

Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
September 15, 2015

Attendees: Dolly Parizo
 Jessanne Wyman
 Chris Russo
 Craig Heindel
 Steve Revell
 Justin Willis
 Denise Johnson-Terk
 Roger Thompson

Mary Clark
Rich Wilson
Carl Fuller
Peter Boemig
Terry Shearer
Gail Center
Gunner McCain
Ernest Christianson

Scheduled meetings:

October 13, 2015 1-4 PM Annex Building, 190 Junction Road – Montpelier
November 17, 2015 1-4 PM Annex Building, 190 Junction Road – Montpelier

Agenda:

The agenda was accepted.

Minutes:

Craig offered several comments to clarify the discussion of the Eljen Mantis system that were accepted. The concept of limiting the pump to gravity option for mound systems to 1000 GPD will be discussed at the next TAC meeting.

Innovative/Alternative Systems:

Mary reviewed the current requests for approval.

Aqua Test Inc. Company of Washington State is requesting approval for use of their NIBBLER system. This is a moving bed bioreactor type of system that is used between a septic tank and an advanced treatment system when the septic tank effluent is high strength wastewater. The goal is to reduce the wastewater strength down to a level so that the advanced treatment system meets its required level of treatment. This technology is being considered for pilot approval without any reduction in leachfield size or separation to the seasonal high water table related to its use. One system is in use in Vermont where food handling results in high strength wastewater. Roger asked if the submittal included information about the influent strength. Mary said it does and will circulate the information to the TAC.

Mary mentioned a draft proposal to use a filtration product developed by Aquaculture Systems Technologies for the aquaculture industry for use on a commercial building with

high strength wastewater. The proposal was to use this product for reducing waste strength prior to entering an I/A General Use unit. Initial review comments included questions on the appropriateness of this product, testing, approval history, and etc.

The request for use of coco media in the Ecoflo Biofilter has been approved. This will be used in lieu of the previously approved peat media.

Mary discussed whether the Innovative/Alternative approvals should include expiration dates. The current approvals are for 2 year periods and expire unless renewed. Mary has asked the Agency attorneys to review the issue. Landowners with permits for construction of wastewater systems have asked about situations where the Innovative/Alternative approval has expired and if they can still construct the system as approved. The answer is yes because the permit to construct a wastewater system is valid until revoked. Ernie said there are concerns about vendors that go out of business or who choose not to renew their Vermont approval. There are also concerns about getting the annual maintenance inspections done as the Innovative/Alternative approvals require the vendor to approve the people doing the maintenance inspections. A process for ensuring that system owners can still have their systems inspected even if the vendor ceases operation should be established. Steve noted that many inspections are done by approved service providers who are not licensed designers. Chromaglass systems were discussed. The company is no longer in business though Steve said that there may be a successor in the works. Chris said that she is still getting annual inspection reports for some of these systems.

Mary circulated an updated list of service providers for the various systems. Peter asked where the names came from and Mary said they were provided by the vendors. Peter asked if there should be a licensing category for service providers.

Installer Licensing or Certification:

Mary said that a series of meetings were held around the state in the past and that there was a lot of interest in a certification program. This would allow installers to advertise that they have been certified to do wastewater system installations. The Department is also discussing a licensing program for installers which would require a statute change. One question related to this is whether the installers would be required to do the installation certification. Steve said that many of the installers he works with want the designer to do the installation certification. There is also concern that some legislation requiring that systems be guaranteed might be proposed. Gunner and Justin agreed with Steve. Dolly Parizo of Island Excavating Corporation said that she supports a certification process for installers. Dolly commented that her company has been finding a lot of leaking tanks this year. She also wondered how this would fit with their liability insurance. Gunner asked if a certification program would be at the individual or the company level. Justin said he is not in favor of having non-designers do the installation certifications.

Mary has reviewed the New Hampshire program for licensing installers. This program has operated for many years and Craig notes that there is a large statewide organization of licensed installers that provides training for installers. Mary is considering two levels of inspection that would cover simple and complex systems. The National Association for Wastewater Technicians (NAWT) is one group that can train and test installers.

Ernie said there is also consideration of transferring all of the licensing programs to the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) in the Office of the Secretary of State. This would reduce an administrative burden on the Department. Craig asked Gail about her experience working with the Plumbers Licensing Board and Gail said it is a lot of work to run the licensing program.

Chris asked about the fees that OPR would charge. Mary reported that their estimate is about \$100 per year. Roger asked if a small program of a hundred or so would be as cost effective to run as say the Professional Engineers program with more than 2,000 members. Mary said the cost of the program is spread across all of the various licenses so that the fees are pretty flat from program to program. Ernie asked Dolly if \$100 per year would be a problem and she said it would not. Ernie asked Dolly if she thinks that there is an incentive for installers to be able to do the installation certifications. She does not and would not want to take on this task.

Steve said he hears request for installer training and said that many years ago there was routine training sessions for designers and installers. Gunner supports this type of training. Roger suggested that the Vermont Technical College would probably like to run a training course that would lead to an ANR certification. Justin asked Dolly about the training her company uses for its several installation teams. She said that there are many long term employees who provide on the job training and that the company owners visit every site every day.

Loan Program:

Ernie reviewed the loan program for failed wastewater systems. One problem is that under the current process the landowner needs to pay the designer upfront even though the cost of doing the design can be rolled into the loan. Many of the people who qualify for this program do not have the several hundred to two thousand dollars needed for the design work. Don Robisky, who first operated the loan program, suggested finding a group of designers who would be willing to do the work and wait to collect their money until the loan has been issued. Other state loan programs have a planning advance process where the state issues the money to pay for the design which is recovered by adding it to the construction loan. The TAC supports the planning advance approach.

Wastewater Tracking System Update:

Ernie reports that the system is still on-track to be running on October 1st. The system is under beta testing now. The entry of technical information is being revised to flow in a logical fashion starting with the well or the leachfield and working back to the building.

Wastewater System Rules Update:

Ernie said that Christine Thompson is in the process of reviewing the current draft. Once this is done the final draft that will be sent to the Interagency Committee on Administrative Rules (ICAR) will be circulated to the TAC.

Water Quality Database:

Gail reported that the Vermont Department of Health has received a \$500,000 grant from the Center for Disease Control to put all of the water quality data they have into data base. They are currently interviewing people to do the work. Craig asked if the work will be done in-house or under contract. The grant runs for five years.

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