

## Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

May 18, 2016

**Attendees:** Chris Russo Justin Willis  
Dolores Eckert Denise Johnson-Terk  
Jessanne Wyman Gunner McCain  
Mary Clark Darlene Autrey  
Steve Revell Ken White  
Ernest Christianson Roger Thompson

### Scheduled meetings:

June 28, 2016	1-4 PM,	The Annex, Montpelier
July 19, 2016	1-4 PM,	The Annex, Montpelier
August 16, 2016	1-4 PM,	The Annex, Montpelier
September 30, 2016	2 PM	ANR Regional Office, 111 West Street, Essex Junction

### Licensed Designer Training:

Mary arranged for Dr. Sara Heger, P.E., and Tom Fritts to meet with the TAC. Dr. Heger is an engineer and a researcher and instructor in the Onsite Sewage Treatment program at the University of Minnesota. Tom Fritts, is the vice-president of the Residential Sewage Treatment Company in Grandview Missouri as well as a past- president of the National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association (NOWRA) and an experienced trainer. Sara and Tom, representing NOWRA had just completed a two day training session in Vermont for installers of wastewater disposal systems. Vermont is considering licensing installers and the TAC wanted to get their perspective on licensing installers.

Sara said that she believes mandatory licensing of installers is required to ensure that all installers participate in training sessions. Certification programs are useful but tend to reach the installers who are already disposed to building their knowledge base and keeping up-to-date. She said that Minnesota has operated their licensing program since 1996 and has different training programs for different categories of installers. There are 3 full-time staff working in the

program. They find that the National Institute of Health (NIH) training is useful but the existing test is not up-to-date. The examination is a closed-book exam.

Tom said that the best results with a licensing or certification program occur when the people want to do the training and testing sessions. He said that one state allows certified installers to do the final inspection which avoids any delays in completing the installation.

The NIH certification program requires training and testing as well as at least five years of experience in installing systems. Mary asked if any states have recently required installers to be licensed. Tom said that New Jersey started about 3 years ago.

Ernie asked if Vermont were to require licensing of installers would there be a grandfather approach to cover existing installers. Some existing installers might have limited reading and test taking skills. Sara noted that some states provide assistance to deal with these issues. Steve asked if installers are allowed to do final inspections will they also be allowed to defer this to licensed designers. One question was if all people working for a company would need to be a licensed installer. Sara said that Minnesota allows one licensed installer to be responsible for all company employees.

The TAC also asked about levels of certification and learned that several states offer at least two levels and that continuing education is often required. Tom noted that Missouri has two levels of certification and requires 12 hours of continuing education. Chris asked how the quality of the installers work is ensured and the response was that it mostly depended on complaints from other installers who want to be on a level playing field. Justin asked if licensed installers are generally allowed to do the preconstruction stakeout and was told that many states allow installers to do this. Justin said that he thinks it is important for the designer to do the stakeout because this is when the designer get to talk with the installer about the important issues for that particular design. Steve and Gunner agree with Justin. Roger asked if there is any information about how many problems are occurring with unlicensed installers that would be avoided with a licensing program because starting a new licensing program is a significant investment and should have a payoff. Justin asked Sara if Minnesota has a time of sale inspection and they do. Ernie asked if the time of sale inspection also focused on the water supply but it mostly deals with the wastewater system.

### **High-Strength Wastewater:**

The TAC also asked Sara and Tom for their observations on dealing with high-strength wastewater. Tom said up until about 10 years ago his company mostly worked on single family residences but they have now transitioned to working with larger systems. These systems range from 1,500 GPD to more than 500,000 GPD and they mostly involve high-strength wastewater. This is a growing business partly because the municipal sewer line extensions that were routinely constructed in the past are no longer being built. Therefore many new businesses that would have been on the municipal system must now build their own wastewater system. Tom noted

that NSF is developing a test protocol for wastewater treatment systems. This will allow a system manufacturer to have a certification that their system can treat high-strength wastewater. The two main ways to dispose of high-strength wastewater are to increase the size of the disposal field or to add a treatment system. Tom said that once the wastewater strength exceeds a biological oxygen demand (BOD) of about 400 mg/l it is usually less expensive to add a treatment system. It was also noted that operation and maintenance is key and a supply of licensed service providers is important. Chris asked if the NSF certification of systems approved to treat high-strength wastewater includes inspection requirements. If the product is advertised and sold as NSF approved it must be inspected every six months.

**Agenda:**

The agenda was accepted as drafted.

**Minutes:**

The minutes were accepted with the edits suggested by Chris.

**Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division Director:**

Bryan Redmond has been appointed to replace the retired Christine Thompson as Director of the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division. Bryan was previously the On-site Loan Program Lead working in the Agency Facilities Division and was responsible for administering the financial assistance program for replacing failed private wastewater disposal systems.

**Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules (Rules):**

Ernie reported that Diane Sherman, ANR attorney, is still reviewing the draft rules.

Steve raised the question of whether the use of the Munsell Soil Color Chart should be required and recommended against it. Steve said that if it will be required it should be required for all soil evaluations included those using the perc test approach instead of the soil description method. He also noted that if the Munsell Soil Color Chart is required there should be a training program as part of the implementation. This issue will be added to the agenda for the next TAC meeting for discussion and decision.

Ernie also reviewed H.595 that requires adoption of rules to allow surface water to be the source for a potable water supply. This bill has been signed by the Governor. Ernie noted that there are several issues to be resolved in drafting rules including: whether a permit is required for the construction of the system, whether a permit is required for construction of a water treatment system for the surface water, will the installation of treatment systems for drilled wells be affected, and who will be allowed to design the water treatment system. The current Rules require a permit for construction of a potable water supply except when the new system will be a replacement for an existing system that serves only one single family residence on its own

individual lot. The current Rules also provide that installation of water treatment systems does not require a permit when treating for a specified list of contaminants. One difference is that all surface water sources are presumed to be contaminated or at such risk for contamination that every system will require a water treatment system. Roger asked if the permit trigger will be the construction of the surface water source or the treatment system. Ernie said he would like the TAC to help with a draft of the rules.

### **Meeting Schedule:**

The following dates, times, and locations were selected:

June 28, 2016 1-4 PM           Annex Building, Montpelier

July 19, 2016 1-4 PM           Annex Building, Montpelier

August 16, 2016       1-4 PM           Annex Building, Montpelier

September 30, 2016 2-5 PM       Essex Regional Office, Essex Junction

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**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

#### **Well Driller's Reporting Form**

Rodney Pingree, Craig Heindel, Claude Chevalier, Peter Boemig, Mary Clark, Ernie Christianson