

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029
2/20/2003

Richard Eskin, Deputy Director
Technical and Regulatory Services Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 450
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1718

Dear Mr. Eskin:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region III has reviewed the Draft Final report entitled, "Water Quality Analysis of Zinc Contamination for the Jones Falls Baltimore City and Baltimore County, Maryland," submitted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for final Agency review on December 24, 2002.

EPA concurs with MDE's determination that the recent data show that a zinc total maximum daily load (TMDL) is not necessary for Jones Falls. Jones Falls was first listed by Maryland on its 1996 Section 303(d) list of water quality-limited segments as impaired by nutrients, suspended sediments, zinc, copper, lead, and chlordane. The chlordane impairment was addressed by a TMDL analysis in relation to fish tissue impairment in Lake Roland. The other impairments are to be addressed separately at a future date.

The monitoring data collected show that Maryland's acute and chronic freshwater aquatic life criteria for dissolved zinc are being met for this waterbody. The data from 2001 and 2002 for zinc were all found to be below the hardness-adjusted criteria for zinc. Zinc concentrations ranged from 0.35 to 10.8 ug/l, plus one sample at 52.99 ug/l. If in the future evidence suggests that zinc from Jones Falls watershed is contributing to water quality problems, then action will have to be taken.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (215) 814-5715 or Mr. Thomas Henry, TMDL Program Manager, at (215) 814-5752.

Sincerely,

Signed
Joseph Piotrowski,
Associate Director
Water Protection Division
Office of Watersheds

cc: James George, MDE

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