

Groundwater Protection Program Public Meeting

Monday, Jan. 10, 2012

Mid-State Electric Building – Community Meeting Room

Members present: John Blakinger (committee chair), Robert Ray (co-chair), Bill Gaetano, Dave Crider, Marietta Qual, Judy Forsythe, Leon Shields, Conrad Ruel

Members not present: Lee Wilkins, Allan Hammerman

DEQ staff present: Bob Baggett, Brian Mannion, Bill Mason, Eric Nigg

ODA staff present: Brent Nicholas

Welcome

Convene: 6:00 p.m.

Logistics: Roll call

Well testing updates

Eric: Not going to be able to present the results today because we have to report to well owners

Judy: Why weren't letters ready?

Eric: It was a recent change in the plan. We decided as an agency to wait to discuss specifics until we've notified the well owners. We're sending a letter and making phone calls. Hope to be done in the next two weeks. Data will be presented with earlier well findings and presented on a map.

Committee requested emailing results when they're ready. DEQ agreed. Committee will discuss option of holding additional committee.

Committee discussed sample set. Bob and Eric discussed general well data issues, including checking to ensure well information such as location is correct in the data.

Public Comment session #1

Wendell Evers: Money poured down the drain should have been used to solve problem. Nothing has been done. If a research study is not done using criteria of scientific research empirical criteria it is not scientific and is flawed.

There are too many false things going on. Most recent \$26,000 spent was spent foolishly. If there's a problem with a well it should have been fixed. If you



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average in the new data, or use it without vetting all the issues corrupting it it will gum up the works.
There probability of being hit by an asteroid is greater than nitrates being a problem in 150.

Recommend putting a moratorium on ATTs until a problem is found and resolve the problem with the finances. We can move forward this fast.

Patrick Murphy: Is step by step methodology available for public viewing?

Bill Mason: Lab puts together reports on methodology. Action item: Bob to share information with Bill M. and Patrick Murphy.

Herbicide contamination update

Brent Nicholas: ODA Investigation is ongoing. If people have questions about the products, including picloram, ODA can provide some information. ODA can't answer question about how chemicals are affecting wells. That's a question for OHA.

Eric to call Curtis C. at OHA about potential actions re herbicide.

Bob B.: Told people that PARC is looking into it. Human health response falls to OHA and local, Klamath County health.

Criteria update

Robert R. reported the criteria subgroup did not meet.

Work session

John asked group to discuss two scenarios: 1) treating drinking water and 2) prevent groundwater pollution

Preventing groundwater pollution

The committee discussed the following options, details included where discussed.

- *One size fits all*
- *Phased approach "Monitor and manage"*
 - Monitor: Improved RET monitoring
 - Pros: If done well use existing system to provide lots of good data
 - Cons: Current system does not provide good samples, legislatively complex
 - Unknown: How to ensure quality, consistent samples, funding, legislative feasibility, who pays?
 - Phased management



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- Pros: Cost directed at known problems
- Cons: Costs would be unevenly distributed among residents

Robert R.: Committee agrees one size doesn't fit all; next step is developing criteria to guide selection and solutions. If application of criteria indicates there is little or no problem in an area, doing nothing would be an ok recommendation for that area. Initial criteria include well depth, density, distance from other neighborhoods and river, other existing data.

Criteria subcommittee to meet before next meeting.

Just protect drinking water

The committee discussed the following options, details included where discussed.

- *Reverse osmosis filters for individual homes*
- *Provide public water supply*
 - Pros: Cost less than ATT system, ensures people have fresh water, solves health issue
 - Cons: Doesn't protect groundwater, could potentially effect surface water, public water supply complex land-use process to get system installed
 - Unknowns: Don't know what happens to nitrates travelling between groundwater and surface water; feasibility of completely writing off groundwater is unknown.

Do nothing

The committee discussed the hypothetical situation of doing nothing to protect groundwater or drinking water.

- Pro: Cheap for some people
- Cons: Aquifer is saturated with partially treated sewage; there would be a decline in groundwater quality, probably undrinkable; possible knock on effects such as trouble selling homes; some lots that could not be developed
- Unknowns: What are the consequences of doing nothing and allowing nitrates contamination to max out?

Conrad: Even if committee does nothing, DEQ will still do something.

Public comment # 2

Dave Gillette: Need to consider different aquifers, cost benefit analysis of solution, take into account that science is old; likes idea of using RET to get good data. Also recommended moratorium on requiring any ATT systems in until



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committee reaches firm recommendation. Too many irregularities, cost benefit analysis, sustainability, equilibrium. Too many variables, too many irregularities.

Citizen Engagement

Brian M: The article was placed in the Sunriver Scene but not the Newberry Eagle.

Brian M. to follow up with goal of getting the articles published, double check on deadlines and publication schedule. Bill G. to double check Sunriver Scene.

John to send draft of next article. Committee to get back with comments by next Monday

Committee discussed source article issues including filtering effects of area soils.

Public Comment # 3

Patrick Murphy: Permeable soils *always* allow *all* pollution to reach the groundwater?

Bill M: It depends on a lot of factors, including density. Low density would mean it's not likely to be a problem downstream. More density increases problems.

Patrick: What is the rate of groundwater movement?

Bill: Also depends on where you are and what kind of soil is involved, permeability, gradient, etc.

Patrick: Why aren't all wells in older wells contaminated?

Bill: Depends on a lot of factors including flow direction

Patrick: How much do we know about the groundwater flows?

Bill: A lot actually. Unconfined aquifer flow mirrors topography.

Patrick: Aren't pesticides in the groundwater DEQ's responsibility.

Bill: Proper application is ODA's responsibility. Dumping, spills or emergencies is DEQ's responsibility. Health is OHA's rule.

Pam Cosmo: Do you have the capacity to get over this ATT system stuff? She said she wants to protect groundwater and is into local food and concerned about what's being sprayed on the ground. The nitrate issue is so miniscule compared to other issues: hormones, antibiotics, chemicals.

Where did concern from nitrates come from? Somebody rich started pushing ATT's and it filtered down. Is it possible or legal to throw out ATT systems and concentrate on things that actually pose a threat.

Area fought as hard as possible to stop this and state is still forcing ATTs. ATTs have a bad performance record.



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Eric: Stated that work on nitrates is important and clarified that DEQ is taking a case-by-case approach to deciding what onsite systems to permit in the area. Where this site-by-site analysis indicates the ATT is the best solution, DEQ requires that type of system. Where it is not, the agency does not require it. DEQ has recently permitted some standard systems. Eric also state that the committee is charged with finding solutions.

Other business

John: Gave update on behalf of Tony De Bone saying Gene Whisnants bill is not happening in this legislative session.

Next meeting topics

- Well test data
- Criteria
- Articles: one final, one draft.

Adjourn: 9:10 p.m.

Action Items:

Action	Owner	Due	Status
Email well test results when complete	Eric and Bob	2/9/12	Complete
Email well testing methodology to Bill M. and Patrick Murphy.	Bob	2/9/12	??
Call Curtis C. at OHA and get info about potential actions to deal with herbicide; report back to committee	Eric	2/9/12	??
Criteria subcommittee to meet before next meeting.	Subcommittee, Brian, Bill M.	2/9/12	??
Follow up with Newberry Eagle	Brian M.	2/9/12	Complete
Follow up with Sunriver Scene	Bill G.	2/9/12	??
Send draft "Sources" article to committee	John B.	1/16/12	Complete