



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

CATHERINE R. McCABE
Commissioner

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

DIVISION OF WATER SUPPLY AND GEOSCIENCE
NEW JERSEY GEOLOGICAL AND WATER SURVEY ELEMENT
BUREAU OF WATER ALLOCATION AND WELL PERMITTING
401 E. STATE STREET – P.O. BOX 420
MAIL CODE 401-0Q
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0420
TELEPHONE: (609) 984-6831
FAX: (609) 633-1231
www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection State Well Drillers and Pump Installers Examining and Advisory Board Conference Call Minutes for March 26, 2020

Approved by the Board on April 16, 2020

Due to COVID-19 impacts this meeting was conducted as a conference call in lieu of an in-person meeting. Notice of the change and instructions for members of the public interested in participating in the call were posted on the Department’s website as follows:

Please be advised that the March 26, 2020 NJ State Well Drillers and Pump Installers Examining and Advisory Board (Board) will not be held at the Department of Environmental Protection headquarters to best protect the health and safety of Board members, Department staff and members of the public. Limited Board business exclusive to reviewing new applicants for well driller and pump installer licenses, continuing education course offerings and continuing education requirement deadlines will be reviewed by the Board during a conference call to be held at 10 am. During the call the Board intends to take formal action to approve qualified license candidates and make any other necessary formal motions. Members of the public who wish to participate in the call may call 1-888-557-8511 and enter access code 9841764 when prompted. Please continue to check this website for information on future meetings.

Board Members Participating Via Telephone: Art Becker (Chairman), Gary Poppe (Vice-Chairman), Gordon Craig, Joe Yost, Carol Graff, Joe Pepe, Jeff Hoffman, Richard Dalton, and Steve Domber

Board Members Absent: none

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

Board Legal Counsel: Jill Denyes, Deputy Attorney General (DAG)

Members of the Public: Karen Whitfield, Michael Glaser

1. Call to Order-

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 am with a quorum present via telephone.

2. Review and Certification of New License Applicants-

Board members reviewed the applicants for eight (8) well driller and pump installer licenses: 3 Environmental Resource & Geotechnical (ERG), 3 Vertical Closed Loop Geothermal and 2 Pump Installer. A summary is provided below:

Environmental Resource & Geotechnical	Kurt Bassett	Navarro and Weight Consulting Engineers
Environmental Resource & Geotechnical	Kristopher G. Curtis	Allstar Drilling & Probing
Environmental Resource & Geotechnical	Shane Wayman	Parratt Wolff Inc.
Pump Installer	Michael Glaser	Aqua Solutions, LLC
Pump Installer	Philip S. Andrews	Subsurface Technologies Inc.
Vertical Closed Loop Geothermal	Glenn Eaves	Chesapeake Geosystems, Inc.
Vertical Closed Loop Geothermal	Joseph Fairbank	Chesapeake Geosystems, Inc.
Vertical Closed Loop Geothermal	Corey McAllister	Chesapeake Geosystems, Inc.

S. Reya indicated that the Department found that all listed applicants meet the experience and exam requirements for licensure based upon the criteria prescribed in the rule. He also indicated that none of the listed applicants had any outstanding violations with the Department. Michael Glaser, who is a candidate for the pump installer license who was present on the call also discussed his experience and provided additional information on his experience. Mr. Glaser departed the call at 10:12 am.

A motion to certify all eight (8) listed applicants for licensure was made by J. Yost. The motion was seconded by G. Poppe and approved unanimously.

3. Kevin Blumhagen License Reinstatement Request-

Prior to the call, Board members were provided with a license reinstatement request letter and supporting documentation, which the Department received on March 25, 2020. The request was submitted by Mr. Blumhagen's legal counsel, Edward P. Azar, Esq. As noted in the request, the 75-day suspension of Mr. Blumhagen's NJ pump installer license ended on March 18, 2020. Board members were notified that the Department has not taken any enforcement action against Mr. Blumhagen during the time in which his license was suspended. The Department, therefore, found that he complied with the terms of the Settlement Agreement in which the Department and Mr. Blumhagen entered into in which he was to hire a NJ licensed pump installer to perform necessary oversight work during the period of his suspension.

Following the Board's review of the letter and documents provided, a motion to reinstate Mr. Blumhagen's pump installer license was made by G. Poppe. The motion was approved by J. Yost and approved unanimously.

Department staff will return Mr. Blumhagen's physical license, which he previously surrendered. Additionally, they will notify counties in which he frequently works that the license has been reinstated.

4. **Department update regarding COVID-19 impact on license/continuing education deadlines-**
T. Pilawski informed the Board that as a result of the COVID-19 health crisis, Department staff has been evaluating any permit or license expiration dates that could be extended for good cause. After consultation with staff in which the information technology (IT) needs of the program were considered, staff is of the belief that Department resources necessary for the conversion of nearly 300 licenses (held by existing Soil Borers, Monitoring Well Drillers and Journeyman Class B well drillers) is unlikely to be able to completed in time for license renewal processing for the June 30, 2020 license expiration. A proposal to deal with the IT limitations in being able to assure license renewals can be processed without interruption is to extend the license expiration deadline one year to June 30, 2021. The corresponding continuing education deadline would also be pushed back one year to April 1, 2021. In doing so, the Department would not receive the license renewal income for this fiscal year. This renewal income would be received during fiscal year 2021. Estimated loss of income by extending the deadline one-year is would also be the equivalent of one third of the license renewal income assuming all licensees renew. From 2021 onward, the license cycle would then revert back to the standard three (3) year duration.

As T. Pilawski explained, however, trying to hold to the current deadlines could potentially result in license holders not being able to submit well permit applications as of July 1, 2020. If the licenses are not properly converted in the Department and NJ Treasury system prior to that point, along with generation of invoices and collection of renewal fees an interruption of license status and/or problems submitting well permit applications through the Department's online permitting system would be the result. She reiterated that although the current continuing education points (CEPs) of all license holders are tracked and up to date in Well Permitting's records, the ability to re-classify licenses requires IT staff that are already tasked with other Department emergency initiatives related to COVID-19 and that there is no way the program can estimate a timeframe for when DOIT will be able to focus on resolving this licensing issue. She also noted that staff reached out to DAG, Jill Denyes, who advised staff to elevate the request for the license extension through the Department's chain of command. DAG Denyes was on the conference call and reiterated this recommendation. The program is in the process of raising this issue with management. Any extension would require an Executive Order or rule/law change as the deadlines are currently prescribed in rule and statute.

Finally, T. Pilawski noted that the statute and rule that govern continuing education note that a waiver from continuing education may be requested from a licensee "on the basis of active duty in the military or reserves, illness, disability, or other due cause." By extending the license expiration and continuing education deadline concurrently, she noted that these waiver requests would not be necessary. In trying to maintain the current deadlines, the Board would potentially be in a position to be forced to evaluate waiver requests from approximately 300 licensed individuals who have not yet obtained the required CEPs.

She asked Board members for their input on the proposed extension. J. Yost stated that he sees no other option but to proceed with granting the extension considering the current circumstance. G. Poppe also agreed and felt the extension is warranted. G. Craig questioned whether additional CEPs would be required from April 2020 through April 2021 and it was clarified that they would not be required. He too was in agreement with the extension. J. Yost further noted that although the Department would lose some income in extending the deadline, the whole world is losing money due to the virus and that is simply something with which the State will have to deal with.

J. Yost made a motion that the Board recommends to the Department to establish a one year extension to the current well driller and pump installer license and continuing education deadlines as a result of the COVID-19 impacts specified by the Department, as failure to do so

could potentially result in licensure status interruption and associated loss of income for licensed well drillers and pump installers should the Department encounter the difficulties described. The motion was seconded by G. Craig and approved unanimously.

5. Continuing Education Course Provider Application Review-

Water Source, Contaminants and Treatment Technologies (4.5 CEPs requested). Applicant: Richard A. Mest, Master Water Conditioning Corp.

The application and summary table describing this course content were provided to Board members for evaluation. G. Poppe noted that he read through the packet and felt the content would be beneficial to NJ license holders. A. Becker agreed and added that he had attended courses put on by the same instructor in the past and found them very informative. J. Pepe also felt the topic was clearly related to the industry.

A motion to approve the Water Source, Contaminants and Treatment technologies course for the requested 4.5 CEPs was made by J. Yost and seconded by J. Pepe. The motion was approved unanimously.

M. Ortega provided an update for the completion status of the continuing education program and indicated that the Department is up to date in tracking CEPs for all license holders but there are two online course providers who will have to report their rosters in the coming days in order to have a final tally on CEP completion compliance. He will reach out to both providers to obtain attendance data immediately following April 1st. Currently, he indicated that approximately 62% of all license holders have obtained the 7 or more CEPs required for renewal.

6. Evaluation of existing approved courses for the 2020-2023 CEP cycle-

As discussed on the February Conference Call, the Board's opportunity to evaluate previously approved courses and address any concerns prior to carrying the approved courses into the next cycle was to be done at this meeting. Considering the discussion described item #4 above, however, it was determined that discussion on this topic should now be held off until the Board meets in person. A. Becker requested that Department staff include this topic on the agenda of the Board's next in-person meeting since reviewing a large list of course information over the phone is difficult. It was also not deemed to be time sensitive due to the extension proposal discussed earlier.

7. Well Permit Application Processing Update-

S. Reya indicated that Lynn Stout and her staff have been taking necessary steps to review well permit applications remotely and with some outstanding IT limitations. The program wished to make drilling contractors aware that permit applications continue to be reviewed and approved, however, there may be delays and drillers should not expect unreasonable turnaround times such as one day considering current limitations. He asked that drillers be patient and noted that L. Stout and her staff requested that we urge drillers to double and triple check their submittals. A number of issues could easily be resolved in a timelier manner, but they are having to be returned for administrative errors, all of which is more difficult and time consuming when working through their remote system. He noted that contractors can expect quicker turnaround times by increasing the accuracy of the information they submit to the Bureau.

8. New Jersey American Water Co. Backflow Prevention Issue-

G. Poppe raised an issue of backflow prevention device requirements being implemented by New Jersey American Water Company in a development in Howell Twp. This issue has been previously raised at Board meeting and he requested an update and further guidance. T. Pilawski, J. Mattle and S. Reya met with the Bureau of Water Systems Engineering on the issue, as the requirements fall under the purview of that program and the NJ Safe Drinking Water Act rule (N.J.A.C. 7:10). Well Permitting staff made that program aware of the concerns but is not the regulatory authority on the issue so all correspondence or inquires should be sent to that program. G. Poppe requested that program staff send him the appropriate contacts and relevant information as the issue has recently been brought to his attention by a number of individuals who would like to follow up on the matter. Well Permitting staff will email the requested information to G. Poppe.

9. Adjournment-

At 10:47 am a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by G. Poppe, seconded by G. Craig, and approved unanimously.