



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 19, 2010

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Cruise ship science advisory panel meeting starts Thursday

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) kicks off its third science advisory panel of the year on Thursday at Centennial Hall in Juneau. Sessions will highlight cruise ship lay-out and space design; the U.S. Coast Guard's wastewater treatment system approval process and information on the quality of potable water ships take onboard in port.

The meeting begins at 8:00 a.m. Thursday and concludes at 5 p.m. on Friday.

Attending the meeting will be Rob Edwardson who accepted the DEC Cruise Ship Program Manager position in September. Edwardson is a lifelong Alaskan and retired Coast Guard officer whose positions included Hazardous Materials Coordinator and Officer in Charge of units performing Search and Rescue, Law Enforcement and Marine Environmental Protection. He will be available to answer questions about the cruise ship program.

Guided by state law, DEC established the 11-member science advisory panel in 2009 to evaluate the most "technologically effective and economically feasible" wastewater treatment options for cruise ships. Its members include representatives from the Coast Guard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the fishing industry, the cruise ship industry, academia and a marine conservation organization. The panel will advise DEC as it prepares to report the findings of the panel to the state legislature. The group's first meeting took place in February.

For a full meeting agenda or more information on the science advisory panel go to: http://www.dec.state.ak.us/water/cruise_ships/SciencePanel/index.htm . To receive updates on the cruise ship program and science advisory panel, please sign up to the DEC list serve at: <http://list.state.ak.us/soalists/DEC-Cruise-Ship/jl.htm> .