working for the betterment of the monitoring industry.

Advocacy

ACIL's Environmental Sciences Section has been very active in the laboratory accreditation arena. ACIL is actively working to: curtail drastic fee increases for environmental laboratory accreditations; ensure that states do not externalize laboratory assessments in a non-competitive manner; persuade states to accept non-governmental accreditations as an alternative to government-only accreditations; and track legislative and other government policy changes to ensure that its members are kept informed of sensitive issues arising on the accreditation front.

Improving Environmental Measurement Methods

ACIL's non-profit education and research subsidiary (Independent Laboratory Institute) hosted a workshop on February 15, 2012 that brought together EPA's Office of Water (OW), Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery (ORCR), Regions, and Office of the Science Advisor; the ACIL laboratory and technology innovation communities; and others. The purpose was to focus on updating EPA Methods 624, 625, and 608. ACIL member concerns were voiced and the group collectively worked on incorporating language into the methods to address the issues. For those areas where extensive changes or additions were identified, participants volunteered to develop the appropriate language. Work is currently underway to codify all the identified changes into new drafts of the methods for a second review by the participants and additional EPA experts. They will identify validation data gaps that need to be filled. Additional workshops are being planned to address other methods and collaborate on method development for new technologies.

National Environmental Monitoring Conference (NEMC)

As part of its efforts to make the NEMC program as valuable as possible to the monitoring community, ACIL is again organizing a session dealing with Laboratory Operational and Advocacy Issues at the 2012 NEMC. The session will bring together speakers from the ACIL membership and government agencies to address topics of importance to our community. These include training of laboratory staff, uniform data reporting and electronic deliverables, managing high throughput/short turn around time studies, and the DoE laboratory accreditation program.



NEFAP Executive Committee Elected

The NELAC Institute held an election for individuals to serve as members of the first permanent TNI NEFAP Executive Committee for terms beginning on April 11, 2012. The individuals listed below were elected by the membership.

NEFAP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Doug Berg
 Mr. Justin Brown
 Mr. Scott Evans
 Ms. Calisa Daigle
 Mr. John E. Farrell, III
 Mr. John (Seb) Gillette
 Mr. Keith Greenaway
 Mr. Doug Leonard
 Mr. Mike Miller
 Ms. Marlene Moore
 Mr. John Moorman
 Ms. Cheryl Morton
 Ms. Lauren Smith
 Ms. Kim Watson
 Ms. Jan Wilson
 Mr. Dane Wren



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
 P.O. Box 2439
 Weatherford, TX 76086
 Jerry Parr
 Executive Director
 Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org

URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Member Spotlight—Carol Smith

By Kirsten Daigle, TestAmerica, Inc.

Carol works as the Director of the Office of Environmental Laboratory Certification for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). She has been a member of TNI since 2011, but has been coming to many of the NELAC and TNI meetings, since the inception of the program.



Carol grew up in Greenwood, SC, a town located in upstate South Carolina. She attended the University of South Carolina where she earned a B.S in Biology with a strong study emphasis in Chemistry. After graduating, she planned to work in the medical field building, in the hospital lab in Greenwood, using experience she gained prior to college. Instead, she was offered a position in the environmental field and so began a long and distinguished career in our industry.

Early in her career she performed wet chemistry and bacteriological testing for an industrial laboratory. She left this position to move to Columbia, SC to be closer to her future husband, Ron. Here she accepted a job with a commercial laboratory performing organic, inorganic, and microbiological analyses, but this job was not meant to be. After a year, the company closed the laboratory and Carol found herself unemployed. What to do now? The State beckoned and she landed a job with SCDHEC working in the organic environmental lab. It was not glamorous. The lab had a quite a backlog of fish and sediment samples that required extraction and Carol was hired to perform this task, which she did for six months straight. Next, she analyzed pesticide and PCB extracts using GC instrumentation. All in all, she spent approximately five (5) years in the laboratory before transitioning into a new role in laboratory certification. In this tenure of lab work, she gained extensive experience in wet chemistry, microbiology, organic extractions, and GC and GC/MS instrumentation. This varied background made her the ideal choice to help the new laboratory certification program for organics get off the ground. That was 1987.

Today, SCDHEC offers a comprehensive laboratory certification program that presently covers drinking water, wastewater, and solid and hazardous waste. Her division certifies close to 600 labs, of which 482 are in state and 78 are out of state, with 5 certification officers in addition to Carol.

SCDHEC is not a NELAC AB, but the agency has a long history of involvement with NELAC and TNI. In August 2004, DHEC hosted the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference/Institute for National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation (NELAC/INELA) meeting in Charleston, one of the most memorable face-to-face meetings on record. This marked the transition from NELAC to INELA. If you were there, I am certain that you also remember the southern hospitality, the charming hotel, and great downtown location.

How has NELAC influenced the work of her state's certification program? Carol told me NELAC (TNI) was a springboard for discussion of the challenges we face in our day-to-day work and helped us work together to learn from each other. That is the reason she continues to remain active in TNI. She says the laboratory certification staff uses NELAC accreditations and assessment reports as tools to evaluate laboratories that apply to their program. The staff supplements these materials with a detailed review of SOPs and PTs to ensure compliance with state program requirements. What happens in the national program has an impact on their program. This is especially true for proficiency testing (PT) because the TNI Fields of Proficiency Testing (FoPT) tables mandate the composition, scoring, and availability of PT samples used for non-NELAC state programs. The certification program also tries to mimic the national standard whenever possible, but there are differences between the TNI Standard and state requirements. State requirements prevail.

I asked Carol what she thinks is the secret to her program's success. Without hesitation, she answered that her staff are what makes the laboratory certification program tick. They strive to work collaboratively with the laboratory community and are always looking to streamline



New Committee Chairs

Mitzi Miller from Dade Moeller & Associates is the new Chair of the Proficiency Testing Expert Committee. *Stacie Metzler* from Hampton Roads Sanitation District is the new chair of the Proficiency Testing Program Executive Committee. *Justin Brown* from Environmental Monitoring and Technology is the new Chair of the Field Activities Expert Committee.

Paul Junio from Northern Lake Services is the new Chair of the Quality Systems Expert Committee. *Kirstin Daigle* from TestAmerica, Inc. is the new Chair of the Laboratory Accreditation Systems Executive Committee.

The TNI Board would like to thank *Kirstin Daigle, June Flowers, Eric Smith, Silky Labie* and *Marlene Moore* for their leadership of TNI committees for the last five (5) years.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org

URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

Member Spotlight (cont.)

processes and make their work more efficient. Each of the certification officers had prior work experience in the laboratory so Carol says, “they understand” both sides of the process. In addition to a great staff, DHEC has an amazing certification database that has made everyone’s job a bit easier. In fact, she attributes the database to the reason the EPA Region 4 granted DHEC an exemption from the Discharge Monitoring Report Quality Assurance (DMRQA). This triumph thrilled the labs, who now have the opportunity to use WP studies to satisfy DMRQA requirements, and equally thrilled the DHEC staff, who enjoyed a significant reduction in administrative work. This time savings allowed them to spend time on other certification tasks.

On a personal note, Carol is honored that the Water Environment Association of South Carolina, a state organization with which she has been involved for many years, asks her to present laboratory certification updates each year at their annual meeting. In this role, she serves as an Ambassador between the regulated laboratory community, the state regulatory program, and the EPA regions.

In her free time, Carol enjoys the outdoors. Endeavors include camping, hiking, reading, and hanging out at the beach. Her son is in high school and is a Life Scout – soon to be Eagle Scout? Fingers are crossed. Her husband, retired from law enforcement, now works as a Hospice Nurse. Carol is quite proud of him. What are her plans? Take each day as it comes – she’s thirty (30) years into this work and tells me that after all this time she still learns something new every day.

I hope you enjoyed getting to know Carol as much as I have. As the byline goes – next time you see Carol, don’t be shy, say hello, and remember our organization is full of wonderful people with amazing life stories.



TNI MISSION

The NELAC Institute is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization whose mission is to foster the generation of environmental data of known and documented quality through an open, inclusive, and transparent process that is responsive to the needs of the community.



VISION

All entities generating environmental data in the United States will be accredited to consensus national standards.



Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
P.O. Box 2439
Weatherford, TX 76086
Jerry Parr
Executive Director
Phone: 817.598.1624

Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org

URL: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>

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Contact TNI

The NELAC Institute
 P.O. Box 2439
 Weatherford, TX 76086
 Jerry Parr, Executive Director
 Phone: 817.598.1624
 Email: jerry.parr@nelac-institute.org
 Website: <http://www.nelac-institute.org>



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