



St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission

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NEWS RELEASE *for Immediate Release*

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California, MD.

MetCom achieves Maryland Department of the Environment State Certified Water Quality Laboratory Designation

Safe Drinking Water. On September 26, 2018, the Maryland Department of The Environment (MDE) inspected MetCom's laboratory facility located at the Larry K. Petty Building. On December 13, 2018, the Commission received the formal **State Certified Water Quality Laboratory** designation from MDE's Water Supply Program. George Erichsen, MetCom's Executive Director stated: *"We are very proud of the work that our collections, distribution, laboratory and operations / maintenance staff do each and every day to ensure our facilities comply with State and Federal regulations. Mike Sullivan, Gary Reynolds, Samantha Forrest, and Harry Pool were just a few of the dedicated staff that were instrumental in making this happen."*

In addition to the State recognition, staff will have the ability to analyze nearly 90 total coliform and E.coli test samples in house saving the Commission between \$700 - \$800/month. In fiscal year 2017, approximately 1,350 drinking water samples were collected and analyzed by MetCom staff to determine compliance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. These samples were tested by a third party laboratory to monitor parameters such as bacteria (*coliform*), lead / copper (*triennially*), arsenic, fluoride, nitrates, metals and disinfection byproducts. pH levels are monitored monthly (*612 samples*) while chlorine concentrations are analyzed twice per week (*5,304 samples*) by in-house operations staff in each of our 28 systems that include 51 water pumping stations. MDE also conducts periodic quality assurance testing and compliance site visits. To learn more, see the 2016 Annual Water Quality Reports at www.metcom.org and select the Water Quality Reports option under the Operations tab.



Laboratory Supervisor
Samantha Forrest conducting
BOD Analyses

Watershed Protection. In addition to drinking water sampling, over 25,500 wastewater analyses were conducted in FY 2017 at each of MetCom's five (5) wastewater treatment plants and two (2) additional facilities operated by MetCom to determine compliance with the federal Clean Water Act. Recently, a state-of-the art wastewater laboratory was constructed at the Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility. This full service lab meets or exceeds all MDE and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) requirements for wastewater laboratory testing, including accuracy testing on Discharge Monitoring Report Quality Assurance (DMRQA) and Standard Methods in the Examination of Water and Wastewater. Water quality tests are performed on water entering and leaving each treatment process at the plants and throughout the Commission's distribution system. These analyses consisted of parameters such as bacteria (*coliform*), bio-chemical oxygen demand, nitrogen, phosphorus, suspended solids, pH, dissolved oxygen, acids, alkalinity and chlorine concentrations. The state and federal testing and analyses requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits ensure the quality of the effluent released into receiving surface waters.

If you are interested in working in our lab and to learn more about possible internships with MetCom, please visit our website at www.metcom.org and select the Open Positions option under the Human Resources tab.