

ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCE ANALYSTS,
INC.

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- We have new staff members!
- We are introducing a new quarterly newsletter!
- We are planning to host the continuing education courses again this year!
- Read about our contaminant of the month *E. coli*!
- Information about the Stage 2 DBPR!

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ERA Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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Happy New Year from the staff at ERA!

We hope that you had a wonderful holiday and a very happy new year. We have made some changes at ERA and would like to introduce some new staff members to you.

We are happy to introduce Jean Eppler as our new Administrative Assistant. Jean and family recently moved to the area from St. Louis, Missouri. She has a bachelor's degree from Maryville University and over 34 years experience in quality management. She will be happy to assist you in any way she can.

We have also retained some excellent scientists as full time analysts. Chris Rich has been with us since 2008 and has recently graduated from Auburn University with his bachelor's degree. He is now our full time lab analyst and field technician. Mallorie Carroll has been at ERA since early 2009 and has recently graduated from Auburn University with her bachelor's degree. She will be the senior lab technician in our inorganic and organic extraction labs. Aly Hammett, a recent Auburn University graduate, as well as Zach Bailey and Megan Cancilla, who are both current Auburn University students have been hired as part-time analysts..



The staff at ERA

ERA has continued to hire well qualified staff members who have expertise in the fields in which they are employed. We are very pleased with the highly trained staff we have been able to retain.

Contaminant of the Quarter: *E. coli*

E. coli is a single cellular bacterium. Because its natural environment is in the intestines of warm blooded animals, it is a good organism to use to indicate fecal contamination. *E. coli* belongs in a group of indicator organisms called coliforms. The coliform group is further divided into fecal coliforms to indicate specific coliforms that are present in feces (see diagram on next page). *E. coli* is a fecal coliform. *E. coli* is normally a harmless bacterium.

In fact, you need *E. coli* and other organisms like it to help you digest your food. However, some strains of *E. coli* can be harmful because they produce disease causing toxins.

E. coli should not be present in drinking water. Often times when a drinking water sample is positive for *E. coli* it is due to mishandling of the sample. (Story continued on back page.)

For Our Clients

We really appreciate our clients. This year we are implementing several changes to give back to our clients and to our community. First, we wanted to start a quarterly newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter will be to inform our clients of important regulatory changes, educate our clients about various contaminants, and announce any events that may be happening. The newsletter will contain a "Contaminant of the Quarter" section, as well as a section on a current regulatory issue.

We appreciate YOUR BUSINESS!

If there is a specific issue or topic you would like addressed, please send any comments or suggestions to Erin Consuegra (carroej@gmail.com). Current and previous newsletters will be avail-

able online at www.eralab.com under the information section.

"We have several ideas on how to improve upon our course from last year and plan on offering these courses again this year free of charge to our clients."

Continuing Education Course

Last year we hosted two continuing education courses and got overwhelmingly positive feedback. We have several ideas on how to improve upon our course from last year and plan on offering these courses again this year free of charge to our clients. We feel that these courses not only help our clients by providing a free way to gain their continuing education

hours, but also help develop the personal relationships with the clients that we value so much. Previously we covered topics such as: legally defensible data, quality control, and the biology of wastewater. This year we hope to expand these topics and bring in specialized guest speakers to broaden the range of information presented. Please feel free to send any com-

ments or suggestions on topics you would like to learn about to Erin Consuegra (carroej@gmail.com).

DBP Monitoring Plan

Prior to July 2011, every water system in Alabama must submit a "Stage 2 Disinfection Byproduct Rule (Stage 2 DBPR) Monitoring Plan" to ADEM. The DBP plan includes a description of sampling locations and frequency of sampling. The tests that are included in the DBP plan include the trihalomethanes (TTHMs) and the

haloacetic acids (HAA5). We have a fully trained staff to perform these analyses here at ERA. Because the stage 2 regulations require that all samples be collected during the same week of each quarter, we are asking that you contact ERA for help with scheduling your sample collection dates. We greatly appreciate the opportunity

to serve as your certified drinking water laboratory and for the opportunity to offer our services on this important project.





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Environmental Resource Analysts (ERA) was founded in 1991 by Dr. Joseph Freda. The company's initial focus was ecological field studies, but expanded into the areas of aquatic toxicology and analytical chemistry. Our primary motivation for expansion has always been, and will continue to be, meeting the needs of our valued clients. This commitment to service has allowed us to obtain many diverse capabilities such as cultural resource studies, bacteriological analysis of drinking water, and hazardous waste identification.

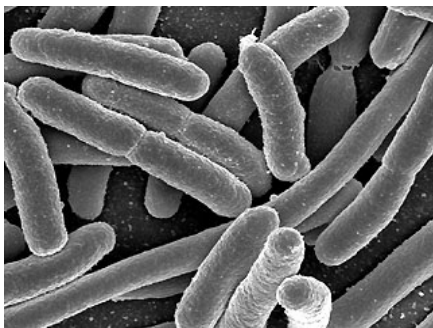
For more information about ERA please contact the Lab Manager Staci Hickman at shickman@eralab.com.

www.eralab.com



Contaminant of the Quarter: *E. coli* (continued)

E. coli under the microscope
Credit:
National Institute of Health



Simple steps such as hand washing and proper collection/handling techniques can prevent this contamination.

Wastewater operators may have noticed a change in their permits from fecal coliforms to *E. coli*. Curious as to why this change was made, we contacted the EPA. A spokesperson from the EPA informed us studies had shown that the incidence of disease more strongly correlated with high *E. coli* presence than with just high fecal coliform counts in general. This finding was the basis for making this change.

At ERA we are fortunate to have a staff that is very experienced in the field of Microbiology. Hope Watson has a bachelor's degree in Microbiology, and Erin Consuegra has her master's degree in microbiology.

Several of our analysts are fully trained in running total coliform, fecal coliform, and *E. coli* analyses. As always, we have an excellent and routine QA/QC program to ensure the quality of our results.



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Diagram showing the relationship between total and fecal coliforms. *E. coli* is a fecal coliform.

