

CARD/ EGLE Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2025 at 10:00 AM

[20250603 CARD Quarterly Meeting](#)

Drafted using AI

CARD/EGLE Quarterly Meeting Minutes Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Via Zoom

Moderator: Jack Eaton

1. Call to Order - Welcome (Roger Rayle)

- Roger Rayle, Chair of CARD and Citizens for Safe Water, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 AM.
- He welcomed attendees and provided guidance on Zoom functionalities (gallery view, recording, automatic transcripts, YouTube posting).

2. Approval of May Minutes (CARD Board Vote) (Beth Collins)

- Beth Collins, Secretary, offered to add attendees to the email list.
- A motion to approve the May 2025 meeting minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved by the CARD Board.

3. US EPA Update

- **a. Superfund Site Designation Update:** No EPA representative was present. Jack Eaton provided an "unsatisfying update," stating that the decision on NPL listing for the Gelman Plume is still with EPA headquarters in D.C., with no anticipated decision date. There is an impression of staff reductions at Region 5 due to "early out" offers.
- **b. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's team (Georgia Frost):** Georgia Frost announced two upcoming town halls during Congress's mid-June recess:
 - Monday, June 16th, 6:00 PM in Dexter.
 - Wednesday, June 18th, 6:00 PM in Belleville.
 - She noted that the Dexter event would include state legislators and county officials, and that EPA topics would be relevant to discussions. She offered to share links to materials.
- **c. Dan Bicknell:** Dan Bicknell was not present.

4. EGLE Updates (Chris Svoboda)

- **Slauson School Geothermal Project (Related to 4.a, 4.b, 4.c):** Chris Svoboda reported on EGLE's involvement with the planned geothermal well field installation at Slauson School. EGLE requested test borings and vertical aquifer sampling due to concerns about shallow dioxane and potential cross-contamination of lower aquifers. If dioxane is detected, double-casing the wells through the contaminated shallow area will be required to prevent groundwater communication. The project depth is 800 feet, with a clay layer at approximately 70 feet. This project is expected to provide valuable data on dioxane entry into Allen Creek and potentially lead to a permanent monitoring well, a positive step for data collection. Concerns were raised by attendees about potential exacerbation of contamination and the general use of geothermal in contaminated areas. Jenny Conn clarified that it is a closed-loop system using glycol, not extracting groundwater, thus the primary concern is during the drilling phase. Roger Rayle requested that EGLE share reports on this project with CARD immediately.
- **Sampling Results from Near Surface Water Testing (Related to 4.b):**
 - West Park pond: 2.2 ppb.
 - Slauson School: 22 ppb.
 - Vince reiterated concerns about the lack of shallow groundwater testing in the West Park area despite historical detections of 50+ ppb and the potential for vapor intrusion into wet basements, citing research indicating concern at 150 ppb. He advocated for air surface testing.
- **New Lower Reporting Limit for 1,4-Dioxane (Not explicitly on agenda but significant update):** EGLE's drinking water and environmental lab can now report 1,4-dioxane down to 0.2 ppb, certified by the EPA. This is a significant improvement from the previous 0.5 ppb and will be applied to residential samples collected with the health department. This is close to the 0.12 ppb standard used by some townships.
- **New Contingency Municipal Water Hook Up Plan (4.d):** EGLE responded to Gelman's municipal water connection contingency plan (dated May 20th), deeming it "short on information." EGLE requested more detail, including consolidated permit documentation and engineering information, to ensure the plan effectively enhances a quick response to threats to private drinking water sources. This applies to areas in Scio Township. Roger Rayle highlighted concerns about 3 dozen current homeowner wells with dioxane without access to city water in these areas, and the expense of extending city water.
- **Discussions on Well Restrictions/Prohibition Zone:** Josh highlighted that the old Gelman property has restricted wells, except for the area around the fire suppression well, lagoons, and remediation building, which is "kind of funky." Roger noted that Scio Township previously had an arrangement where Gelman provided water for fire tankers from Gelman's "file well".

5. Old Business/Action Items

- **Washtenaw County:**
 - **1. Board of Commissioners/Environmental Council/Legal update (Yousef Rabhi):** No update provided.

- **2. Any update from WCWRC:** Gretchen Driscoll, the new Water Resources Commissioner, introduced herself and stated her office is monitoring the situation, though EGLE is the lead. She noted a close watch on the Allen Creek/Slauson discussions due to drain involvement. Roger suggested keeping her office on the agenda quarterly.
- **3. Wash Co Health Dept & EGLE Homeowner Well Sampling:** Jenny Conn (Health Department) reported that annual residential well sampling will occur next week, targeting 127 homes (one declined). A survey was included to gather information, including on filter system usage; only 3 responses have been received so far.
- Jenny also mentioned recent news from Illinois regarding a dioxane plume affecting a mobile home park, where residents were encouraged to install activated carbon or reverse osmosis systems, despite no specific NSF certification for dioxane-approved residential media yet. The Health Department is exploring a test study with a local homeowner who has various treatment systems.
- Jenny noted that Washtenaw County uniquely permits closed-loop geothermal systems, unlike most Michigan jurisdictions, which have only best practices. She encouraged attendees to advocate for state-level regulation of geothermal drilling in contamination zones.
- **4. Realtor Meeting on 1,4 dioxane (Jenni Conn):** The presentation from the May 20th realtor meeting is available and will be shared.
- **5. Geothermal application for Slauson:** Discussed under EGLE updates (Chris Svoboda).
- **6. Other issues:** Mike Moran inquired about the tanker agreement in Scio Township; Roger stated it was an old arrangement and is no longer in place as the water tower is gone. Mike will follow up with fire departments.
- **Ann Arbor Township:**
 - **1. Other issues:** Nothing reported from Ann Arbor Township.
- **Scio Township:**
 - **1. PFAS response and update on Dino Dr. (Kathy Knol):** Kathy Knol reported on new PFAS contamination discovered on Dino Drive in Scio, which was the focus of an April presentation to Scio Township (presentation link shared). She also mentioned the ongoing PFAS site at Huron River Drive and Zeeb Road (old Chrysler area) with regular monitoring by MPART.
 - Kathy raised a new, incomplete issue: a request from Mark Smith (MIHQ site, on part of the original Gelman property) to change their fire suppression system to use water from a Gelman property well. Concerns were immediately raised about potential aerosolization of contaminated well water, as some Gelman wells were heavily contaminated. Bert Steinman at EGLE is looking into this. Roger noted that the specific well ("Fire Well") in question (near the old water tank) was previously non-detect but historical data for Gelman's water wells is lacking. EGLE noted that that well is in the only small area on the former Gelman

property not restricted for wells. Rita expressed strong concern about using any contaminated wells.

- James D'Amour raised concerns about PFAS in clay used by school children from the Dino Dr PFAS site; Jenny Conn clarified that PFAS is primarily dangerous if ingested, not through unbroken skin, and that lead in clay is a potentially greater concern.
- **2. Other issues:** No other issues specifically for Scio Township.
- **City of Ann Arbor:**
 - **1. Update on Ann Arbor's 1,4-dioxane (Patti McCall/Erin Donnelly):** Erin Donnelly (City of Ann Arbor) reported a busy construction season with extra internal work to manage dewatering and discharge in areas within the plume footprint.
 - **2. Comprehensive Land Use Plan Draft and 1,4-dioxane (James D'Amour/Erin Donnelly):** James D'Amour stated that the draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan is currently under review by the Planning Commission. He noted the absence of language regarding the dioxane plume and that the Executive Committee formally communicated a request for its inclusion, providing a current plume map. Brett Leonard, the City Planner, expressed interest in data. Erin encouraged visiting the project website and monitoring Planning Commission meetings for updates, as a second draft is expected in late June or July. Lynn Nybell (Sister Lakes Association) expressed appreciation for CARD's quick response and James's presentation to the Planning Commission, highlighting concerns about development on the west side (e.g., Ma property now for sale).
 - **3. Other issues:**
 - **Wet Basement Testing:** Erin Donnelly clarified that the city is tracking information, having conducted wet basement testing in 2020 with non-detect results in some homes. She stated concentrations are largely below 7.2 ppb in known shallow groundwater areas and that the city is tracking EGLE's ongoing conversations with Gelman regarding data gaps in monitoring plans for the West Park area.
 - **Utility Capacity:** Erin reported that comprehensive plans for stormwater and wastewater infrastructure to handle anticipated population growth are not yet available. An overall presentation on infrastructure changes for proposed growth is expected today (June 3rd) at the Planning Commission.
 - Discussion on city water/sewer capacity to service townships, the high cost of sewer hookups for homeowners, and potential impacts on property values. Roger noted that the Knights of Columbus property planned its own sewage treatment, suggesting city water capacity is greater than sewer. Chris Svoboda acknowledged that water table changes from moving water could affect distant areas.
- **Executive Board:**
 - **1. Yale Superfund Research Program update (Dr Loch-Caruso/ Dr Vasiliou):** Rita Loch-Caruso noted that she had not heard from Dr. Vasiliou recently,

possibly due to funding issues. She will follow up for the next meeting. She mentioned Dr. Vasiliou was quoted in Eleanor Epperson's articles.

- **2. Subcommittee on the Allen Creek MS4 Violation?:** This subcommittee exists (Jack, James, Roger listed), but no meetings have occurred.
- **3. July 1 meeting- do we want to cancel this?:** Due to significant new content and ongoing developments, it was decided **not to cancel** the July 1st meeting. The group agreed to try and keep the meeting compact (1-1.5 hours) given it's early July.
- **4. Elinor Epperson's articles on CARD and the contamination (Rita Loch-Caruso):** Rita provided an extensive review of Eleanor Epperson's recent Michigan Public Radio articles on the dioxane plume, praising their thematic organization, balanced reporting, and prominent featuring of CARD members (Roger, Rita, Dan Bicknell, Chris Svoboda). The articles are accessible via a link on the agenda and provide perspectives from homeowners, health effects, and the politics/legalities of the consent judgment.
- **5. Other issues:** No other issues specifically for the Executive Board.

6. Chair Updates (Roger Rayle)

- **a. Latest News and Observations:**

- Roger reiterated the importance of the recent Michigan Public Radio articles by Eleanor Epperson (three articles, one broadcast audio, and a reporter's notebook piece), praising their depth and balanced reporting, hoping for continued periodic updates on the issue.
- Roger reviewed Gelman's historical dioxane mass estimates: 64,000 lbs in 1989 (marsh area 1,818 lbs). He noted that over 78,000 lbs have been removed since 2000, exceeding the 1989 estimate. Adding earlier removal efforts (18,000 lbs from 1987-1994, 2,300 lbs from 1997-2000), a total of 112,000 lbs were removed by 2018, out of an estimated 850,000 lbs used by Gelman. He emphasized that the amount of dioxane remaining is unknown.
- He highlighted that the current "RockWorks" study area does not cover dozens of township wells with low-level dioxane (some up to 2 ppb). He noted that in states like Minnesota, homeowners with such levels would receive notices and bottled water. He stressed the need to understand how little dioxane it takes to contaminate many wells and called for calculating the remaining dioxane in the aquifer more accurately. Chris Svoboda acknowledged that RockWorks can calculate groundwater volume by concentration but agreed it doesn't tell the "whole story" as dioxane can be found elsewhere.
- Roger reiterated concerns about the municipal water connection contingency plan, especially for 3 dozen homeowner wells without access to city water, and the high expense of extending city water and sewer. He noted that the south and north offshoots of the plume follow ancestral streambeds, necessitating a complete picture of the problem. He concluded by stating that data is evidence in an "ongoing crime scene."

7. Non-Agenda Items (All of CARD)

- **Introductions:** Beth Collins and Roger Rayle welcomed new attendees and interns. Lynn Nybel (Sister Lakes Association) introduced herself, expressing appreciation for CARD's quick action on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, especially regarding the Ma property (3.5 acres for sale) potentially impacted by development. Grant and Amelia, senior interns from New Canaan, Connecticut, researching Michigan dioxane issues, introduced themselves. They expressed inspiration from the meeting and the history of how the plume was discovered by a U of M graduate student (Dan Bicknell) in 1984. Roger offered further assistance and shared documents with the interns.

8. Reminder: Next CARD Meetings (Zoom)

- Tuesday, July 1st at 6:00 PM (Confirmed, will aim for a shorter meeting)
- Tuesday, August 5th at 6:00 PM

The meeting concluded with thanks to all participants and acknowledgment of the significant content covered.