November 14th Microfiber Pollution Working Group Notes:

- Welcome: Tom Metzner, DEEP
    - Want to look at the law and its requirements and see what the group can agree upon addressing each requirement.
- Introductions by each member
- Discussion of Requirements in Public Act 18-181

a. " consumer oriented information that explains the process by which such microfibers are shed from clothing and are dispersed in the state's waterways"
    - Tom: We want to highlight the concerns members of the working group have on the statements in the draft of how microfibers get into the waterways.
        - This is meant for the lay-person, it has to be simple enough for them to understand but we want to be scientifically accurate.
    - Tom: What is the size of a microfiber (or microplastic)?--> There isn't a common, standard size that all parties agree on
        - Dr. Ward & Dr. Breslin: <5 millimeters in length and <10 microns in diameter
        - David Sutherland: don't put it in scientific terms for the general public, put it in terms of something a lay person would understand (smaller than a strand of hair, etc.)
        - Lisa Erdle: This is a definition for control, not logical effect.
        - Consensus: Definitions for people involved vs. regular people (lay-persons) are different. There is a place for a scientific and legal definition and a common one, which can be useful in educating the public.
    - Demi Fox and Lisa Erdle: There are many sources of microfiber pollution, but we know that laundering and washing machines contribute to it and we can focus on that now
        - Sarah Pierce: AHAM does not agree with targeting washing machines
        - Miriam Diamond: We know the most about washing machines; there are other sources but we don't know enough about them (e.g., microfibers in the air)
    - Stephanie Karba: The apparel industry is working really hard in order to create a standardized test method so that we can actually quantify using the same method company to company.

b. "best practices for consumers to eliminate and reduce the disbursement of microfibers from clothing into the waterways of the state"
    - Miriam Diamond: Textiles over time—newer textiles have a shedding rate less than older textiles (clothing)
        - Moving toward more durable clothing
    - Demi Fox: Keep it simple for the public in the public education campaign
    - Bill Lucey: We can say something like clothes shed plastic fibers, some you can see and some you can't, and these can end up in oceans and waterways like the Long Island Sound
    - There isn't enough evidence (according to the University of Toronto team) to say that any laundering practices (other than washing less frequently) would reduce the amount of microfibers
        - However, we can say that the use of filters can help reduce amount of microfibers released in washing machine effluent

- Senator Kennedy: Mermaids public education campaign example
- Technology
    - Cora Ball about 30% removal, Guppy Friend (about 90% removal) & External Filters→ (Filtrol 160—most effective)
        - Easy solutions for people to just want to do something

--BREAK--

c. "information on efforts that members of the apparel industry, including, but not limited to, brand labels, are undertaking to reduce or eliminate microfibers in clothing"
- Kristen Kern: AAFA is gathering information and data to find out the best practices they can tell their consumers
    - Right now, they need more information
- Steph Karba: Apparel industry is working to find a standardized and quantified shedding rate (OIA) so that they can use to company to company
    - Bringing researchers and brands together
    - Not a definition of durability, but a measurement to use and for consumers to infer durability
    - Beginning stages; timeline is in the process of being created
- There are several organizations claiming that they have a solution (e.g., an additive on the clothing) and they're testing it (Patagonia)

d. Other components of a consumer education and awareness program including funding
- Consumer awareness part: telling consumers about the problem, what they can do about it and what is being done by the industry
- Sue Quincy: cost approximately $20,000-30,000 (for the educational component)
    - Human impact on environment already part of the curriculum, students taught "how to think" not "what to think"
    - Integrate into plastics issue
- Lisa Erdle: Supports this idea
    - Students go through a water sample and find the amount of microfibers in it
- Demi Fox: NOAA's Marine Debris Program hosts two grant competitions each year; announcements are typically published in August
    - Removal FFO: every year
    - Research FFO: every other year
    - Prevention (through Education and Outreach) FFO: every other year
    - UK social media campaign—What's in my wash? #What'sinMyWash
        - Consumers could share what their clothing's made out of—gets people to pay attention to the issue
- Funding discussion—funding is always hard to get (esp. in the U.S. vs the E.U.)
    - Dr. Ward: hard to get funding for a new topic like microfiber pollution
- Dr. Breslin: we don't know about the amount of microfibers in the Sound
    - Lack of local research

i. K-12 Curriculum

ii. Working with Mystic and Norwalk Aquariums on exhibits, research and promotion of research

- Mary Ellen Mateleska—Mystic Aquarium:
    - Plastics pollution education and exhibition→ both macro and microplastic prevention
    - Working with 22 other aquariums around the country on a campaign on plastic pollution
        - Tracking behavioral change on 1 consistent message
    - Undergraduate research from all over the country; students present information at the aquarium during its busiest days
    - Social media campaigns from Mystic Aquarium:
        - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
        - Consistent message
        - Easy to access for consumers

iii. Social media campaign

iv. Tie in to plastics in the ocean issue

Break – 10:15 – 10:30

III. Continuation of discussion of above

IV. Recommendations for report – Education, reengineering, filtration

- Statement
- Technologies
- Dr. Ward: An opportunity to mention the K-12 education and we'd be able to see if it is effective in the future.
- Bill Lucey: This is a long-term project; can't just have a few meetings
    - Imperative to have a way to monitor the effectiveness of the campaign
    - Quite a bit of sampling and research
- POTWs and WWTPs→ examine phosphorus and microfibers and the sludge

V. Next Steps, Timeline, Goals 11:45 – 12:00—Tom Metzner:

- We need to know what everyone agrees on and can agree on
- Some outreach component should be developed (like the Mermaids public education campaign or the CT DEEP fertilizer campaign)
- Conference call after draft of the report

12:00 - adjourn