

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

Ohio Environmental
Protection Agency
Lazarus Government Center
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1049

Ohio Department of Natural
Resources
Fountain Square
Columbus, Ohio 43224-1387

Ohio Department of Health
246 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0588

Ohio Department of
Commerce-SFM
8895 East Main Street
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

Ohio Public Utilities
Commission
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0573

Ohio Department of
Agriculture
8995 East Main Street
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068-
3399

Ohio Department of
Development
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0413

Ohio Department of
Transportation
1980 West Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

February 16, 2011
ODNR – Fountain Square
Building H, conference room 2

The February 16, 2012 meeting consisted of Agency announcements and a presentation titled "Arsenic in Ground Water of Licking County, Ohio" by Mary Ann Thomas, USGS

ATTENDANCE

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

AGENCY UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

Company Transfer. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio approved an agreement on February 14, 2012 allowing Aqua Ohio to purchase 100 percent of the outstanding capital stock of Ohio American Water.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management

Youngstown Seismic Event. The division has drafted a report on the Youngstown seismic event, which will be posted on the Web and publicized via a press release, once it has been reviewed and finalized.

Industry Growth. In Ohio there are currently in operation thirteen oil and gas rigs for Utica shale oil and gas extraction, with others preparing to initiate operations in April and May.

Cementing Rules. New rules for cementing newly constructed oil and gas wells are at the Joint Committee for Agency Rule Review (JCARR).

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey
OGS Seismic Monitoring. The division is working on establishing seismic monitoring centers at sites throughout Ohio, primarily at universities. Currently there are 26 sites, and they are trying to establish sites at Kent State University-Tuscarawas Campus, Marietta College, and Belmont College.

USGS Seismic Monitoring. In addition, USGS has been working for years to establish a national network of seismic monitoring sites, the U.S. Array-Earthscope, on a 70-kilometer grid, working its way from west to east. An array is currently being set up in Ohio and should be operational by August. These instruments will be set up in vaults and collect data for roughly two years. Discussions are actively occurring to make some of these permanent stations.

Other OGS Projects. While projects related to the oil and gas industry in eastern Ohio are a priority, the division continues to work on its projects to improve the mapping of karst and glacial aquifers, as well as coastal delineation and CO₂ sequestration.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Staff Change. Karl Gebhardt is the new division chief, and Ted Lozier—who was acting chief—has returned to his assistant chief position.

Online Well Sealing Report. A fully functional version of the software should be posted to the web site by March. However, the division is still populating the database with data from the old paper reports.

OEPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters:

Fluoride Fact Sheets. DDAGW is collaborating with the Ohio Department of Health to issue a joint fact sheet on fluoride for a nontechnical audience. A lengthier version for a more technical audience is also being prepared.

Salt Storage Workgroup. The workgroup has met twice so far. Its mission is to develop guidelines for best management practices and a summary of how other states have approached this issue. The workgroup is considering producing two documents: one for piles that are sufficiently large that tarping is the only practical method to cover them, and another for salt piles that are housed within a building. The next meeting, a conference call, will be held February 27th.

WMAO Conference. Ohio EPA has been tasked with organizing the annual Water Management Association of Ohio (WMAO) conference in November, and is soliciting volunteers.

Ohio EPA's eDocument Search. Ohio EPA's eDocument Search, which currently includes noncompliance documents issued since Jan. 1, 2007, should be live next week and will eventually include electronic copies of most of the Agency's public records.

Centralizing Services. The Agency is moving towards a shared services concept for its GIS services.

Geothermal Guidance. Next Tuesday the Ohio Water Resources Council will consider the geothermal guidance developed by the SCCGW workgroup. Upon endorsement, the guidance will be available to the public on the SCCGW web site.

Baseline Water Quality Guidance. OEPA, ODNR and ODH jointly developed a guidance document (available on each agency's web site) for the general public on how to sample for baseline water quality in advance of nearby oil and gas well drilling. However, the Ohio Water Resources Council recently discussed the need for guidance on how to interpret the sampling results. Pennsylvania Extension Services has developed an excellent web-based guidance for interpreting water quality results that Ohio may be able to adapt.

United States Geological Survey - Ohio Water Center:

Budget. The President's proposed 2013 budget includes an overall increase in funding for USGS, with funds for the National Ground-water Quality Monitoring Network and for research related to the oil and gas industry expansion in the Marcellus/Utica Shales. On the other hand, proposed funding was decreased for NAWQA and the Cooperative Water Program.

Ground Water Flooding. Water levels are currently only 7.9 feet below ground surface in Observation Well E-10, which is a "sentinel well" for incipient ground water flooding in northern Ohio. Normally, the ground water levels are around 60 feet below surface at this time of year.

Observation Well Network Upgrade. Progress has slowed on this project, in part because of delays in obtaining new equipment from suppliers. To date 46 of the 124 wells have been upgraded.

Hydraulic Fracturing. USGS is part of an internal workgroup with other federal agencies to study the issues surrounding hydraulic fracturing. Seven study sites have been established around the country by the U.S. EPA, including one in western Pennsylvania.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

- Geological Society meeting in Dayton, Dayton Convention Center, April 23-24, 2012 (<http://www.geosociety.org/Sections/nc/2012mtg/>)
- National Ground Water Association Focus Conference on Midwest Ground Water Issues, Downtown Crowne Plaza Hotel, Columbus, June 26-27, 2012
<http://www.ngwa.org/Events-Education/conferences/5085/Pages/5085jun12.aspx>
- WMAO one-day conference on lake water quality and dam safety at Kings Island Conference Center on March 16, 2012
<http://www.wmao.org/meetings.shtml>
- COSI-sponsored Earth Day celebration of water on April 28, 2012, 11am-3:30 pm
<http://www.cosi.org/calendar-of-events>

New USGS Articles:

- "Phosphorus and Ground-water: Establishing Links Between Agricultural Use and Transport to Streams", Fact Sheet 2012-3004
- "Comparison of particle-tracking and lumped-parameter age-distribution models for estimating vulnerability of production wells to contamination, S.M. Eberts et al, Hydrogeology Journal. Published online: 05 January 2012
- "O₂ reduction and denitrification in shallow aquifers", Anthony J. Tesoriero and Larry J. Puckett, Water Resources Research, Vol. 47, W12522
- NAWQA program – occurrence of radium in principal aquifers.
<http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/trace/radium>

- “Quality of Volatile Organic Compound Data from Ground Water and Surface Water for the National Water-Quality Assessment Program, October 1996-December 2008, David A. Bender et al., Sci. Investig. Rpt., 2011-5204.

Ohio Department of Health:

Ohio Water Resources Council. The OWRC will meet on Feb. 21. The Council will review and vote on the budget for the council, the adoption of the Balanced Growth Initiative for statewide application, the funding of two balanced growth projects in the Ohio River basin, the reappointment of external advisory group members, and the technical and regulatory recommendations for geothermal heating and cooling systems developed by the SCCGW workgroup.

Sewage Treatment Rules. The rule advisory committee for the sewage treatment system rules will continue to meet through the end of March. ODH will be preparing a first draft of the rules for the 60 day comment period to be available in late April. During the 60 day comment period, ODH will schedule small group regional meetings for local health districts and industry. Based on comment obtained during the first comment period, ODH will prepare a second draft. The proposed timeframe is to have the rules ready to submit to Public Health Council in late fall, with a possible effective date in early 2013.

Sub. House Bill 32. ODH has been tracking the progress of Sub. HB 32 which provides an exemption for the use of a registered surveyor for the preparation of design plans for sewage treatment systems, and provides a linkage between current local health district rules and the penalty provision of ORC Chapter 3718. The bill was passed through the General Assembly and is now to the Governor for signature.

Web-Based Permit Information. The Bureau of Environmental Health is in the process of preparing an RFP to develop a web based application and database to capture and manage environmental health program permits, licenses and data from local health districts and the state. BEH has some funding to move forward with this project.

Hydrogen Sulfide Complaints. BEH staff continues to work with local health districts and Ohio EPA on issues related to releases of hydrogen sulfide from landfills and local resident complaints of odors and health impacts.

Contractor Registration. The private water systems program is winding up the peak of the annual registration renewals for private water system contractors. There are currently almost 700 contractors registered for 2012.

DISCUSSION

Methane Fact Sheet. Members discussed the need for a fact sheet on methane, since the potential for methane gas to migrate into private wells and basements from improperly installed oil and gas wells is a growing concern for individuals living in eastern Ohio. ODH guidance advises concerned private well owners to install venting devices on their wells. However, the state agencies do not have much data on methane gas in ground water and therefore cannot identify the locations where such devices are most critical. The group discussed using high iron and low sulfate concentrations in ground water as an indicator, since these characterize methane-producing conditions and these data are widely available. The oil and gas industry itself collects a great deal of methane data, however, so as a first step ODNR will request these data from them.

New SCCGW Chair. The group discussed rotating the chair of SCCGW to ODNR, starting with the June 21st 2012 meeting. Staff from the Division of Soil and Water Conservation will decide who can fill this role for the next year.

PRESENTATION

“Arsenic in Ground Water of Licking County, Ohio: Identifying vulnerable parts of aquifers and increasing public awareness”, presented by Mary Ann Thomas, USGS

NEXT SCCGW MEETING

... will be held April 19th at ODNR Assembly Center (Building E) and will feature a presentation by Doug Aden (ODNR-Division of Geological Survey) on karst in Delaware County and the area around Springfield.

REMINDER:

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

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