

STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GROUND WATER

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TO PROMOTE AND GUIDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COORDINATED, COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GROUND WATER PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE STATE OF OHIO

March 22, 2007
USGS Conference Room

ABSTRACT

The March 2007 SCCGW meeting was a rescheduling of the February 2007 meeting (which was cancelled due to weather). It consisted of Agency announcements and a presentation by Brian Tucker (Ohio EPA) on Natural Resource Damages.

ATTENDANCE

Ohio EPA: Tom Allen (SCCGW Chair), Michael Eggert, Bob Knipmeyer, Barb Lubberger, Brian Tucker (presenter)
ODNR: Ted Lozier, Greg Nageotte, Rick Pavey
PUCO: Sue Daly
OSU Ext.: Cindy Folck
USGS: Ralph Haefner

--Tom distributed the Ohio Water Resources Council's Strategic Plan. For the next SCCGW meeting (in April), he will provide a list of the ground water action items. The group will discuss how SCCGW can move these action items forward.

Ohio EPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters:

--Staff changes:

- Eric Adams is Manager of the Ground Water Program for Ohio EPA, Northeast District Office, replacing Chris Khourey who retired.
- Pat Heider, geologist (NWDO) retiring effective March 30.
- Ahmed Hawari has left OEPA-NEDO and taken a position with ODNR/Mineral Resources Management in Stark County.

--Related to its carbon sequestration project, First Energy recently finished drilling a 8,400-foot-deep borehole into the Ordovician Queenstown Formation in Belmont County. It is cased to 6,000 feet.

--The Division of Surface Water recently issued a general stormwater permit for the Big Darby basin.

AGENCY UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tom Allen, SCCGW Chairman:

--To provide background for staff revising landfill regulations, DDAGW drafted some fact sheets explaining why certain landfill siting criteria involving ground water were originally put into rule. These include setbacks from water supply wells and siting prohibitions in 100 gpm aquifers, sole-source aquifers and surface mines. Tom distributed these fact sheets and asked SCCGW members to forward any comments to him.

In an effort to maintain net recharge to the basin, the permit provided “ground water recharge credits” for practices that recharge the aquifer. It was hoped that this would encourage best management practices using green space. However, it appears that it is instead encouraging the installation of Class V drainage wells, which channel storm water directly into the aquifer. As long as the water quality does not exceed drinking water MCLs, there are no treatment requirements beyond running the water through settling basins prior to injection.

--The Wayne County Unsafe Water Supply Investigation is complete and a summary was presented to the County officials and the public. The County signed an order from Ohio EPA ordering them to submit a plan within one year to abate the water quality pollution attributed to household wastewater treatment systems.

--To obtain better information about ground water flow rates in Clark County karst areas, DDAGW staff conducted a preliminary dye tracer test there in February. Dye visibly appeared at a monitoring site within 45 minutes of injection into a sinkhole only 1,800 feet away (i.e., 0.7 feet/second flow rate!) A second test will be proposed to be conducted jointly with the County Health Department in the next week or two. Another dye trace test is tentatively planned in a karst setting in Sandusky County.

--DDAGW staff recently sampled small public water systems clustered around Buckeye Lake to try to locate the cause of chronic total coliform positives in this area. The initial sampling turned up no positives, so factors other than ground water contamination—such as sampling technique—are being examined. Another round of sampling is scheduled for April.

--Mike Eggert distributed Web information on the National Water Information Coordination Program’s call for volunteers for various workgroups of the subcommittee on Ground Water including: Monitoring Inventory; Data Standards and Data Management; Field Practices; and National Monitoring Design. He asked whether any SCCGW members will be involved and in what capacity. USGS has a staffperson on one committee and ODNR nominated one of their staff to a

subcommittee. Members mentioned various concerns, such as possible duplication of effort and concerns that the group could propose data collection standards so high that few agencies could meet them.

--DDAGW has entered 500 sites into its ground water quality impacts database so far. In the future, Ohio EPA would like to expand this effort to other agencies and include areas with high nitrate levels and links to sensitive aquifers. Ultimately a GIS project will be created that is accessible via the Web to SCCGW members.

--The new MCL for arsenic became effective January, 2006, dropping from 50 to 10 µg/l. A total of 63 Ohio public water systems will need to take action to meet this, and another 40 systems are finding levels just below the MCL. Mike Slattery is analyzing hydrogeologic, well construction, treatment information and pumping scenarios that may help control the levels of arsenic dissolving into ground water.

--DDAGW is updating three chapters of its Technical Guidance Manual: drilling and subsurface sampling; monitoring well design and installation; and ground water modeling. If any SCCGW members would like to review, they should contact Jeff Patzke, Ohio EPA DDAGW at (614) 644-2752.

The Voluntary Action Program’s rules have come up for five-year rule review. Few proposed changes involve ground water. However, there is a proposal to label ground water “contaminated” if there is NAPL floating on the water table with no evidence of any dissolved NAPL.

--Mike Eggert noted that DDAGW’s Resource Characterization database, which combines valuable information on hydrogeologic parameters from OEPA, ODNR and USGS, will quickly become defunct unless the agencies agree to update it. Ralph Haefner noted that the Ground Water Metadata database faces the same issue.

--The Village of Carrollton and the Village of Racine have expressed concern about proposed underground mining near their wellfields.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water:

--A number of the new appointees at ODNR have a strong environmental background:

- Director Sean Logan has degrees in law and soil science, and is a former county commissioner and state legislator;
- Vicki Deisner, formerly with Ohio Environmental Council, is Environmental Policy Coordinator;
- Mike Shelton, formerly with The Nature Conservancy, is Chief of Legislative Services;
- David Lytle, formerly with The Nature Conservancy, is Chief of Forestry.

--Other staff news:

- Dick Bartz is still Acting Chief of the Division of Water.
- Assistant Director Glen Alexander plans to retire in September.

--Jim Raab will testify before ERAC next week about dewatering concerns at a City of Barberton wellfield that Barberton plans to lease to the City of Wadsworth.

--Representative Carmichael is convening a meeting on March 29th to discuss a legislative solution to inadequate well sealing standards.

--Also on March 29th, Jim Raab will give a presentation in Wood County on Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and their potential impacts on ground water quality.

--The Ohio Water Resources Council's Workgroup for Water Resources Monitoring held an annual Ohio Water Monitoring meeting on March 6th. The workgroup has discussed a new statewide ground water monitoring project that will likely be initiated in the fall.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Conservation:

--Cathryn Loucas is the new Deputy Director of Resource Conservation

--The governor's budget for DNR is flat. However, an additional \$1.3 million was included for Division of Wildlife's Central Support.

United States Geological Survey, Ohio Water Science Center:

--USGS is working with Homeland Security to develop a methodology for testing wells for hard-to-detect bacteria and viruses. Testing conducted so far has not revealed any serious issues with these contaminants in Ohio water.

--There is a paper on ground water tracers in the March/April 2007 issue of *Groundwater*, authored by USGS staff. The article is titled "Heat, Chloride and Specific Conductance as Ground Water Tracers near Streams."

--DDAGW recently asked the USGS/Ohio Water Science Center to provide a half-day training on ground water tracers.

--July is the deadline for updating the service provider for the Ground Water Metadata database.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey:

- Larry Wickstrom has been named chief of the Division.

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio:

--PUCO is conducting a five-year review of its Ohio Administrative Code water/sewer-related rules. Only very minor changes are being proposed.

--Commissioner Judy Jones' term ends April 10th.

--Paul Centollella is starting a term as commissioner. His background is in the electric utility industry.

Ohio EPA, Directors Office:

--Staff updates:

- OEPA's new director is Chris Korleski, who has a Masters degree in agronomy and previous experience as an environmental attorney at the AGO and at Honda.
- Laura Powell is Assistant Director.
- Bill Fischbein returned to his previous position in Legal, as Supervising Attorney of

Water Programs. Andrew Bergman is the new chief legal counsel.

- Melissa Fazekas is the new Deputy Director for Communications
- Other Directors Office staff are being retained.

--OEPA has participated in two table-top exercises on pandemic flu response. An anticipated challenge is the impact an overwhelmed health care system would place on Ohio's limited system for proper disposal of infectious waste.

--OEPA has developed a fact sheet on pandemic flu designed for water and wastewater plant owners and operators (copies distributed). It advises planning for contingencies such as reduced staff, shortages of equipment and supplies, and problems with utilities such as electricity.

The Ohio State University, Agricultural Extension:

--Pesticide training for 2007 just wrapped up. About 3,000 people attended.

--US EPA has finalized rules on aquatic pesticides, agreeing that if the label says a product can be used on water bodies, a NPDES permit will not be required for such application. However, Ohio EPA must be notified when applications are made to ponds of a certain size in Ohio.

--The new applicator exam for field crops focuses on atrazine handling.

PRESENTATION

Brian Tucker (OEPA-DERR) gave a presentation on Natural Resource damages, a program intended to restore a contaminated resource to baseline conditions (if possible) or replace with "in-kind" services or resources, and compensate the public for their losses.

NEXT SCCGW MEETING

April 19th, 8:30-11:30 am at Ohio EPA. On the agenda: agency updates, Storm Center website demo, and a presentation on DDAGW's ground water quality impacts database.

REMINDER: Meeting agendas and final meeting summaries will be posted on the SCCGW Web site. <http://www.ohiosccgw.org/>