



Water Well Standards Advisory Council

**Georgia Environmental Protection Division
(Agent for Council)**

531 Main St., Suite D
Tifton, Georgia 31794
229-391-2400

Approved Minutes

GEORGIA WATER WELL STANDARDS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, September 21, 2023

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

In-Person and Teleconference Meeting

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Greg Grosch at 2:00 PM

II. Check for Quorum

A. Council Attendance

1. Present: Howell Clements, Kevin Colwell, Jarrell Greene, Greg Grosch, Wayne McKinnon, Andy Pippin, and Raymond Wilke

2. Not Present: Dan Elder

B. Others Attending the Meeting

1. Environmental Protection Division (EPD): EPD Albany, Sheri Almer, Emily Duff, Jacob Elliott, Sydney Henderson, Caitlyn Holmes, Cliff Lewis, Edward Rooks, Kevin Towne, Anna Truszczynski, and Irene Valli

2. Other State Representatives: Kathleen McCanless (Attorney General's Office), and Tim Morris (DNR Law Enforcement)

3. Public: Scott Adams, Larry Altman, Harold Andrews, Mark Andrews, Rachel Andrews, Chris Bowers, Richard Cosnahan, Brandon Creasy, Kyle Fulghum, Tucker Green, Tim Grey, Jess Hall, Megan Hull, Danny Love Sr., J.D. Love, Josh Maddox, Jim McClain, Jerold Penzo, Pete Peterson, Danny Spell, Ryan Thompson, and Josh Youngblood

III. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting on August 10, 2023, was made by Wayne McKinnon and seconded by Kevin Colwell. The Council voted unanimously to accept the motion.

IV. Correspondence

- A.** The Public Notice for the Water Well Standards Advisory Council Rule Changes was mailed to all contractors active during the 2021-2023 renewal period on September 11, 2023.

V. Reports of EPD

A. Site Inspections

1. One water well contractor pump rig was inspected and was found to be properly labeled.
2. Four water well contractor offices were inspected and all had their licenses properly posted.
3. Since the previous Council meeting, no new agricultural wells have been inspected.

B. Enforcement Actions

1. Tri-State Water Services

On August 21, 2023, EPD documented Tri-State Water Services advertising water well contractor work without a license or certificate on their website and Facebook page. On August 22, 2023, EPD issued a Notice of Violation for the advertisement of water well contractor work without a license to Joshua Maddox of Tri-State Water Services. Mr. Maddox addressed the Council and explained why he was in violation and that it was not his intention to be in violation. Mr. Maddox also said that he is planning to apply for a pump contractor certificate.

C. Complaints

1. Jess Hall Complaint

On August 15, 2023, the EPD received a written complaint from Jess Hall against Danny Spell of Spell Well and Pump. On August 17, 2023, EPD inspected the well for Mr. Hall and found the well head was not secure, the well pad was insufficient, and the well was not grouted. On September 19, 2023, EPD met with Mr. Spell and Mr. Brandon Creasy to document grouting of the well. The grouting of the well was completed, and the well pad was made compliant. Danny Spell addressed the Council and said that the well originally was grouted but when the casing was pushed down the grouting was moved. Mr. Spell said the well is completed.

VI. Reports of Committees

A. No reports were submitted.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Samantha Grey Complaint

Samantha Grey submitted a written complaint on June 14, 2023, regarding sand pumping from two newly installed agricultural wells by Adams Well Drilling. A third well was also installed but not in use. On September 6, 2023, EPD conducted a site inspection of the wells and found sand present in samples taken for the first two wells. These two wells were also observed clogging new filters within twenty minutes or less. The third well pumped clean water, free of sand.

Scott Adams addressed the Council and said that he believed that larger filters were needed to resolve the issue.

Harold Andrews addressed the Council on Mr. Adams' behalf and stated that the area where these wells are located requires large sand filters because the sand is so fine. Mark Andrews also stated that the sand in this area is very fine.

Ryan Thompson stated that the area has very fine sand and proper filtration is needed.

Tim Grey addressed the Council and said that the first well did not have sand at first but later began having sand issues just like the second well; regardless there are sand issues with both wells.

Jacob Elliott explained the sampling and inspection process.

Greg Grosch asked Mr. Grey if he would be willing to buy a sand separator, Mr. Grey agreed to try one. Raymond Wilke made a motion that the Council acknowledges the willingness of the driller to install a Layco sand separator and let the owner test it for thirty days before payment is made. The motion was seconded by Howell Clements. The Council voted unanimously to accept the motion.

Rachel Andrews asked the Council about driller responsibility compared to irrigation responsibility for filtration systems and how that relates to their liability with well construction. The Council replied that as long as a driller follows proper construction standards as outlined in the law, that is all the Council has the ability to address.

B. Samantha Randle Complaint

On June 21, 2023, EPD received a well complaint from the Decatur County Health Department on behalf of Ms. Samantha Randle against Seminole Well Drilling. On July 20, 2023, a Notice of Violation was issued to Mr. Danny Love of Seminole Drilling for not properly labeling the drill rig. On August 16, 2023, a second Notice of Violation was issued to Mr. Love for performing water well contractor activities without a water well contractor license and to cease all water well contractor work. On September 18, 2023, EPD contacted Ms. Randle and Mr. Love and was informed by both that Mr. Love issued a full refund to Ms. Randle and Mr. Love removed his drill rig from the property. Ms. Randle said she put a cap on the well.

Danny Love addressed the Council and said he plans to attend the continuing education offered during the 2023 Savannah Water Well Show to meet his license renewal requirements. He plans to plug and abandon the well for Ms. Randle once his license is renewed.

- C.** In the August 10, 2023, Council meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Mathis said it would be beneficial if there was a way to inform well owners of the two-year requirement for submitting a complaint. Edward Rooks said that he would ask the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) to consider making this known to people installing a well.

On September 5, 2023, Edward sent a request to DPH asking if they had ideas for notifying new well owners of the two-year period for making complaints (including modifying the Notice of Intent Form if needed). The Department of Public Health will reach out to their county level personnel and share any feedback by the end of the month.

D. Draft Rule Changes

Edward Rooks summarized the proposed rule changes for the Water Well Standards Act Rules. Mr. Rooks explained the biggest changes to the Rules and stated where the Synopsis could be found for the rule changes. October 13, 2023, is the deadline for submitting public comments and November 1, 2023, is the scheduled meeting where the Council can vote on accepting the Rule changes. Mr. Rooks and the Council opened the meeting for public comments specific to the Rule changes at this time and asked for questions be directed by calling EPD. No comments were received, but three questions were asked.

Rachel Andrews asked about the hearings process for rule changes and if the Director of EPD inspects the changes to the rules. Edward Rooks addressed her, and Mrs. Andrews said she would send an email to him.

Harold Andrews asked about when continuing education requirements will begin for pump contractors.

Jim McClain addressed the Council and asked if the National Groundwater Association (NGWA) will be more involved with testing. Edward Rooks responded and said that NGWA has been the source of the exams for several years and the rule changes would now reflect that NGWA is the source of the exams. He also mentioned that NGWA uses PSI to administer testing. Tucker Green said that page seven of the rule changes addressed this question about the NGWA and testing.

VIII. New Business

- A.** Worldwide Drilling Association requests for the Council to approve eight in-person continuing education sessions, each 1-hour in duration. A motion to accept the eight Continuing Education Hours, was made by Kevin Colwell and seconded by Jarrell Greene. The Council voted unanimously to accept the motion.

Pete Peterson addressed the Council to express his concerns, stating that Worldwide Drilling Association is not a member of the Georgia Association of Groundwater Professionals.

IX. Review of Applications and Licensing Report

A. New Water Well Contractor Applications:

1. Kyle Fulghum

The Council asked Mr. Fulghum about his experience. Mr. Fulghum addressed the Council and stated he has eighteen years of experience drilling with his dad.

A motion was made by Howell Clements to accept this application pending fees and bonding requirements. The motion was seconded by Wayne McKinnon. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

B. New Pump Contractor Applications

None

C. New Water Well Contractor Licenses Issued Since the Previous Council Meeting

None

D. New Pump Contractor Certificates Issued Since the Previous Council Meeting

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Certificate #</u>	<u>Date Issued</u>
Joshua Lamb	Josh Lamb Well Service LLC	128	9/5/2023

E. New Bonded Drillers Since the Previous Council Meeting

None

X. Announcements

None

XI. Public Comments

- A.** Ryan Thompson thanked the Council for requiring continuing education for pump contractors in the proposed Rule changes. He also said that water is changing, and water quality issues may increase. He said that contractors need to help educate their customers and inform them of the two-year limit to submit complaints. Mr. Thompson asked for suspended aquifers to be reopened for drilling.
- B.** Pete Peterson addressed the need for better or stricter laws for well abandonment or perhaps new rules for well abandonment. He cited Chatham County's procedures for abandonment as an example.
- C.** Jim McClain congratulated those who go through the proper procedures to apply for their licenses. Jim addressed unlicensed drillers and displayed a printed page with two unlicensed contractors in Savannah, Georgia. He provided this document to EPD. He said these unlicensed contractors give the rest of those doing the right things a bad name.
- D.** Larry Altman said that water professionals need to do the right things. He addressed forever chemicals in drinking water and the need to use clean water for drilling practices and not to withdraw from streams, lakes, etc. EPD and the Council made it aware that withdrawing water from places like these is allowed as long as the water is disinfected prior to using it for drilling.

Raymond Wilke suggested that the Georgia Association of Groundwater Professionals appoint a subcommittee to outreach to the public and address these issues with their members. He said perhaps they could put something in their contract for their members.

XII. Date for Next Meeting

Date for next teleconference meeting: Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 9:00AM by Zoom.

XIII. Adjournment

Howell Clements adjourned the meeting at 3:35PM. Seconded by Raymond Wilke.