

STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GROUND WATER

**To promote and guide the implementation of a coordinated,
comprehensive and effective ground water protection and
management program for the state of Ohio**

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Ohio Public Utilities
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77 South High Street
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Ohio Department of
Transportation
1980 West Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**April 21, 2011
USGS Ohio Water Center
6480 Doubletree Avenue, Columbus**

The April 21, 2011 meeting consisted of Agency announcements and a presentation titled "Proposal for a Great Miami Ground-Water Observatory" by Dr. David Nash, University of Cincinnati

ATTENDANCE

Ohio EPA: Michael Eggert, Barb Lubberger, Jeff Patzke
ODNR: Mike Angle, Tom Tomastik
ODH: Rebecca Fugitt
PUCO: Sue Daly
USGS: Ralph Haefner
NRCS: John Armentano

AGENCY UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mineral Resources Management

Disposal of Drilling Wastes. Currently about 10,000 barrels/day of oil/gas fluid wastes are trucked into Ohio for disposal in one of Ohio's 40-50 commercial deep injection wells. Recently the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection passed a May 19th deadline on sending oil and gas well drilling wastes to Pennsylvania wastewater treatment plants. The Division anticipates that now even more of these wastes will be trucked across state lines to Ohio.

Drilling Activity in Ohio. In the three-month period from January 1 to March 31, 2011, 399 oil/gas wells have been drilled in Ohio.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Innovation Grants. Applications are in for 12 Conservation Innovation Grants.

RC&D Programs. NRCS has zeroed out funding for the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Programs, so all NRCS work being charged to RC&D activities must cease. As a result, all RC&D Coordinators have been removed from that position and assigned other duties.

OEPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters:

Fact Sheets. In response to mounting citizen requests for water quality sampling related to oil/gas drilling issues, an interagency workgroup is developing two fact sheets on private or public well sampling near oil/gas wells, designed for laypersons. The first fact sheet focuses on what to sample for and how to find a certified lab to analyze the sample. The second fact sheet focuses on how to interpret the analytical results.

Web Map of UIC Wells. The division is developing a Web-based map that will display locations of all Class I and Class V permitted injection wells.

Nelsonville Bypass. The planned Nelsonville bypass crosses some areas of historic coal mining. To stabilize the subsurface in these areas, 1400 Class V wells have been constructed to pump nontoxic flyash (mixed with 6% cement) into the void spaces.

Source Water Protection Survey. The division recently sent out letters to almost 750 community public water suppliers, requesting that they complete an online survey on the types of source water protection measures they are currently implementing.

Statistics Training. At Ohio EPA's request, USEPA statistics expert Kurt Cameron provided a two-day training last week for Agency staff, which was also attended by private consultants.

Technical Guidance Manual. The division is seeking comment on revisions of Chapter Ten ("Ground Water Sampling") of the *Technical Guidance Manual for Hydrogeologic Investigations and Ground Water Monitoring*.

Merger. As of April 18, 2011, three Ohio EPA waste management divisions have been merged into two. The new Division of Waste Materials Management incorporates the permitting, inspections, enforcement and other functions of the former Divisions of Hazardous Waste Management, Solid & Infectious Waste Management, and Emergency and Remedial Response. Cleanups and closure activities will be consolidated with emergency and remedial response in the other division, as yet unnamed.

Salt Contamination. Investigation is continuing at five sites around Ohio, where ground water has been impacted by runoff from piles of road salt. In addition, staff are re-inventorying salt piles previously identified in source water protection areas, to determine the scope of the problem and decide what level of measures should be taken. Meanwhile, salt facility construction standards have been drafted, to be considered by DSW for inclusion in municipal storm water permits.

Ambient Program. Ohio EPA's ambient water quality program consists of ground water samples from public water systems, where pumping is almost continuous. To study the relationship of ground water quality to ground water levels in unstressed aquifers, the division is interested in partnering with ODNR to sample some of its observation wells.

Devola Study. The study of nitrate levels at Devola (Washington County) should be finalized before long. This study implicates septic systems in the unsewered areas of the community as the main source of high nitrates in the area's drinking water.

United States Geological Survey - Ohio Water Center

Observation Well Network Upgrade. USGS recently piloted the upgrade with two wells, to work out potential problems in advance. Fifty wells will be upgraded this summer and by the summer of 2012, all the upgrades should be complete.

Arsenic in Private Wells. An interagency group helmed by USGS is developing a Test Your Well proposal for homeowners in Summit County with suspected high levels of arsenic in their well water.

NAWQA Studies. A compilation of abstracts on National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program studies was distributed. The studies included:

- Estimate of Tracer-Based Piston-Flow Ages of Groundwater from Selected Sites: National Water-Quality Assessment Program, 1992-2005 (<http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa>)
- “Nitrogen contamination in surficial aquifers – A Growing Legacy?” *Environmental Science and Technology*, February 2011.
- “Septic systems show impacts on shallow groundwater quality”, *Journal of Hydrology*, February 2011 (397, 151-166)
- “Human activities can increase concentrations of naturally occurring trace elements in some water-supply wells”, *Journal of Applied Geochemistry*
- “Changing water quality in the Edwards aquifer”, *USGS Scientific Investigations Report* (2010-5129, 93 p.)
- “Age of groundwater is determined using environmental tracers”, *USGS Scientific Investigations Report* (2010-5229)
- “Estimates of 2005 domestic water use and population served are now available”, *USGS Open-File Report* (2010-1223).

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

New Commissioner. Commissioner Valerie Lemmie’s term expired in 2011 and she has been replaced by Andre Porter. The new chair is Todd A. Snitchler.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey

Funding Uncertainties. The division was extremely resourceful in lining up grant-funded projects over the last year, but budget cuts for the various partners now make these projects uncertain. Among the partners are FEMA, the Office of Coastal Management, USGS (four projects), and the Coal Development/Clean Air Office.

Ohio Department of Health

Sewage Treatment Rules. The Rules Advisory Committee is continuing to develop rules based on the statute. Current discussion focuses on (1) defining the point at which repairs are insufficient and a full septic system replacement is required; and (2) whether the statute outlaws the use of all drainage wells for sewage and if so, what options that leaves for very small properties.

PRESENTATION

“Proposal for a Great Miami Ground-Water Observatory”

David Nash, David Lentz, Amy Townsend-Small, and Ishi Buffam (all professors at University of Cincinnati, Departments of Geology and Biology), are proposing a ground water observatory next to the Great Miami River at Whitewater Park (south of Fernald). The observatory would enable both high-level research on ground water/surface water interactions and first-rate public education. The proposal includes installation of four deep wells to bedrock and well points on the riverbank. With sufficient funds, a pumping well with 16 observation wells arrayed around it could be included. The Miami Conservancy District has already pledged \$100,000 toward this project and at least another \$150,000 is needed.

NEXT SCCGW MEETING

... will be held June 16th. Meeting and agenda to be determined.

REMINDER:

Meeting agendas and final meeting summaries
are posted on the SCCGW Web site:

<http://wwwapp.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw/SCCGW/>