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WELL SAID NEWSLETTER

Available on the web at
OWRD home page, under
Agency Spotlight >

Well Said Newsletter.

Please share with others at
your organization.

Well Said is a production of
the OWRD Well Construction
& Compliance Section and is
designed to inform the drilling
industry and the public about
program activities and other
items of interest.

Questions or suggestions
about this newsletter may be
directed to Kristopher Byrd
at (503) 986-0851 or email at
Kristopher.R.Byrd@oregon.gov



*Serving the public by practicing
and promoting responsible water
management.*

NEW NC REGION MANAGER

The Water Resources Department (WRD) is pleased to introduce to the well drilling community, Chris Kowitz, the new North Central (NC) Region Manager. Mr. Kowitz replaces long-time NC Region Manager, Mike Ladd, who recently retired from WRD.



Chris Kowitz, who received his Bachelors of Science from Western Washington University, has been with the agency nearly three years. Prior to accepting the region manager position, he served as the Water Resources Coordinator and a Water Management and Conservation Analyst. Chris most recently worked for the Oregon Department of Transportation as a Water Program Coordinator. Additionally, he has worked for the City of Salem as a Watershed Program Coordinator, and Skagit County, Washington, as an Environmental Services Manager.

Water use, policy, and law have long been Chris' passions, reaching back to his collegiate days. Chris expresses that the supportive leadership coupled with the knowledgeable and dedicated staff at WRD allow him the opportunity to fulfill the Department's mission of serving the public by practicing and promoting responsible water management through two key goals:

- To directly address Oregon's water supply needs
- To restore and protect stream flows and watersheds in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Oregon's ecosystems, economy, and quality of life

During most weekends, you are most likely to find Chris enjoying the company of his family while out exploring all the Pacific Northwest has to offer; including, fishing, hiking, backpacking, skiing and camping. When he cannot be outside enjoying the weather, Chris enjoys cooking, woodworking, and watching just about any sport on TV.

Mr. Kowitz states that he is looking forward to meeting and working collaboratively with the drilling community in the North Central region.

Please contact Chris Kowitz at the Pendleton office, (541) 278-5658 or Chris.C.Kowitz@oregon.gov to discuss any concerns or ideas that you may have.

OWRD WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

WELL CONSTRUCTOR LICENSING SURVEY

Senate Bill 855 (Chapter 649, Oregon Laws 2019) requires each professional licensing board to study the manner in which persons who are immigrants or refugees become licensed, certified or otherwise authorized in the occupational or professional service. The Department licenses water well and monitoring well drillers; therefore, the law requires the Department to study the manner in which persons who are immigrants or refugees become licensed to construct water supply wells and monitoring wells in the state.

Your feedback matters! OWRD is requesting your assistance in obtaining information for this study. Please take a moment to visit the Department's website, at <https://www.oregon.gov/OWRD/> and complete a survey, so the Department may further its analysis and report back to the State Legislature. (You'll find a link to the survey under the "Agency Spotlight" Section, on the OWRD home page.) Comments will be accepted through October 31, 2019.

28TH ANNUAL OREGON WATER LAW CONFERENCE

The Oregon Water Law Conference, to be held November 14 & 15, 2019 at the World Trade Center in Portland, Oregon, will provide an update on recent water-related legislation and administrative developments, along with discussions of the key issues driving water policy. Director of the Oregon Water Resources Department, Thomas M Byler will be presenting on the topic of "Oregon Legislature: What Became Law and What Didn't." Practitioners from a wide array of viewpoints will address complex water supply and management challenges in several of Oregon's watersheds.

The Oregon Water Law Conference has been approved by the Continuation Education Committee for a total of 6.5 continuing education credits in the general category.

For questions related to continuing education, please contact Buffy Gillis at 503-986-0856 or Buffy.M.Gillis@oregon.gov.

If you are interested in attending the Oregon Water Law Conference, please contact Meghan Whiting at mehgan@theseminargroup.net for further information.

WHAT IS THE OREGON WATER VISION?

Many areas of Oregon are known for clean and reliable water. This is due to both favorable climate and the infrastructure we built in the 19th and 20th centuries to effectively move water from its source to where it is used. As has been identified in Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy, three forces combine to place significant stress on Oregon's water: 1) Climate change and associated increases in fire, drought and flooding, 2) A half century of underinvestment in built and natural water infrastructure, and 3) Our changing population and associated development – growing in some areas, shrinking in others. These factors impact the quality and quantity of water for our communities, including water in our rivers, lakes, reservoirs and aquifers. Simply put, if we are not willing to roll up our sleeves and work together to invest in our natural and built water systems, we place the safety of our communities, the health of our people and environment, and Oregon's economic future at risk.

The 100-Year Water Vision builds on the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS), by developing an investment framework to implement the recommendations made in the IWRS. To address changes in climate and population dynamics, Oregon will steward its water resources to ensure clean and abundant water for our people, our economy and our environment, now and for future generations. Strategic investments will result in resilient natural and built water systems across the state to support safe and healthy communities, vibrant local economies and a healthy environment.

Visit the Water Vision website!

Get the latest information and subscribe to the list serve at OregonWaterVision.org. This website will have continued updates on State efforts to gather feedback this fall and winter.

As part of this work, we are holding a series of community conversations and a technical workshop. Whether you are a utility manager, a water user, a farmer, an activist, a county commissioner, a community organizer, or anyone else who is excited about Oregon water future, we hope we can find a way to connect!

Visit <http://www.oregonwatervision.org> to learn more, register for a conversation or workshop, or share your thoughts!

COMMUNITY OR PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

When constructing a community or public water system, remember that the Water Resources Dept is not the only agency that needs to be contacted if there are questions. While OWRD has jurisdiction over well construction and water right issues, the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Drinking Water Services administers and enforces drinking water quality standards for public water systems in Oregon.

In order to avoid costly changes, well constructors that are contacted by a community or public water system to drill a well are encouraged to contact both agencies if the construction requirements are unclear.

For well construction questions, contact Joel Jeffery at Joel.W.Jeffery@oregon.gov or (503) 986-0852. OHA Drinking Water Services can be reached at info.drinkingwater@state.or.us or (971) 673-0405.

DEQ OFFERS KLAMATH BASIN RESIDENTS FREE WELL WATER TESTING

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is testing groundwater in the Klamath Basin for nitrate, arsenic, pesticides, herbicides, hardness, primary and trace metals, coliform bacteria, E. coli, pharmaceuticals, and volatile organic compounds.



In 2013, the Oregon legislature provided funds to the DEQ's Groundwater protection program to monitor groundwater across Oregon that is vulnerable to contamination. DEQ selected the Klamath Basin as a study area using data on vulnerable aquifers, information on geology and soils, data from historical real estate transactions, gaps in available water quality data, and input from local stakeholders.

Public water suppliers are required to test their water on a regular basis, however, homeowners who rely on well water are not required to test their water unless they transfer their property. For this reason, DEQ is continuing the groundwater study to learn more about groundwater quality and communicate any health risks to homeowner's who rely on well water. DEQ will sample well water at a tap in the water supply system prior to any water treatment and filtration system and submit the sample to a laboratory for analysis.

The study commenced this fall and will continue into the spring of 2020. The public is invited to participate by contacting the groundwater monitoring program as soon as possible at (503) 693-5736 or by email: Groundwater.Monitoring@deg.state.or.us. DEQ will send you a form with questions about your well. Participants will be selected based on location and well characteristics.

Free Testing

FLU SEASON

FLU

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is a contagious respiratory tract infection caused by influenza viruses. Influenza can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Symptoms of influenza generally include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, and/or fatigue.

During most flu seasons, which typically run from November to April, between 10 to 20 percent of the population is infected with influenza viruses. In fact, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized with influenza each year in the United States. Although the flu affects everyone, certain groups of people, including older adults, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk for serious complications from it. People can spread the flu even if they don't know they're sick. The flu can be more serious for some people, including young children, pregnant women, older people, people with certain health conditions, and smokers. The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated each year.

The Oregon Health Authority maintains a website through the Public Health Division which provides information and tips with regard to flu prevention, flu surveillance reports, and a portal to a website for locating a vaccine provider. The website also provides a telephone number to call for flu vaccine location information. The website provides a wealth of information and is located at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PreventionWellness/FluPrevention/pages/index.aspx>.

GROUNDWATER AND PFAS

The National Groundwater Association (NGWA) published Groundwater and PFAS: State of Knowledge and Practice, a guidance document on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Created by 36 NGWA volunteers who spent 1100 hours on the project over 12 months, it is a comprehensive eight-part piece exploring the potentially hazardous, and widely discussed, compounds in groundwater and soil. PFAS refers to per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, a group of chemicals that have been used in a wide range of applications since the 1940s. The man-made chemicals are used in firefighting, stain resistance, water repellants, and other industrial applications.

NGWA published the document to identify the known science and knowledge related to PFAS compounds. It summarizes the fate, transport, remediation, and treatment of PFAS, as well as current technologies, methods, and field procedures. For information on obtaining a copy of this publication, please visit <https://www.ngwa.org/what-is-groundwater/groundwater-issues/Groundwater-and-PFAS>.

PERCHLORATE IN DRINKING WATER



Perchlorate can be pervasive in groundwater, soils and plants. It can be found as both a naturally occurring chemical and a synthetic chemical which may be used in the production of rocket fuel, fireworks, flares, and explosives. Additionally, it may also be present in some fertilizers and laundry bleach. Studies conducted by the Federal Drug Administration do not indicate a consistent increase in perchlorate levels across foods from year to year; however, higher than average levels have been found in some foods such as bologna, salami, and collard greens, while lower levels have been found in boxed macaroni & cheese, milk chocolate and plain bagels.

Health risks to humans have been associated with exposure to high dosages of perchlorate, which can interfere with iodide uptake into the thyroid gland, potentially leading to a reduction in the production of thyroid hormone. In unborn babies and young children, thyroid hormones are critical for normal growth and development of the central nervous system. In adults, the thyroid plays an important role in regulating metabolism.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to set both the enforceable maximum contaminant level (MCL) for the perchlorate regulation and the perchlorate maximum contaminant level goal (MCLG) at 0.056 mg/L. Additionally, the EPA is proposing requirements for water systems to conduct monitoring and reporting for perchlorate and to provide information about perchlorate to their consumers through public notification and consumer confidence reports.

The deadline for finalizing the rule of regulating perchlorate in drinking water has been moved to June 19, 2020.

For further information about perchlorate, please visit the EPA website at:
<https://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations/perchlorate-drinking-water>.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



A buried well that a Well Inspector located in western Oregon.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Homemade tool to retrieve broken bit from 1,340 feet below ground surface.



Here's where the bit broke off the drill.



The drill bit that was retrieved from the borehole, using the homemade tool.



Old drill rig in eastern Oregon



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