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Ms. Cheryl Niemi
Washington State Department of Ecology
Water Quality Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Subject: Comments on Human Health Water Quality Criteria and Implementation Tools

Dear Ms Niemi:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Human Health Water Quality Criteria (HH WQC) and Implementation Tools in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-201A issued January 12, 2015.

AMEA is a 120 year old, 2,400 member, non-profit, non-partisan trade association based in Spokane, Washington. AEMA members reside in 42 states, including Washington State, 7 Canadian provinces and 9 other countries and are actively involved in prospecting, exploring, mining, and reclamation closure. Our diverse membership includes every facet of the mining industry including geology, exploration, mining, engineering, equipment manufacturing, technical services, and sales of equipment and supplies. AEMA's broad membership represents a true cross-section of the American mining community from small miners and exploration geologists to both junior and large mining companies. More than 90% of our members are small businesses or work for small businesses. Most of our members are individual citizens.

We appreciate the effort of the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) in engaging us throughout this process as it seeks to improve the Washington State HH WQC. We are supportive of the proposed HH WQC, which are more protective than the current HH WQC.

While we are supportive of the overall direction of the HH WQC, we see opportunities to strengthen the rule and supporting documentation moving forward. Specifically, we believe that:

- Additional rationale is needed to support decisions on the fish consumption rate, relative source contribution (RSC) for the fish consumption rate, the selected PCB criteria, and the selected arsenic criteria,
- State-wide variances should be added to the rule with clarifying provisions, so they are available for use if/when appropriate,

- The cost benefit analysis should be strengthened to accurately reflect the costs and challenges of the new HH WQC,
- The document should explicitly acknowledge that there are no implementation tools available to new or expanding dischargers, and
- Language about the use of AKART from human health protection in WAC 173-201A-240 Toxic substances should be removed.

For your convenience we have provided more detailed comments in the attached document.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Washington State HH WQC and we look forward to your consideration and integration of our comments.

Regards,



Matthew Ellsworth

Government Affairs Manager