UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 10 2007

OFFICE OF WATER

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RE: ATP # N06-0033; N06-0034; N06-0035; N06-0036; N06-0037

Dear Ms. Ammerman:

We are pleased to inform you that we are returning your application for the use of discrete analyzer technology without action. Under recently adopted changes to EPA's Guidelines Establishing Test Procedures for Pollutants, approval for the use of such technology will not be required if certain requirements are met. Consequently, the Engineering & Analysis Division - (EAD) will no longer be reviewing applications for approval of such uses under EPA's Alternate Test Procedures (ATP) program. We recommend that you inform your customers of these recent developments. To assist you, we are providing as an attachment to this letter an explanation of the new approach in a memorandum dated April 2, 2007 Richard Reding ("Flexibility to Modify CWA Methods – Automated Methods").

In the past EAD has issued ATP letters authorizing the use of discrete analyzers as alternative methods when it determined that methods modified for use with discrete analyzers were equivalent and acceptable alternatives to the unmodified CWA method. Now, however, under new-40 CFR Part136.6, laboratories that use a modification to a currently approved CWA method in compliance with the requirements of section 136.6, will no longer require an ATP determination letter. All discrete analyzer methods (or any other method modified pursuant to section 136.6) have the same regulatory standing as any method for which an ATP determination letter had been issued in the past. Thus, both a "lettered discrete method" and a "non lettered discrete method" are authorized test procedures under Part 136 so long as the non-lettered method complies with the requirements of section 136.6.

The purpose of the CWA ATP program, in contrast to section 136.6, is to review (for potential approval) innovative, more effective, or more accurate analytical methods. Our focus is on new chemistries and detectors, or modifications to approved methods that are clearly outside either the scope of the flexibility provided in the underlying approved method, or 40 CFR Part 136.6. We have requested that our ATP coordinators, QA managers, and permit writers support and make use of the flexibility provided in section 136.6. Moreover, we have asked them to encourage their state and local counterparts to

allow use of methods, such as discrete analyzers, that have been modified in conformance with 136.6.

In addition, we are providing the following information in anticipation of a number of key questions that may arise among both instrument manufacturers and potential users of the discrete analyzer technology. You should understand that it is permissible to alter buffers and sample-to-reagent ratios as required to improve performance of a method provided the supporting documentation and justification are available for review. For any modified methods, the instrument manufacturer must provide (a) the methods written in EPA format; (b) a table providing a side-by-side comparison of the reference and modified methods and (c) data on calibration, accuracy (recoveries), precision and detection limit. Of course, the user laboratory must follow QC specifications of the method for initial qualification of any new instrument or method that it incorporates into its compliance monitoring standard operating procedures.

We appreciate your interest in the development of environmental monitoring methods. If you have any questions regarding the ATP program please contact me at walker.lemuel@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Lemuel Walker
CWA ATP Coordinator
Engineering and Analysis Division (4303 T)
Engineering and Analytical Support Branch

cc:
Steve Wendelken, SDWA ATP Coordinator
Richard Reding, Chief, EASB
Mary T. Smith, Director, EAD
Richard Witt, OGC

Attachment – April 2, 2007, Richard Reding Flexbility to Modify CWA Methods – Automated Methods memo.

ATP #	Method
N06-0033	SEAL Method EPA-126-A as an alternate to 353.2 for determination of nitrate/nitrite
N06-0034	SEAL Method EPA-137-A as an alternate to 353.2 for determination of nitrite
N06-0035	SEAL Method EPA-125-A as an alternate to 351.2 for determination of TKN
N06-0036	SEAL Method EPA-111-A as an alternate to 351.2 for determination of TKN
N06-0037	SEAL Method EPA-120-A as an alternate to 351.2 for determination of total phosphorus