

## Groundwater Protection Water Well Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

Schedule: 4:00-6:00pm (Actual: about 4:15-6:15pm)

**DATE:** 10/1/2012

**Location:** DONALD E. GILMAN (KENAI) RIVER CENTER, 514 FUNNY RIVER ROAD, SOLDOTNA, AK

**Host:** SOA DEC

PRESENT		
Kathy Kastens (DEC)	Barbara Roberts (Public)	Mike Tauriainen (Consulting Engineer)
Charley Palmer (DEC)	Henry Knackstedt (Sanitary Surveyor)	Jason Hoffman (Anchor Point Safe Water – PWS Operator)
Chris Miller (DEC)	Scott Earsley (PWS - Seafood Processor)	Susan Bulkow (DEC)
Roy Robertson (DEC)	Dorothy Melambianakis (Non-Profit Water Testing)	Jamie Bjorkman (DEC)
Roy Ireland (DNR)	Mike Gebhard (Willowbrook Subdivision)	Scott Forgue (DEC)
Melissa Hill (DNR)	Eric Burg (DEC EH DW)	Ryan Peterson (DEC)
Al Nagel (DOL&WD)		Rebecca Baril (DEC)
James Weise (DEC)	Jeanette Flint (Anchor Point Safe Water)	Charity Bare (DEC)

**MINUTES BY:** Rebecca Baril (DEC)

**FACILITATOR:** Kathy Kastens (DEC)

**PRESENTORS:** Charley Palmer (DEC); Roy Robertson (DEC); Roy Ireland (DNR)

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	COMMENT
<b>Presentations</b>	Kathy opens the meeting with introductions, Description of DEC, DOL&WD, DNR roles, and an overview of the meeting structure and agenda.	
	Charley presents groundwater use, basic groundwater hydrology, well logs, well constructions standards statewide, well construction aspects, sanitary survey inspections and unresolved deficiencies, and abandoned wells.	
	Roy (DEC) presents engineering plan reviews, Groundwater Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water (GWUDISW; “gweedy”) wells requiring surface water treatment, separation distances, common water well and groundwater protection issues.	
	Roy (DNR) presents DNR roles, and the WELTS (well log tracking system).	
<b>General Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What initial tests are performed when a well is installed?</li> </ul>	Answer: Depends on the system classification (listed the well types and testing requirements).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If an aquifer becomes contaminated, what happens?</li> </ul>	Answer: Well owners are responsible cleanup and/or treating, which tends to be expensive.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the state has oversight of the groundwater why can't we regulate the private water systems?</li> </ul>	<p>Answer: We don't have regulations for private systems at this time. We can regulate a system that could influence a public water system, but that is very difficult to show and would have to be in the event of an extreme case.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question from the State: Do you want us more involved or less?</li> </ul>	<p>General Answer from the public: Understand that there is a need for data such as well logs but how to assure the data is received by the proper agency was not known. Also understand the lack of regulation and power for the state to protect the groundwater; need to ensure regulations have "teeth".</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation turned to septic systems: How long have they (septic systems) been regulated?</li> </ul>	<p>Answer: A long time, but it was changed a about 3-4 years ago after the discovery of systems being incorrectly installed. There is now a wastewater installer certification program in DEC (Division of Water) that works with DOL &amp;WD, to make sure installations are done by properly certified or licensed individuals and companies.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you considered becoming one agency? (Due to confusion of where to go to for what)</li> </ul>	<p>Answer: We try to cooperate as much as possible, if we generalize our roles too much, potential to become convoluted.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why aren't any well drillers at this meeting?</li> </ul>	<p>Answer: We contacted the Alaska Water Well Association (AWWA) with paper mail and by phone and e-mail, and attempted to contact non-member well drillers that we could find contact information for. Additionally, we tried to schedule this meeting at a time that we thought they could attend, but we understand they work long hours, as well as the flooding issues that probably made them very busy. We anticipate that the next two meetings in Wasilla and Fairbanks will have a better turnout; some drillers have already signed up.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What about expanding the line of communication with well drillers?</li> </ul>	<p>Answer: These meetings are the first step at expanding the line of communication.</p>

<p><b>General Discussions (and questions)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns and a question were voiced about wells and the protection area for public water system wells and how to protect it with respect to contamination from septic systems, as well as questions on whether we track the quality and quantity of water considering all the developments going in. A comment was given that they had the understanding that contamination can come from many miles away.</li> </ul>	<p>State responded that there is currently no way to track the quantity or boundaries of aquifers, but that getting well logs can help. DNR stated that they had requested additional funding to continue the Mat-Su study and for the development of regional-scale groundwater monitoring programs in the Kenai Peninsula, and the Anchorage Bowl. DNR's jurisdiction lies in assisting well owner's in possession of water rights in protecting water levels in wells, DEC oversees the testing done by public water systems that can track water quality issues that may arise from contamination if it is a regulated contaminant, but there isn't any oversight or testing requirements for private wells.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments and discussion led to the understanding that something needs to happen without incurring over-regulation and excessive government cost. And that whatever action was taken should keep as simple as possible (KISS).</li> </ul>	<p>The State recognized the concern of the public to not have the state "overreact", and reiterates the necessity to have stakeholders involved in any action that may be taken.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition from the crowd was voiced as to the perceived exceptional water quality in the area, as well as a feeling that the well drillers were very good on the Kenai Peninsula.</li> </ul>	<p>The State recognized and agreed that the Kenai Peninsula tends to be an area of better groundwater quality, but also wants to make sure it stays that way.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments from the crowd gave the indication that there was interest in being involved in processes and groups that may occur from this meeting. Showed understanding that there needs to be some protection from well drillers that may not be aware of the risks to public health that could be incurred by improper drilling techniques.</li> </ul>	<p>The State will maintain a list of those interested in participating in future stakeholder meetings and facilitate future meetings if the results of this workshop series indicate that there is a collective interest.</p>