Registration is Now Open for the 2020 P2 Meeting

ACIL is proud to announce that registration is now open for the 2020 ACIL Polices and Practices Meeting. The P2 Meeting will be held on March 30th through April 2nd, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Washington DC.

Each year the P2 meeting is an incredible opportunity for members of the
in our nation’s capital. This event will include educational sessions, section meetings, and the opportunity to participate in Independence Day on the Hill, where attendees will be able to meet with lawmakers to discuss issues important to the laboratory testing industry.

Early bird pricing is available through February 21st. Register today and save!

Analysis of Impurities in Aluminum with the Avio 200 ICP-OES Following London Metal Exchange Guidelines

Aluminum is a versatile metal used in a variety of applications and products, including construction, electrical and consumer products. Due to aluminum’s varied uses and popularity, there are many grades available. The London Metal Exchange (LME) lists specifications for two commonly-used aluminum (Al) purities: 99.5% and 99.7%1, with each having up to six inorganic impurities specified. ICP-OES is the best technique for measuring these impurities at these levels due to its ability to easily handle high-matrix samples and simplicity of operation.
This application note describes the analysis of impurities in Al at the LME specifications using the Avio® 200 hybrid scanning ICP-OES, an ideal choice for this application – its optical design provides excellent light throughput, essential for measuring lower concentrations with shorter analytical times, plus, its charge-coupled device (CCD detector) provides simultaneous background and analyte measurement, important for samples such as metal matrices.

Read the full article here >>

A2LA News

Conforming to ASTM-D7036: Self-Declaration vs. Third-Party Accreditation

Author: David Fricker

Between May 2018 and May 2019, the Office of Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted an audit to determine the effectiveness of oversight in assuring that emission stack tests are conducted in accordance with EPA regulation, policy, and guidance. In their report published July 30, 2019, they identified numerous errors in 29 out of the 30 stack test reports reviewed. Based on the evidence found during the audit, it is clear that the current quality assurance practices and processes in place for Air Emission Testing Bodies (AETBs) and their regulators are underdeveloped and inadequate.

In the preamble to the "Minimum Competency Rule," (CFR76, 17288, 3/28/2011) a rule that establishes competency requirements for AETBs
performing Part 75 emission testing programs, the EPA pointed to strong evidence that unqualified, under-trained and inexperienced testers are routinely deployed on testing projects. The preamble went on to reference an audit report from the EPA Office of Inspector General: "Report of EPA's Oversight of State Stack Testing Programs".¹ This report states that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) made significant corrections to 57 percent of stack tests, that 86 percent of the test protocols were deficient, 28 percent of the test programs had to be repeated for at least one parameter, and 26 percent of the test reports required significant correction, clarification, or were rejected by the NJDEP.

Based on the evidence reported in the preamble to the "Minimum Competency Rule", in 2012 the EPA mandated that AETBs performing Part 75 test programs must conform to ASTM D7036-04, *Standard practice of Competence for Air Emission Testing Bodies*. Current EPA regulations allow AETBs performing Part 75 test programs to conform one of two ways. Option one: the AETB may submit a certificate of accreditation (or interim accreditation) for the relevant test methods by a recognized third-party accreditation body. Option two: management of the AETB may certify that the AETB conforms to the standard for the relevant test methods (i.e., the test methods required to conduct the Part 75 test program). Given the two paths available, it is not surprising that an overwhelming majority of AETBs choose to self-conform. With no demand from the regulatory community or clients, it can be difficult to see the advantages of third-party accreditation, but evidence continues to indicate that self-declaration leads to a high rate of deficiencies.

Read the full article here >>

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**A2LA's Quarterly Newsletter**

**A2LA today**

September 2019 Newsletter | Number 144

**Case Study: How Pinnacle CT Achieved Accreditation on a Deadline**
Pinnacle CT is a cannabis testing laboratory located in Westminster, Maryland. They were founded in 2018, in response to the growing need for high-quality cannabis product testing services in the state. Maryland’s medical cannabis program became active in 2017, and since then the cannabis industry and its related infrastructure has been growing dramatically to support this new industry. Pinnacle CT provides testing for a wide range of cannabis products, including medical marijuana, hemp, and CBD products. As one of only a few cannabis testing labs in the state, Pinnacle CT hopes to create a sense of consumer confidence in the cannabis industry, by providing accurate testing, superior customer service, and excellent value.

**Objective**

Pinnacle CT began considering accreditation to ISO 17025:2017 both in response to state regulations and as a way of reinforcing their public perception of quality. They initially applied for accreditation with A2LA, but after applying they had mistakenly come to believe that A2LA would require consulting services that Pinnacle CT was not interested in. Concerned about this possibility, they instead began to focus on an alternative accreditation body. “Then we met accreditation officer Anna Williams at the Cannabis Science Conference,” explained Dr. Victoria Allen, a representative of Pinnacle CT, “She made a very good impression on us as being very proactive. We decided to switch back to using A2LA, where we believed we would get excellent customer service - and ultimately did.” Ms. Williams, a staff accreditation officer at A2LA, met with decision-makers at Pinnacle CT and provided a detailed quote to help them in their process. She also reassured them that A2LA is strictly an accreditation body, not a consulting service, and that clients had full control over whatever services they chose to pursue. She also shared helpful details about A2LA’s cannabis program requirements. With their confidence restored, Pinnacle CT reapplied for accreditation with A2LA.

**Read the full Case Study here >>**
Industry News

Labs Receive ACIL Customer Service Quality Award

WASHINGTON, DC, October 1, 2019 – The Washington, DC-based American Council of Independent Laboratories (ACIL) is announcing the Customer Quality Service Award at its 82nd annual meeting on October 8 to 10, 2019 in Nashville, Tennessee. The fourteen (14) laboratories receiving the nationwide 2019 ACIL Customer Quality Service Award are listed in this release.

Developed in 1996 to address the industry's quality issues and recognize those laboratories with exemplary quality performance, the Program provides...
Participants commit to ensuring data integrity, meeting customers’ quality needs and setting performance standards for the testing laboratory industry. No other evaluation program ranks customer satisfaction with laboratory services and requires laboratory management to commit to a data integrity program.

As recipients of the ACIL Customer Quality Service Award, the following laboratories, presented alphabetically, have demonstrated commitment to quality and customer service:

- Advance Testing Company, Inc., Campbell Hall, NY
- American Analytical Laboratories, Inc., Akron, OH
- Ana-Lab Corp., Kilgore, TX
- Atlantic Testing Laboratories, Limited, Utica, NY
- D.L.S. Electronic Systems, Inc., Wheeling, IL
- Foreign Trade Service Corp, Chesapeake, VA
- Gibraltar Laboratories, Inc., Fairfield, NJ
- Microbac Laboratories, Inc., Marietta, OH
- Neilson Research Corporation, Medford, OR
- NSF International Inc., Ann Arbor, MI
- Particle Technology Labs, Downers Grove, IL
- RTI Laboratories, Inc., Livonia, MI
- Washington Laboratories Ltd, Gaithersburg, MD
- Weck Laboratories, Inc., Industry, CA

Read the full article >>

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**Brooks Applied Labs is CGMP Compliant!**

Brooks Applied Labs (BAL) is excited to announce that we are now fully CGMP-compliant to current pharmaceutical requirements. The first question you may be asking yourself is, “What does CGMP compliant mean?” It means that our pharmaceutical clients who are in need of a quality contract...
demands of the Code of Federal Regulations (21 CFR Parts 210, 211, and 11) and International Council on Harmonization (ICH Q7, Q9), especially as related to our compliance with data integrity requirements. This also means that our biopharma clients no longer need different laboratories to support CGMP, R&D, and MS&T facets of their business cycles, which equates to increased efficiencies and standardized high data quality throughout their enterprise. Browse our updated Pharmaceuticals Website for additional information. You can also quickly and easily request a quotation through our website!

With the addition of CGMP-compliance to BAL’s long list of regulatory and accreditation accolades (ISO 17025, NELAC, DOD/DOE, etc.), BAL is well positioned to drive transformational environmental and human health outcomes by providing our clients across a broad range of markets with the gold-standard in analytical services for trace elements.

Brooks Applied Labs provides Meaningful Metals Data and Advanced Speciation Solutions to hundreds of projects worldwide, and we are very dedicated to staying in our niche. Many members of our staff, from the Sample Disposal Technician to our CEO, are seasoned veterans in the world of ultra-trace metals analysis and metals speciation. Together we work to provide thoroughly ultra-clean and pre-tested sampling equipment, fast turn-around-time options, high-quality validated data, and custom reporting packages at competitive prices to ensure that our clients receive the data and consulting they require to make critical decisions.

ANAB Expands Training to Product and Personnel Certification and More

During the past year, ANAB has expanded its training programs beyond courses based on ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO/IEC 17020 to include training related to product and personnel certification. ANAB’s training portfolio now covers all accreditation-related training under one umbrella and includes both in-person and online training on requirements and concepts of accreditation-related ISO standards and related processes.
Individuals and organizations seeking to gain knowledge and a better understanding of accreditation-related requirements and processes can benefit from ANAB training. Each training course is based on ANAB’s knowledge and experience, as well as feedback received on previous course offerings. They were developed in response to the demand for a hands-on, practical approach.

ANAB participates in and is a leader of standards-developing committees and the international accreditation cooperations responsible for developing accreditation requirements. This ensures firsthand knowledge and a full understanding of the requirements.

As an accreditation body, ANAB has direct experience with assessments, granting and suspending accreditation, and developing policies for implementing standards. This puts ANAB in the best position to provide the most accurate and technically competent accreditation-related training.

All ANAB instructors are highly qualified assessors and industry experts with decades of experience in accreditation. Their up-to-date knowledge is assured through participation in regular professional development sessions.

ANAB training will provide you with knowledge of the requirements and an understanding of practical approaches to their implementation.

In addition to core accreditation-related training based on ISO standards, ANAB offers training in specialty topics including IAF Mandatory Documents, the new AOAC Guidelines, measurement uncertainty, risk-based thinking, data validation, and more. New classes are added regularly.

For details on the courses offered, visit [www.anab.org/training](http://www.anab.org/training).

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**Pickering Laboratories Introduces ONYX PCX – A Culmination of Nearly 40 Years of Post-Column Innovation**

*Next generation post-column derivatization instrument delivers on promise of*
Mountain View, California, Nov 25, 2019 – Environmental, pharmaceutical and feed laboratories now have access to the newest model of post-column derivatization instruments – the Onyx PCX. Every component of this system has been optimized for post-column applications, thereby improving ease of use, reliability and ruggedness of analytical instrumentation. Onyx PCX is used in the analysis of amino acids, glyphosate, mycotoxins, antibiotics, cannabinoids and a variety of other applications. This latest instrument is part of the commitment Pickering Laboratories has to complete application support. Together with analytical columns, high-purity reagents, mobile phases and methods, the Onyx PCX post-column system supports Pickering Laboratories’ guarantee of method performance and chromatographic separation.

The Onyx PCX features a precisely programmable convectional column oven with temperature gradient capabilities and a fully inert flow path with ceramic syringe reagent pumps, PEEK electronic valves and PTFE reactor coils. All main components of the system are accessible from the front panel for ease of monitoring and maintenance. Following the tradition of Pickering Laboratories’ derivatization instruments, the Onyx PCX can be connected to any HPLC system, greatly expanding the LC’s capabilities.

“We are also very excited about new software features, such as extensive record-keeping capabilities and automated heaters calibration,” says Dr. Maria Ofitserova, Senior Research Chemist at Pickering Laboratories. “In addition to log files collecting real-time data on all instrument parameters for troubleshooting purposes, we now have the User Journal that allows laboratories to maintain records of completed runs, error messages, changes to methods and sequences.” She continues, “these and other details are important for audits and regulatory compliance. We also introduced an automated calibration feature for our heaters, which supports instrument performance qualification in the field.”

About Pickering Laboratories, Inc.:

*Pickering Laboratories, Inc. manufactures analytical columns, high-purity reagents, and post-column derivatization instruments that enable specialized analysis with High-Performance Liquid Chromatography Equipment. For*
nearly 40 years, Pickering Laboratories has offered its expertise and technical support to our customers in the environmental, clinicals and food markets to help them achieve the highest sensitivity and selectivity of analysis. Our supported methods include the derivatization of Amino Acids, Carbamates, Glyphosate, Aminoglycoside Antibiotics, Polyether Antibiotics, Biogenic Amines, Aflatoxins, Paralytic Shellfish Toxins, and more.

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Section Updates

Conformity Assessment Section (CAS)

CAS is now reviewing the recently released OSHA NRTL directives. CAS and FSS held a joint meeting during Nashville to discuss the “FDA Pilot Conformity Assessment Program.” Both Sections continue to monitor the issues with the pilot program. It is likely that once formalized, the program will run for two years before being modified or becoming permanent.

Unfair competition by government funded labs at the state and university...
Don Heirman, DON HEIRMAN Associates completed his EMC webinar series in 2019. The webinar was held September 16 – “IEC Advisory Committee on EMC- 2nd Meeting (ACEC).” That webinar marked the conclusion of the EMC webinar series.

IAF has proposed the IAF Draft Mandatory Document – Criteria for the evaluation of Conformity Assessment Schemes. The proposals in the document would seriously impair the functioning of many conformity assessment schemes, including schemes of significance and importance to ACIL and its member organizations. CAS and a number of accreditation bodies are developing strong responses to the proposed criteria. Comments are being submitted to Dan Cannon, ACIL CAS consultant, by COB on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 for consolidation.

Construction Materials Engineering and Testing Section (CMET)
The Construction Materials Engineering and Testing Section (CMET) has finalized the acquisition of NACLA and the process of integrating NACLA into CMET is taking place.

A major focus for CMET in 2020 will be building back old relationships and adding new ones for the benefit of its members. Informational pieces are being developed to highlight the benefits of CMET membership in ACIL. Work also continues on the revisions to the I-Mark program for CMET.

The issue of conflict of interest problems with certain state is being discussed and solutions are being suggested to those states. The problem areas revolve around continuation of services within the same contract. CMET members are suggesting clarifications to avoid these issues going forward.

CMET is also continuing its discussion of the CMET Training Working Group to discuss program that can be provided to help member and other firms with a variety of training needs. This will be one of the major topics covered during the "P2" Conference meeting on April 1, 2020.

Environmental Sciences Section (ESS)
ESS is reviewing and commenting on the California Water Authority (CWA) Method Update Rule (MUR.) ACIL has reviewed the MUR and, while not perfect, the MUR provides a strong solution to the current problems in California. ACIL is drafting a letter of support for adoption of the MUR.

ESS has written a strongly worded letter to EPA requesting the reversal of the current administration to the non-renewal of the charter for the
value of ELAB can be continued. More on this issue will follow.

ACIL and other laboratories are supporting EPA in developing an update to Method 3050C. Samples for testing have been sent out to laboratories participating in the study. However, results may not be known until the first half of 2020.

Environmental contamination caused by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) remains a top priority for ESS. Significant activity occurred on The Hill in both October and November 2019. A number of proposed pieces of legislation have moved forward. However, with other issues taking precedence on The Hill, ACIL’s positions and meetings with members of Congress and staffers may need to be repeated next year if the legislation doesn’t pass in this Congressional session.

ESS is also tracking another regulatory issue affecting independent testing laboratories in that state. ACIL supports the adoption of California standards that are similar to the current TNI standards. The position of ACIL is that two-tiered system of rules will not be beneficial and should not be adopted.

Food Sciences Section (FSS)

USDA’s Hemp rules are being promulgated and ACIL has major concerns with rules dealing with independent testing. An FSS Hemp Working Group is working on a response to USDA by Wednesday, December 18, 2020. Major issues include sampling, testing, laboratory accreditation, producer violations and state pre-emption issues.

FSS also continues its multi-year negotiations with FDA relating to FSMA. The FSS FDA Working Group is drafting a response to FDA. It is expected that ACIL will, once again, meet in person with FDA leadership as well as submitting written responses to FDA.

Once the new year begins, FSS will begin to undertake more focus on USDA issues.

ACIL exists to provide advocacy, education, service and mutual support for our members, and thereby enhance the independent testing community.