



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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### New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection State Well Drillers and Pump Installers Examining and Advisory Board Conference Call Minutes for July 22, 2021

*Approved by the Board on August 12, 2021*

**Board Members Present at NJDEP Headquarters Building:** N/A

**Board Members Participating Via Telephone:** Art Becker (Chairman), Gary Poppe (Vice-Chairman), Gordon Craig, Dave Lyman, Eric Hoffmann, Steve Domber, and Richard Dalton

**Board Members Absent:** Jeff Hoffman and Joe Yost

**Board Legal Representative Present:** Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Jill Denyes, NJ Division of Law

**NJDEP Water Supply (Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting) Staff Present:** Terry Pilawski, Joe Mattle, Steve Reya, and Mark Ortega

**Members of the Public:** N/A

#### 1. Call to Order-

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 am with a quorum present via telephone. This in-person meeting was held via conference call due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Notice of the meeting and instructions on how to participate by phone were listed on the Department's website.

#### 2. Review and Certification of the June 17, 2021 Conference Call Minutes-

After reviewing the draft minutes, E. Hoffmann pointed out that a space was needed in the word "environmentalconsultants" on the second paragraph of the second page. A. Becker thanked E. Hoffmann for catching that and made note that the word "Markout" should potentially be split into two words. After further investigation, it was determined that "Markout" was the correct use of the word since it was the official name of the course.

**D. Lyman made a motion to approve the minutes after the correction has been made. This was seconded by S. Domber and approved by everyone except for G. Poppe who abstained as he was unable to attend the June call.**

**3. Licensing-**

*Review of License Applicants*

The Board members reviewed the applicant information for three environmental resource and geotechnical (ERG) well driller licenses. A. Becker asked if there was any discussion needed for the license candidates. No further discussion was needed. The license applications reviewed are as follows:

<b>License Type</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Employer</b>
ERG	Brandon Tolbert	ETD
ERG	Donatas Zvirblis	Geo Drilling LLC
ERG	Charles Sweet	SGS North America Inc.

**A motion to approve the three license applicants was made by G. Poppe, seconded by D. Lyman, and approved unanimously.**

**4. Continuing Education-**

Two courses were presented to the Board for approval. Both courses were deemed to be administratively complete by the Department.

*National Drilling Association (NDA) 2021 Convention*

A. Becker stated that NDA is seeking seven continuing education points (CEPs) for this conference and asked if anyone had any comments about the classes. R. Dalton asked to discuss the course entitled, “Don’t Kill Your Golden Goose – Protect & Perpetuate Your Business” in more detail. He stated that it does not appear related to well drilling as it pertains to business practices. G. Craig discussed the importance of business-focused courses for well drillers and pump installers who are also business owners or who are looking to own businesses in the future. G. Poppe and A. Becker said that they agreed with G. Craig. The benefits of business courses being taught at a drilling convention were discussed, as several members noted that a more prepared and organized businessperson will run a more efficient company and be better equipped to comply with regulatory requirements and less prone to cutting corners. A. Becker added that he sees R. Dalton’s point and said that when he initially reviewed the packet he was on the fence about the course.

S. Reya and the Board clarified that the keynote presentation was not included in the list of courses for which NDA was seeking approval.

**A motion to approve all the listed courses for the NDA 2021 Convention was made by G. Craig, seconded by G. Poppe, and approved by all except for S. Domber, who was opposed. The motion passed.**

**Approved NDA courses:**

<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Points</b>
The Operational Limits of Measuring While Drilling for Geotechnical Site Characterization	1 Technical CEP
Accidents: How They Happen and How to Avoid Them	1 Safety CEP
Growing Your Business by Adding CPT to Your Capabilities	1 Technical CEP
Drilling Aspects of the TDEC Order Project	1 Technical CEP
Grouting of Off-Shore Wind Farms Electric Cables Land Approach	1 Technical CEP
Underground Utilities: Increasing Safety Through Better Understanding of Utility Locating Practices and Geophysical Methods	1 Safety CEP
Don't Kill Your Golden Goose – Protect & Perpetuate Your Business	1 Technical CEP

*Parkhurst – Rules and Regs Course*

S. Reya introduced the Parkhurst Distributing course, *Overview of the Statutes, Rules and Regulations Governing the Water Well Industry in New Jersey*, to the Board. He explained that a similar course from this course provider was approved during the 2019/2020 continuing education cycle and was renewed for this continuing education cycle. This version of the course was shortened to three hours and covers some of the same topics, focusing only on the rules and regulations.

**A motion to approve Overview of the Statutes, Rules and Regulations Governing the Water Well Industry in New Jersey for three technical CEPs was made by R. Dalton, seconded by D. Lyman, and approved unanimously.**

**5. Ongoing Board Product Review: June 25, 2021 CETCO Grout Demonstration Recap-**

A. Becker apologized for missing the grout demonstration, which was held on Friday, June 25<sup>th</sup> in Bedminster, NJ, as he had a scheduling conflict that prevented him from attending. G. Craig, R. Dalton, and D. Lyman attended from the Board; S. Reya and M. Ortega attended from the Department. A. Becker thanked R. Dalton for drafting a report about the demonstration and asked him to discuss his findings with the rest of the Board.

R. Dalton discussed the grout mixture with the Board and said that it might be good for CETCO to conduct some additional tests with their grout due to the large graphite flakes which they use. He added that it might be possible for the grout to develop a preferred orientation when placed in a borehole that could potentially adversely affect permeability. R. Dalton noted that this concern is more relevant to cement-based grouts containing this form of graphite, not the bentonite-based geothermal grout currently under review.

R. Dalton and G. Craig discussed the pumpability of the grout, stating that it pumped very easily. G. Craig noted that he was amazed that the grout pumped easily even though the ¾” joints of the tremie pipe.

A. Becker asked if anyone had a sample that he could see once the Board resumed in-person meetings. S. Reya said that he had a sample, and he would bring it to the next in-person meeting for him to see.

G. Craig asked if the Department received the permeability tests back. S. Reya said that CETCO took samples from the mixer and the borehole and sent them to a third party, but the Department has not received the results.

**6. Disinfection of Wells by Unlicensed Individuals-**

DAG J. Denyes recapped the discussion from the June 2021 meeting. She reiterated that the Board would like to take action against an unlicensed individual who may have improperly tried to disinfect a well. She stated that her office is still working on responding to J. Hoffman, who at the last meeting asked her to investigate if this was covered by the well rule. J. Denyes said that her preliminary findings are that the disinfection of wells is not prohibited for unlicensed individuals, but they are still reviewing the Safe Drinking Water Act to make a final determination.

J. Denyes asked if any of the Board members directly observed this or if they received a complaint from someone else. D. Lyman stated that a licensed pump installer had reported the situation to him, which compelled him to discuss it at the June meeting. The licensed pump installer was called to the house where the improper well disinfection had occurred and discovered chlorine pellets in the well pit. He added that it did not appear that the well cap was ever opened. J. Denyes asked if this person advertises that they conduct well disinfection. D. Lyman said yes and that he has the individual's business card. J. Denyes asked if a copy of the card could be sent to her.

J. Denyes asked if the Board members had any questions for her. D. Lyman reiterated that he believes that well disinfection should be considered a well repair. The Board members explained the process of disinfecting a well and the dangers associated with the practice, if not done properly, with J. Denyes. She asked if a homeowner could potentially poison the water in their own well by attempting to disinfect it, to which the Board members said that it was possible.

A. Becker asked if the Board would have a decision by the next meeting. J. Denyes said that they should have the response finalized by the next meeting. The Board will take action after the report has been completed.

R. Dalton urged the Board to proceed carefully with this matter. He noted that geologists and environmental consultants regularly open wells to take samples or obtain water level measurements.

**7. Bureau Site Inspections (Blueberry Farms) and Enforcement-**

T. Pilawski said that Well Permitting staff has been assisting with inspecting blueberry farms in Atlantic County in late-June and throughout July. These intradepartmental inspections are being conducted with the Division of Water Compliance and Enforcement, the Division of Water Quality, the Bureau of Water Systems Engineering, and the Bureau of Safe Drinking Water. T. Pilawski explained that these inspections arose due to reports of alleged sewage running into blueberry fields. M. Schumacher, of the Well Permitting Section, took a lead role in developing maps and conducting well searches for each farm.

T. Pilawski noted that nothing egregious has been found yet and that there were still a few more inspections that still needed to occur. T. Pilawski expanded on the Department's findings. She said that Department staff found some wells that were too close to septic systems and others that were unpermitted.

A. Becker asked about whether an enforcement would be provided. T. Pilawski said that the Well Permitting Section is still working out how to proceed with J. Altieri's recent retirement. She added

that the Well Permitting Section is working on taking enforcement action against a well drilling company who habitually does not submit well records or well decommissioning reports.

**8. Princeton Geothermal Project Update-**

S. Reya said that Phase 1 of the Princeton Geothermal Project is nearing completion, with 90 percent of the wells installed. A recent project status report, provided by the construction management firm, was also forwarded to Board members for their review. S. Reya noted that there have been no recent compliance issues. He also referenced a recent article about a Princeton resident suing the school because of the geothermal project. The complaints alleged were related to noise and zoning issues, however, so they were unrelated to anything within the purview of the Bureau. Phase 2 of the project is going to be on the West Windsor side of the campus and is set to begin in the next few months.

**9. Program Updates-**

T. Pilawski said that the amended well rule has finally reached the Governor's office. She said that the Department is hoping to have the rule amendments published in the New Jersey Register by September 7, 2021.

T. Pilawski informed the Board that Department staff would start returning to the office in August. Starting August 2<sup>nd</sup>, staff will begin reporting to the office two days per week. Starting August 23<sup>rd</sup>, staff will begin reporting to the office three days per week. Starting September 7<sup>th</sup>, all Department staff will return to the office on a full-time basis. This subject to change depending on the pandemic.

**10. New Items/Comments from the Public-**

T. Pilawski brought up that the Science Advisory Board (SAB) sent their draft report regarding horizontal directional drilling (HDD) to S. Reya and R. Dalton for their review. R. Dalton and S. Reya reviewed the document and sent it back with a few comments that the SAB will take into consideration before finalizing the report. S. Reya also noted that A. Becker and G. Craig participated in a meeting with the SAB in which they provided insight and background on drilling fluids, grout, and well drilling methods (both conventional and HDD). This information was very helpful in evaluating potential risks that HDD poses to groundwater and what steps can be taken to minimize risks. The report will be shared with the Board once finalized and approved.

**11. Adjournment-**

A. Becker thanked the Board members for their attendance and participation. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 12, 2021, at 9:30 am via conference call.

**At 10:40 am, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by G. Poppe, seconded by D. Lyman, and approved unanimously.**