

# OKLAHOMA DRILLER'S LOG

NEWSLETTER OF THE OKLAHOMA WELL DRILLER PROGRAM

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Oklahoma Well Driller Program



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## Well Driller Program Update

Kent Wilkins, Director  
Oklahoma Well Driller Program

Welcome to this, the inaugural edition of the "Oklahoma Driller's Log" -- a newsletter by, for and about Oklahoma's water well drillers and pump installers. I hope the information provided here assists you in your daily activities, because that's my intention.

Coordinating the state's Well Driller program has been both rewarding and a lot of hard work since I assumed program duties following Gary Glover's retirement in April. I was fortunate to work with Gary for a number of years, but was still surprised by the busy nature of this position. Not a day has gone by without receiving a number of phone calls concerning the program and handling numerous tasks associated with the coordinator's role. Even though it seems like there aren't enough hours in the day, I savor this job and offer any assistance I can provide to Oklahoma's well driller industry. Please feel free to call or e-mail me anytime. A complete list of agency contacts is provided in this newsletter.

There are several events and plans in the works to improve the Well Drillers Program. In December, we plan to con-

duct three educational workshops to discuss recent program changes. To better serve our contractors, we are currently revising our testing system and streamlining our renewal procedures. We also hope to produce and disseminate new brochures and public awareness materials. In addition to this regular newsletter, other program directives planned within the next year include updating our website to provide additional information to the contractors and the public and utilization of Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates for legal descriptions.

I am enthusiastic about the Board gaining approval from the State Legislature and Governor to create a Well Drillers and Pump Installers Advisory Council. The new Council will assist the Board in making decisions concerning the program's direction, including necessary rule changes. The industry is rapidly evolving and who better to advise the Board than the state's licensed drillers and pump installers.

I will be preparing this newsletter on a regular basis, so if you have any pertinent articles of interest, I encourage you to submit them. Communication can make all the difference in the success of the industry and this program. If you have any suggestions or comments, please contact me. I wish all licensed contractors success in the upcoming months.

## OWRB Field Inspectors Remain Busy

Field inspectors for the OWRB were extremely busy the first half of 2001. Approximately 25 violations were identified across the state that required some form of correction to the well construction or pump installation. Violations included the absence of sufficient cement surface seals; unplugged test holes; no submission of a well log; an improper or absence of a cap; and improper location of a well in relation to a pollution source.

The Water Board conducts routine inspections to ensure that drillers are meeting minimum construction and installation standards. Complaint and permit inspections are also conducted to identify problems and assist citizens and well drillers in installing wells consistent with minimum standards. Staff



Well owner, Jan Glasgow, observes Kent Wilkins, Mark Belden and Steve Fair, of the Water Board, inspect a recently drilled water well for the presence of a cement grout surface seal.

See *Inspectors* on Page 2

# OWRB Sponsors Panhandle Plugging Demonstration

The Water Board, in conjunction with the Cimarron County Conservation District and Cimarron County Commissioners, conducted an abandoned well plugging demonstration on May 10. The abandoned well was located north and west of Boise City. The OWRB's Jason Shiever and Kent Wilkins provided technical assistance during the demonstration to illustrate proper plugging procedures for a typical abandoned water well.

According to Wilkins, abandoned, uncapped wells can provide an ideal conduit for contamination to reach groundwater supplies. "While contamination at

the surface may require years to leach through soils to underlying groundwater formations, contamination transported through an unplugged well bore can potentially reach groundwater in a matter of seconds," he said.

Abandoned wells can also be a physical hazard according to Wilkins. "Animals or humans can accidentally fall into unplugged wells, even through boreholes of moderate size, as evidenced

## *Inspectors, Continued from Page 1*

from the Board are available for assistance in each quadrant of the state, as follows:

- Jason Shiever: Woodward - 580-256-1014
- Gavin Brady: Tulsa - 918-581-2924
- Hank Elling: Lawton - 580-248-7762
- Kim Sullivan: Lawton - 580-248-7762
- Kent Wilkins: McAlester - 918-426-5435
- Kelly Self: McAlester - 918-426-5435
- Theda Adkisson: Oklahoma City - 405-530-8800

Protection of Oklahoma's invaluable groundwater resources is everyone's business. Water well and pump installation regulations can be downloaded through the Board's website at [www.owrb.state.ok.us](http://www.owrb.state.ok.us) or mailed by calling any of the agency's five locations. Should anyone identify a water well, monitoring well or pump installation that does not meet minimum standards, please contact the OWRB at (405) 530-8800 or the nearest field office location.



*An unplugged test hole subject to surface water contamination.*



*A group of interested Cimarron County citizens observe the proper plugging of an abandoned water well.*

by the documented story of the Texas child a few years ago," Wilkins pointed out. The child, known as Baby Jessica, fell into an abandoned, unplugged well but, fortunately, she was rescued. The well, like many throughout Oklahoma, was constructed with a relatively small diameter well bore.

In general, proper plugging procedure for an abandoned, uncontaminated well consists of filling the well bore with clay, bentonite or other impervious material to within 14 feet of the surface. Cement grout should then be installed from 14 feet to 4 feet. The casing should be cut off 4 feet below ground and soil placed from 4 feet to the surface.

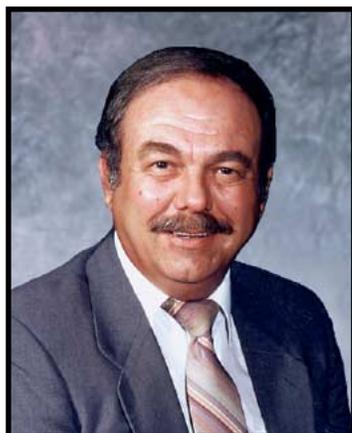
The Board would like to thank the Cimarron County Conservation District, Commissioners and others who participated in and attended the demonstration. A special thanks goes out to Mike Ritter for donating his time, manpower and equipment for the plugging event. If you would like more information on plugging abandoned water wells, please contact Kent Wilkins at 405-530-8800.

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## **Longtime Driller Program Coordinator Retires In April**

OWRB hydrologist Gary Glover, who served the OWRB and well drillers of Oklahoma for almost three decades, retired in April.

Although he was influential in many successful and diverse agency programs, perhaps Glover's most noteworthy role throughout his 27 years at the OWRB was as initial coordinator of the Water Well Driller and Pump Installer Program. Similarly, as organizer of the state drillers advisory council, he spearheaded efforts to effect legislation that both validated the importance of the program and its effectiveness in protecting Oklahoma's groundwater quality. His unique and beneficial insight into the state's water well drilling industry was honed through years of field work in the Board's well measurement program.



*Gary Glover, Retired Oklahoma Well Driller Program Coordinator*

Previously, as a cartographic draftsman in the OWRB's drafting unit, Glover provided valuable assistance during Phase One of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, published in 1980. He also served as agency photographer and contributed to numerous publications, including the widely popular Oklahoma Water Atlas.

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