

Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
April 14, 2015

Attendees: Roger Thompson
Carl Fuller
Mary Clark
Chris Russo
Terry Shearer
Jessanne Wyman
Darlene Autery
Craig Heindel
John Beauchamp
Peter Boemig
Kim Greenwood
Gunner McCain
Steve Rebillard
Travis Blodgett
Mark Bannon
Ernie Christianson
Gail Center
Ernie Kelley

Scheduled meetings:

May 19, 2015	1-4 PM	Catamount Con. Rm., National Life – Montpelier
June 16, 2015	1-4 PM	Winooski Con. Rm., National Life – Montpelier
July 14, 2015	1-4 PM	Winooski Con. Rm., National Life – Montpelier

Agenda:

The agenda was accepted.

Minutes:

The draft minutes of the March 17, 2015 meeting were accepted

Compliance Update:

Chris Russo reviewed the progress on the submission of installation reports, annual inspection reports for individual systems, and vendor reports and entering all of the information into the permit tracking system. The annual inspection reports for 2014 have been entered into the tracking system. About 25% more inspection reports were submitted in 2014 than in 2013 and the compliance rate is estimated to be about 40%. The compliance rate will climb as the DEC does outreach on the permits with missing inspection reports. The annual reports from the vendors have all been submitted with only a few late submissions and these were only late by a few days. Chris is still working with the vendors to ensure that all of the required information is submitted in the future. Chris has provided a template that specifies all of the required information to the vendors that were approved in 2014/2015. The vendors appreciate having the template and have indicated they will use it for their submissions in 2016.

The replacement tracking system is still under construction with steady progress. Vendors and staff are working to index annual inspection reports to the permit numbers.

The new system will move towards use of the SPAN numbering system which will allow easier tracking when the property is transferred from one owner to another. Craig and Peter supported having clickable links in all of the documents to allow rapid movement to a particular document of interest. Chris said that the documents are being sorted into specific subfolders within the tracking system so that some items, such as inspection reports, can be viewed without working through all of the information in a permit file.

Legislative Update:

Ernie provided an update on current legislative action and said that H.217 (partial delegation of the Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply program) is the only bill moving so far. There is some concern among members of the House Fish, Wildlife, and Water Resources Committee (FWWR) that so much time is being spent on clean water issues in front of the Senate Natural Resources Committee that the bill may not be brought up this session.

H.375 (ecological toilets) is still active, though maybe not on track for passage until next year. The Fish and Wildlife Committee will take testimony on April 17th. Ernie is not available and Mary will appear and carry the TAC message. The TAC discussed the bill at some length and decided that before making a lot of recommendations the intent of the bill should be better known. The bill indicates that public health, water conservation, and beneficial reuse are among the considerations. The TAC commented that most of the proposed changes would not diminish the risk to public health and might increase the risk of exposure to pathogens in comparison to the current Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules (Rules). The TAC also noted that most of Vermont is water rich and therefore a lack of water and a need to reuse it that might justify an increase in the health risk is not present in Vermont. Some beneficial use of nutrients from wastewater is occurring in Vermont, including urine separation and land application by the Rich Earth Institute in Southern Vermont. The cost/benefit ratio of beneficial reuse should be evaluated as part of any discussion of the topic. Gail said that one approach to a reduction in water use, waterless urinals, had been approved by the Vermont Plumbing Board. Some of the installations of waterless urinals have not been successful as they are hard to clean. The units are currently allowed in Vermont but are not used frequently.

Ernie Kelley, in charge of the Residuals Management Section, outlined the requirements for management of treated wastewater. Any pathogenic material that enters a treatment process is regulated and proposals based on composting are approvable. If the waste is treated to thermophilic temperatures (135-145 degrees Fahrenheit) it is no longer considered to be waste material and can be used as compost material. Some public wastewater treatment facilities treat and dispose of their sludge using this process. However, composting toilets are a challenge because a single compartment toilet must be taken out of use for a period of time for the composting process to work. Multi-chambers systems can be used but they require careful operation as the solid material and the liquid material must be balanced so that the required temperature is reached. Processing the material so that all portions of the material reach the required temperatures involves constant attention by trained operators. Ernie Christianson asked if grey water was

regulated. Ernie Kelley responded that most grey water has pathogens and would be regulated if processed in any sort of treatment system. A urine diversion system with a separate collection path and no treatment process would probably not be regulated.

Craig suggested telling the FWWR Committee that the TAC is willing to work on the issue but other groups including the Residuals Management Section must be involved.

Mary suggested the following TAC comments for discussion with the FWWR Committee:

- A. Composting toilets are already allowed with ultimate disposal of the waste either in certified landfills or using shallow burial onsite when the soils are appropriate.
- B. Meet with Rep. Zagar (bill sponsor) and discuss goals of the proposed legislation.
- C. Recommend a study group including the TAC and the Residuals Management Section and including any other groups affected by the bill.
- D. Discuss concerns about pathogens and whether the W.H.O. recommendations are appropriate for Vermont.
- E. Most grey water will include pathogens. Bathing and clothes washing, particularly when reusable diapers are considered, will include pathogens and surface application of untreated grey water may not be appropriate in Vermont.

The TAC supported a framework for the discussion with a focus on pathogens and public health. Peter said that the discussion of reuse should be included as over time new information and technology may support reuse in more situations.

Rule Discussion:

Ernie reviewed the most recent draft of the process for drawing the isolation zones around leachfields. Earlier drafts resulted in more downslope area being included than required. The TAC reviewed the current draft and agreed that it correctly describes the process. The TAC strongly recommended that one or two example drawings be included, either in the Rules or as guidance documents. Peter noted that it is important that the examples demonstrate how to deal with situations where the contour lines include convex shapes or concave shapes, as well as uniform slopes, all of which may be involved for a single leachfield.

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