

Contingency Plan Report First Quarter 2014

Ambient Monitoring

MWRA gathers data from the outfall location in Massachusetts Bay on various thresholds in its Deer Island outfall discharge permit. Contingency Plan threshold testing for all Ambient Monitoring Plan studies in 2013 was previously reported and is available at <http://www.mwra.state.ma.us/harbor/pdf/2013q4cpqamb.pdf>.

Field monitoring for 2014 is underway. The first two water column surveys were conducted on February 4 and March 18. Most samples from those surveys are still being analyzed or the resulting data are in the early stages of review, therefore no final datasets from 2014 monitoring are ready for Contingency Plan threshold testing at this time. However, this report provides some general observations from the February and March surveys.

As could be expected after the brutally cold winter that has affected the Northeast, seawater temperatures in Massachusetts Bay were well below average through the March survey. The water is well mixed top-to-bottom, and preliminary dissolved oxygen data appear to be within the range normally observed in cold, winter conditions. Preliminary chlorophyll data show high chlorophyll in western Massachusetts Bay in February; at some stations chlorophyll appears to remain high in March. Also, preliminary data indicate that the organism responsible for red tide in New England waters, *Alexandrium fundyense*, was not seen in abundance in any samples from February or March. This is to be expected, as blooms of this organism (which do not appear in Massachusetts Bay every year) tend to occur in late spring and early summer.

Contingency Plan threshold testing on the 2014 results will be included in future Contingency Plan Quarterly Reports, as results are finalized.