

Tuesday March 29, 2016

Hosted by the DEC

1st floor conference room 555 Cordova St. Anchorage with teleconference

Attendees in Anchorage: Charley Palmer (DEC), Chris Miller (DEC), Roy Robertson (DEC), David Schade (DNR), Roy Ireland (Private Hydrologist?), Rebecca Baril (DEC), Bill Kranich (WWC), Angela Bolton (AWWU), Jim Munter (WWC),

Attendees via teleconference line: Wayne Westberg (WWC), John Craven (Public Water System Officer/Operator), Jacob Dilley (DEC), Lee Ice (WWC), Chuck Ice (WWC), Ted Schacle (WWC), Craig Seime (WWC), John Swan (WWC) Pamela Goode (Private Citizen) James Squyres (Private Citizen) Dan Brotherton (WWC),

Absent: Jeff Ellison (WWC), Cara Shonsey (Private Engineer)

Meeting Minutes

Facilitator: Jeff Warner

Introduction

- Roll Call
- **Other Business/News**
 - Charley - News:
 - The Private Water Wells website has been updated with an “Emergency Links” section.
 - There was an arsenic workshop in Two Rivers to address the high levels of arsenic being found in groundwater. They are offering free arsenic testing for private well residents. Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) may be looking at applying this to other areas of the state, but this area was the highest priority at the moment.
 - Jeff: The problems were detected through epidemiology. One of the physicians in the area noticed an increase in arsenic-like symptoms.
- **Best Management Practices (BMP)**
 - Charley: 17 of 25 people responded. 100% of those who voted, voted to accept the BMP documents. The only comment we received was on the confined space requirements from OSHA.
 - The group agreed that the topic, while important, should be left out of these documents.
 - Charley: Our regulations specialist suggested shortening the headers on each page.
 - Group agreed that this was an acceptable change that did not require a new vote.
 - Charley: So what is the path forward now?
 - David: I’ll take these documents and send them up to the Commissioner. We’ll put it on our website, and DEC can put it on theirs.
 - Wayne: Wasn’t this going to go in regulations?
 - Charley: We won’t rewrite the regulations at this point, but our current regulations allow for an alternative method approved by ADEC. Drinking

Water Program internal policy will be to use these BMPs as an acceptable alternative method.

- Jim: I think that a forward letter to the documents describing how they were started and put together would be beneficial. Possibly send it up for signature by the commissioners and possibly the governor. That way when it's sent to local government, it could hold more weight to them.
- Members from DEC will work to put this letter together.
 - Include groups represented.
- Charley: So are now ok with this document being circulated?
 - Chris: Yes, since we have internally approved it.
- **Discussion / Next Steps**
 - Charley: Started compiling a list of issues that had arisen during our discussions that are in addition to the original list of issues and concerns. Still have a lot of the Minutes documents to review to complete the list. The issue from the original document that hasn't been addressed is contractor licensing.
 - Wayne: Let's discuss that.
 - Charley: There are departments that aren't here that should be a part of the discussion.
 - Chris: Maybe we should talk amongst ourselves before we bring Department of Labor in.
 - John: Last time we mentioned this, we talked about rogues and how they don't last long in the state. We should at least allow for a discussion from the other side who are for the licensing. I understand the nays, but it would be a service to at least allow for a discussion from both sides.
 - David: I think it's an issue to raise next fall. I don't think it's something that we should just absolutely turn down. We should at least sit down and provide data. Prove innocence. Let's put it on the agenda for next fall and talk about it with just this group.
 - Charley: It's not just about the well drillers. There's also the concern for those looking for well drillers, and how do they know they have a qualified driller. We don't have the resources to regulate and implement this. We just want a way to have an endorsement of qualified well drillers.
 - Ted: AWWA members would be qualified.
 - Charley: There are contractors who are NGWA certified that aren't AWWA members.
 - Jim: We are going to go down a rabbit hole. We need a white paper on the threat to the resource. There is anecdotal evidence, but nothing fact based. DEC folks put together a list with context. Even if there is a problem, is there a better way to solve the problem?
 - Roy I: We're talking more about putting together a possible tiered certification. Including AWWA membership, NGWA certification and possibly a list of other qualifications.
 - Jim: Following the BMP could be a stamp of approval.
 - James: The association is doing policing for the rogue drillers. We should be paying attention to HB 91 and SB 71 making their way through the legislature. They apply to these discussions.
 - Jeff: To clarify, the issue with contractors came from private well owners.

- Roy R: All the drillers seem to agree that yes, there have been rogue drillers. We want to explore options that don't require state oversight. I don't think we need a state run program, just some program that covers the experience requirement.
- Charley: Let's not look at the licensing side of things. We at the DEC don't want to implement an actual program. We don't have the time or the resources.
- Jim: These BMPs will be a great asset in this discussion. They are a good document for educating people.
- Wayne: We can use the BMPs as a basis for education. I don't believe we need to involve the bankers and realtors as they don't always realize what is feasible in an area and are more concerned with meeting a minimum gpm even if it isn't possible.
- Jim: Maybe this summer we could have a small focus group that sits down and goes over the list of issues and determines which issues are something the group can address and which are issues that are outside of our scope.
 - Agreed. Charley, Jim, David, and any drillers interested in joining this group.

Wrap-up and next Meeting

- The group agreed that the next **tentatively** scheduled meeting is for November 1, 2016

Action Items:

- DEC and DNR will work on compiling a list of evidence of need for licensing/certifications for contractors.
- Rebecca will draft up a letter to prelude the BMPs. Describing the documents and their origins.
- DNR and DEC will distribute the BMPs to any higher authorities that need to be informed, or provide approvals.
- The group can now distribute the documents as is.

Next Meeting is tentatively Tuesday November 1st, 2016 6:00-8:00pm