

Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

July 18, 2023

Participation by videoconference

Attendees:	Sharon Bissell	Cristian Jabolonski
	Sheri Young*	Jen Fleckenstein*
	Roger Thompson*	Denise Johnson-Terk
	Craig Jewett*	Nathan Kie
	Ernie Christianson*	Kevin Eaton
	Frederic Larsen	Jeanne Allen
	Terry Shearer	Steve Revell*
	Bruce Douglas*	Jared Willey*
	Angela McGuire	Megan Kane
	Cristin Ashmankas*	Gunner McCain*
	Mark Bannon*	Evan Bollman
	Tom DeBell*	

*Technical Advisory Committee members or substitutes

Scheduled meetings:

September 19, 2023	Virtual
November 16, 2023	Virtual

Agenda:

The proposed agenda was accepted as drafted.

Minutes:

The draft minutes were accepted as drafted.

Updates:

Bruce reported that the required public hearings on the proposed Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules (WW Rules) have been held and that there were no comments received. The proposed WW Rules have been submitted to the Legislative Committee on

Administrative Rules (LCAR) and a hearing will be held in August. Bruce said that the LCAR Committee is more proactive than in the past and may have questions and concerns that will need to be addressed.

Innovative/Alternative Technology (I/A):

Cristin reported that there are no applications that currently need Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review.

Updates:

Bruce reported that he is writing up the results of the subcommittee work on Instantaneous Peak Demand (IPD). This will be circulated to the TAC.

Bruce said that the guidance document defining the requirements to meet the attached living unit standards is complete and waiting for Bryan Redmond's signature.

Bruce also reported on a meeting with the Department legal advisors who suggested that the language recently adopted by the Town of Fairlee might be acceptable because it only related to a change in use of an existing property. The TAC objected to this analysis because any type of change, including the first construction on a vacant lot, would meet this standard and conflict with section §1-103 of the WW Rules that mandates uniform statewide standard. Bruce will further discuss this with the legal advisors.

Flood Response:

Bruce said that only a few calls have been received related to small wastewater systems. There were some contacts related to the larger systems subject to the Indirect Discharge Rules. The Indirect Discharge program is reaching out to the 197 permittees to learn if there were any problems caused by the flooding that should be addressed. Replies from 70 systems indicate no problems and 14 reported small problems. Most concerns about private wells are being evaluated using guidance from the Vermont Department of Health (VDH). The VDH is providing free water tests kits on request from owners of flooded wells. The Department of Environmental Conservation is working on a "hot link" to designers, including Professional Engineers that are Licensed Designers, so that updated information can be quickly disseminated.

Sheri said that some systems are failing even though flood waters did not cover the system. In some cases, water has entered pump station that results in continuous operating of the pump. This pumping of flood water can overload the leachfield causing failure. The flood water can also back up into the septic tank with enough pressure to dislodge the outlet filter. These systems are likely to fail quickly if operated without reinstalling the filter. Sheri suggested that more attention should be given to surface grading upslope of leachfields.

Bruce noted that failed water and wastewater systems receive priority for permitting and failed systems related to flooding are a priority within that group. Sheri said systems that failed due to the extreme amounts of rainfall should also get this priority even if the flood level did not reach the system. Bruce is concerned about the workload because the Regional Offices are already issuing about 3000 permits per year.

Bruce asked if advanced treatment systems need extra attention, especially related to the electrical controls. Jared said infiltration is always a concern with conduits but that advanced treatment systems are less apt to be located where flooding occurs. A couple of systems did need pumping.

Cristian asked if there are locations where replacing individual soil-based systems with a collection system would be cost effective. Bruce said there is an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) program administered by the State that might be able to fund this type of system.

Other thoughts on flood relief included mobile wastewater treatment systems which are available but are expensive and mobile toilet/shower facilities.

Tom said that the Vermont Health Department is sending 400 free test kits per day to those concerned about their private water supply.

Other Issues:

Bruce reaffirmed that the WW Rules prohibit use of Lake Champlain surface water systems south of the Lake Champlain Bridge.

Steve asked if Bruce would like some TAC members to attend the LCAR meeting for approval of the WW Rule updates. Steve noted that in the past, TAC members had addressed some of the questions from the LCAR members and helped with on-the-spot revisions so that approval could move forward. Bruce said this would be a good idea.