IL ELAP Update to Accredited Labs: (May 26, 2022)

This note is intended to provide an update to all Illinois (Primary) labs accredited by the Illinois Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (IL ELAP).

1. **Helium Shortage and what you can do:**
   - US EPA discussed the helium shortage in their last conference call. They confirmed that Hydrogen can be used as an alternative carrier gas. This should first be confirmed by your instrument manufacture if this is viable option.

   - If you do change from Helium to Hydrogen on your systems, you will need to new MDLs, IDOC's and Calibration data.

2. **New Payment Option:**
   - Starting in April 2022, renewals and application fees can be submitted using e-Pay.
   - Electronic Check Transfers, Master Card, Visa, American Express and Discover Cards are all acceptable forms of payment.
   - There is a fee for using electronic check transfers, $0.75 and credit cards $2.25
   - You select "Lab Accreditation Fees" and fill in your information.
   - Provides an email receipt to your email address and our email address as proof of payment.
   - Here is the link for the e-Pay site and we are putting it on your renewal letter. https://magic.collectorsolutions.com/magic-ui/en-US/Login/illinois-epa

3. **Assessment Appraisal Form**
   We have implemented an easy online survey for the laboratories to evaluate the IL EPA Laboratory Accreditation Unit and if you want, individual assessors. The Survey Monkey link will allow anonymity. I know that some laboratories feel it is still biased since the link is given out at each assessment, so I wanted to include it here so it could be more random.

   Link for survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D986KQC

4. **Using Vendor Methods:**

2125 S. First Street, Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 278-5800
1101 Eastport Plaza Dr., Suite 100, Collinsville, IL 62234 (618) 346-5120
9511 Harrison Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016 (847) 294-4000
595 S. State Street, Elgin, IL 60123 (847) 608-3131

2309 W. Main Street, Suite 116, Marion, IL 62959 (618) 993-7200
412 SW Washington Street, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61602 (309) 671-3022
4302 N. Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103 (815) 987-7760

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- If you are using a vendor provided method, a few items need to be available for the assessment team.
- Your laboratory needs to contact the vendor to request the documentation verifying the method they are using is validated to the method they are running.
- If no documentation is available from the vendor, a study is required validating the vendor method is the same outcome as the method requested.

5. **Newest Methods:**
   - As described in earlier update letters, we are phasing out the 19th (1995) and older editions of Standard Methods.
   - If you have concerns about this change, please contact our unit.
   - Please provide a written request for any change in method, 2 passing PT's, IDOC's, MDL's and updated SOP should be sent with the request for method changes.
   - Our staff has 30 days to process the request once all the documentation is received.
   - Laboratories can add or change methods at the renewal time, which is the preferred time to do this, if the request comes in within 60 days of the renewal date, they will be updated with the renewal. If the request is greater than 60 days, please submit the written request and documentation.

6. **Most Common Nonconformities seen in assessments**
   - Number of Standards used in a Calibration curve.
   - IDOC issues—wrong procedure, not documented or not done by each analyst
   - Use of wide-range pH paper to measure pH <2; must use narrow range pH paper
   - Technical Managers without enough hours of chemistry (Inorganic lab 16 college hours of chemistry classes, Organic Lab 24 college hours of chemistry classes)

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Please contact any of the IL ELAP team if you have questions and/or concerns.

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Please recommend any topics for our Laboratory Communication Newsletter. Chances are if you have a question about something, someone else does, too.