



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection State Well Drillers and Pump Installers Examining and Advisory Board Meeting Minutes for October 20, 2022

Approved by the Board on November 17, 2022

Board Members Present at NJDEP Headquarters Building: N/A

Board Members Participating Via Telephone/Microsoft Teams: Art Becker (Chairman), Joe Yost, Gordon Craig, Dave Lyman, Eric Hoffmann, and Richard Dalton

Board Members Absent: Gary Poppe, Jeff Hoffman, and Steve Domber

Board Legal Representative Present: N/A

NJDEP Water Supply (Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting) Staff Present: Terry Pilawski, Joe Mattle, Steve Reya, Mark Ortega, and Steve Vargo

Members of the Public: Brian McGuire; MB Drilling, Nick Fallucca; MB Drilling, Wes Eichfeld; MB Drilling

1. Call to Order-

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 am with a quorum present via Microsoft Teams and telephone. Notice of the meeting and instructions on how to participate by video or phone were listed on the Department's website.

2. Review and Certification of the September 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes-

A motion to approve the draft minutes from September 15, 2022 as written was made by E. Hoffmann, seconded by D. Lyman, and approved unanimously.

3. Program Updates-

J. Mattle discussed the current processing times for well permits, stating that they are currently taking longer than normal to process. He informed the Board that a tentative plan has been put in place to assist with well permit reviews. The plan is to take staff from the Technical Assistance and Licensing Unit (Technical Unit) and train them on the review and processing of well permits in order to alleviate some of the current backlog.

Additionally, J. Mattle discussed the recent letter that the Well Permitting Section had sent to all New Jersey licensed well drillers and pump installers. A portion of the letter was used to notify licensees about the current delays and advise them to pay close attention to the information that is submitted. J. Mattle noted that a large percentage of well permits are sent back technically deficient, which delays the approval process. J. Mattle briefly touched upon some intra-Departmental initiatives which have also slowed down processing times of irrigation well permits and well permits taken out for properties where combined pump capacity is above a certain threshold.

T. Pilawski discussed the staffing needs for the Well Permitting Section. She noted that the two supervisor positions, previously held by J. Altieri and L. Stout, are still vacant. Additionally, an entry-level backfill for L. Stout must be filled. She informed the Board that the Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting was able to hire a permanent clerical staff member, Ms. Infiniti Harris.

T. Pilawski touched upon some of the lingering projects that the Technical Unit have been tackling. She discussed the transition of the New Jersey Environmental Management System (NJEMS), which is the Department’s main database, to a new web-based system. She also mentioned that the blueberry farm inspections and subsequent follow-up have taken up a lot of staff time. Additionally, staff will likely be pulled in the future to start working on the horizontal directional drilling guidance.

T. Pilawski addressed a concern that A. Becker had brought to her attention prior to the meeting, in reference to well permit turnaround times. T. Pilawski noted that permit turnaround times have increased from an average of one day to an average of almost three days. She added that she has expressed the Board’s concerns to the Director of Water Supply and Geoscience and the Assistant Commissioner of Water Resource Management. A. Becker thanked T. Pilawski and J. Mattle for the update. He noted that the loss of L. Stout due to her retirement was a huge loss for Well Permitting. He added that there is a lot of pressure that comes from their clients, especially from environmental firms. A. Becker asked that Department staff keep the Board and drilling community informed.

J. Mattle announced that he will be retiring effective May 1, 2023.

4. Review and Certification of License Applications-

A. Becker read off the list of two Environmental Resource and Geotechnical (ERG) well drillers who applied for licensure. He asked if anyone knew where Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers, Inc. was located. M. Ortega said that he believed that they were based out of Pennsylvania.

License Type	Applicant Name	Employer
ERG	Brandon Pizzuti	Cascade Drilling
ERG	Joseph J. Mehalick	Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers, Inc.

A motion to approve the two license applicants for licensure was made by G. Craig. This motion was seconded by E. Hoffmann and approved unanimously.

**5. Continuing Education Course Application Review-
Paradigm**

S. Reya introduced the course, Pipeline Safety & Coordinated Response Exercise. He said that the provider was seeking two continuing education points (CEPs) for this safety-related course. He added

that a New Jersey licensed Journeyman well driller had registered for this course and brought it to the Department's attention; M. Ortega had given the course provider an application shortly thereafter.

R. Dalton discussed how the course is related to One Call. A. Becker noted that he wanted more details on the course, so he attempted to take the course online but was not able to access it. He added that he still believed that the course was relevant.

A motion to approve Pipeline Safety & Coordinated Response Exercise for two safety CEPs was made by R. Dalton. This motion was seconded by G. Craig and approved unanimously.

New Jersey Ground Water Association (NJGWA)

S. Reya introduced the course, NJGWA November 2022 Membership Meeting with OSHA in the Workplace. He added that NJGWA is seeking two CEPs for this course, one technical and one safety.

A motion to accept the NJGWA November 2022 Membership Meeting with OSHA in the Workplace course for one technical CEP and one safety CEP was made by J. Yost. This motion was seconded by D. Lyman and approved by all except for R. Dalton who voted against the motion.

National Ground Water Association (NGWA) Follow Up

S. Reya said that during the September meeting, the Board tabled five courses. Two of the courses were identified as administratively incomplete by M. Ortega during the initial application review and three courses were determined to have inadequate course descriptions by the Board. S. Reya noted that M. Ortega reached out to NGWA, per the Board's requested, and asked for more detailed course descriptions for the three courses that they requested. However, the NGWA representative stated that she would not be able to obtain more detailed course descriptions and asked for the Board to pass on those courses.

S. Reya presented the information for the two courses which NGWA did provide instructor biographies that were not included with their initial submittals: The Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) Symposium and Sonic Drilling: What Does it Have to Offer. He added that the VFD Symposium was two hours long and the Sonic Drilling course was one hour long. Both courses will have online versions available in January, which could also be taken for credit, if approved.

A motion to accept The VFD Symposium for two technical CEPs and Sonic Drilling: What Does it Have to Offer for one technical CEP was made by G. Craig. This motion was seconded by D. Lyman and approved unanimously.

6. Continuing Education Report on Status of Licensees-

M. Ortega provided an update to the Board with the continuing education stats as of October 13, 2022. He reported that 71% of all licensees have started earning their CEPs. He reiterated that the Department expects that at least 75% of licensees meet the requirements by the March 31, 2023 deadline.

M. Ortega noted that there are still a lot of ERG well drillers and pump installers who still have not received any CEPs according to the Department's records. He added that there are over 60 active online course options available to all well drillers and pump installers, covering a wide variety of topics. M. Ortega praised some of the distributing companies, specifically Aquaflow and Parkhurst, for their efforts to hold large seminars for licensees. A lot of pump installers have earned their points from these seminars. M. Ortega brought up the various offerings for safety courses to the Board. A.

Becker confirmed with M. Ortega and the rest of the Board that the same course cannot be taken more than once in a cycle.

A. Becker asked if the issuance of renewal invoices and licenses will be delayed because of the current staffing woes facing the Well Permitting Section. M. Ortega said that the current staffing levels will have no effect on the issuance of renewal invoices and licenses. He recalled that in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, he and S. Reya managed to take care of the coordination, sorting, and distribution of over 700 invoices and licenses. He added that all of the technical issues that were encountered, such as the wrong expiration dates appearing on all of the ERG licenses, should be hammered out moving into this new licensing cycle. A. Becker thanked M. Ortega for the update and praised his efforts for ensuring that the continuing education program runs smoothly.

7. Other Business: Type 1L Cement (Replacement of Type I Cement)-

R. Dalton asked to discuss the Portland Type 1 Cement replacement, Type 1L, which had been discussed during prior meetings. He said that he had reached out to some of his contacts to see if they had any permeability data on this new type of cement. He said that while no permeability tests have been conducted, he learned that the permeability could vary due to the percentage of limestone in the cement. G. Craig added that the amount of water in the grout mix would be greater due to limestone's ability to absorb water. He added that the mix ratio specified in NJ regulations would likely prove unpumpable with the new material composition. R. Dalton also pointed out that limestone can have different compositions, so results may vary.

A. Becker said that he spoke with the Portland Association, however, their focus is concrete, not grout. He said that they have not conducted any pump tests with this new material. E. Hoffmann said that he reached out to the Rutgers Civil Engineering Department but had never heard back from them. He added that he'll try to contact them again soon and that this would be a great research assignment for a graduate student.

A. Becker expressed his concerns and added that not many people in the industry know about this upcoming change. R. Dalton said that it does not sound like the oil and gas industry has been able to conduct permeability tests either as he was unable to find any available documentation. The Board agreed that determining the proper mix and conducting permeability tests and pump tests are information that is needed.

A. Becker asked if this could be captured on a well record. S. Reya said materials section of the well record currently only captures the total pounds of cement utilized, not the type of cement. E. Hoffmann asked if this request could be forwarded to the Department's Division of Science and Research. A. Becker asked Department staff how they could go about doing that. T. Pilawski said that J. Hoffman can submit a request to them for review. A. Becker said that he can send a letter or email to the Department as Board Chairman noting the importance of addressing this issue.

8. Adjournment-

A. Becker asked S. Reya when the next meeting would be held. S. Reya said that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 17, 2022.

At 10:25 am, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by G. Craig, seconded by D. Lyman, and approved unanimously.