

Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
October 13, 2015

Attendees: Roger Thompson
Gail Center
Chris Russo
Peter Boemig
Ken White

Mary Clark
Craig Heindel
Mark Bannon
Ernest Christianson

Scheduled meetings:

November 17, 2015 1-4 PM Annex Building, 190 Junction Road – Montpelier

Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed and Mark asked for time to discuss the current application form and how it might be improved which was agreed to.

Minutes:

The minutes were accepted as drafted.

Application Form:

Mark said that he finds the current WW Permit application form and the administration process to be overly complex. One example is the difficulty when the land is owned in a trust. He has been requested to provide additional documentation stating the person signing the application is authorized by the trust to sign the application form. Mark wonders if the form cannot be arranged so that a signature in one place on the form covers all of the issues. Ernie noted that the application form is long and complex because when it was developed about 5 years ago the intention was that the applications would be filed electronically and that the contents of the application would flow electronically into a database which would also calculate the application fee. Developing this feature turns out to be very complex and was never finished. Mark also raised concerns that an entire application is sometimes returned when only one piece of information is missing. Ernie said that returning applications depends on the amount and type of missing information with the administrative staff using their judgment on when to call for information and when to return the application. Ernie said that he is currently working on standardizing the amount of and the form in which information is submitted from one regional office to another. Ernie also noted that the update of the electronic tracking system has been delayed while working with the original developer of the software and therefore the work on updating the program is now being done by Agency staff. Craig asked for a time line and Ernie said he is hoping to have it done in the next few months.

Peter said that one issue he constantly deals is need to re-notify the neighbors when there is overshadowing from water or wastewater systems and the plans are revised. This adds quite a bit to the cost of a project along with additional delays. Can there be some determination that some revisions are so minor that re-notification can be waived. Ernie said he would ask the Agency attorneys but the requirement is in the Vermont Statutes and does not seem to allow for exceptions. Gunner said that many of his projects require as built plans because when he is preparing the application the size and location of the proposed building is uncertain.

The TAC discussed how they might propose some changes to the statute to allow for a more workable process. It was suggested that legislators be invited to a TAC meeting where the issues that landowners encounter could be discussed. It was agreed that the TAC should have concrete examples of problems and some possible solutions in preparation for such a meeting. Ernie will first discuss the TAC concerns with DEC management to see if there is interest in putting forward a proposal by the DEC.

The TAC decided to form a subcommittee to work on this issue. The subcommittee will be led by Mark with Mary, Gunner, Ken and Ernie. Mary will organize a meeting time and location.

Innovative/Alternative Systems:

Mary reported that the Eljen Corporation has submitted an updated draft manual for installation of the Mantis System. They included the requested changes but also included a new low profile module with only 2 inches of module depth vs. 6 inches tested and meeting NSF Standard 40 requirements. The inclusion of this low profile module has not been previously discussed and the submittal did not include any testing data for the low profile module or any assessment that the system will provide equivalent wastewater treatment to the standard modules. The TAC agreed that approval should continue for the standard modules but that the low profile version should not be approved without prior testing. The draft manual does indicate that mound systems larger than 1000 GPD will use pipe-in-pipe pressure distribution as recommended by the TAC.

The information submitted for pilot approval of the Nibbler wastewater treatments system has been circulated to the TAC. The information includes results for when the system was used on high strength wastewater.

An application has been received for approval of the Norweco Hydro-Kinetic System and has been circulated to the TAC. The TAC had reviewed and recommended approval under the Pilot projects section originally but the approval has not been executed. Norweco is now requesting consideration under the General Use approval because they are now approved in many states, have significant testing results, and are a manufacturer of a similar product used in Vermont for many years. The Hydro-kinetic system was developed for nitrogen removal in addition to the reduction in wastewater strength. Mary mentioned that originally we thought it might fit best as a Pilot system approval because of the small number of installations but otherwise it is based on a proven design

by a well-known manufacturer. The TAC voiced support for approval under the general use category if possible.

Mark raised the question of when something originally approved under innovative/alternative conditions becomes a standard technology. This question has been discussed at previous meetings and there is agreement that some label other than Innovative/Alternative should be developed.

Compliance Program Update:

Chris said that because of the recent major reduction in Regional Office staff all of the maintenance inspection reports for advanced treatment system are now being forwarded to her. She is working on entering the information into the tracking system but it is a large task. There are approximately 700 reports this year and the numbers are expected to rise, possibly to 900 next year. Chris is introducing a fillable PDF form that will be used to submit information in the future which should streamline the work. Chris is reviewing each of the reports to see if the inspector has made recommendations for maintenance or repairs and following up if additional work is needed. This is work that was done by the Regional Engineers prior to the reduction in staff. Chris is also doing administrative reviews trying to update owner contact information, associating WW Permit numbers and SPAN numbers with each report. It takes an average of about 15 minutes per application for this update of the tracking system. The goal is to move towards a system of electronic submissions so that only systems with problems require attention.

Chris is continuing to work on education and outreach when there is time. The Agency did issue a press release and 270 towns and organizations were sent a letter offering brochures for local distribution. About 600 brochures have been requested.

Licensing and Training Programs:

Mary, Ernie, and Chris Thompson met to discuss the training and licensing issues. They agreed to work on developing a training program. This might include working with University of Rhode Island trainers who already have a suite of training programs they offer in Rhode Island and other New England States. Mary thinks this will develop into several day long training programs presented in cooperation with the Vermont Technical College. Peter and Craig suggested consulting with the Granite State Designers and the Installers groups that have been in operation for many years and serve a large number of designers and installers. Mary said that she would be making this contact as well as looking at other national programs. She hopes to find a small amount of funding to support the URI trainers in developing an exam. Craig said that Kyra Jacobs at EPA is a strong supporter of groundwater protection programs and might know of available grants.

Rules:

Ernie said that he is moving forward with detailed editing of typos and formatting issues and doing as much as he can until Chris Thompson completes her review and gives her

approval. Ernie has circulated the most recent draft of the rules and asked for comments about specific sections of the Rules. Steve Revell has submitted some comments indicating support for the draft.

Executive Committee: Steve Revell, Ernest Christianson, Roger Thompson
Alternates – Chris Thompson, Spencer Harris, Claude Chevalier, Craig Heindel

Subcommittees:

Hydrogeology

Craig Heindel, Bill Zabiloski, Mark Bannon, Scott Stewart, Steve Revell, Mary Clark, Roger Thompson, Peter Boemig, Ernie Christianson, Spencer Harris

Bottomless Sand Filters

Peter Boemig, Mark Bannon, Cindy Parks, Mary Clark, Denise Johnson-Terk, Craig Heindel, Ernie Christianson

Seasonal High Water Table Monitoring

Craig Heindel, Steve Revell, Roger Thompson, Ernie Christianson, Bill Zabiloski, Dan Wilcox, Mary Clark