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## Coordinator's Corner

*Kent Wilkins, OWRB Drillers Program Coordinator*

Another year has come and gone. The downturn of the economy has continued to impact our industry forcing us to be even more creative and adaptive. And while we can't change the current economic situation, we can all change our attitude towards dealing with the downturn. Hang in there, remain positive and good things will happen in the future.

The Water Board was again busy this year licensing 36 new firms and 61 new operators while maintaining a total of 345 licensed firms and 600 operators. We also received reports for over 6,000 well and boring records for 2009.

Please plan on attending the Oklahoma Ground Water Association (OGWA) trade show and conference that will be held at the Clarion Hotel in Oklahoma City on February 18 and 19, 2010. The Association members have again prepared an excellent schedule of presenters and topics. Everyone can surely gain some useful information to improve his or her business while obtaining required continuing education credit.

Again this year the OGWA is pleased to announce that a representative from the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) will be present at our conference. We appreciate the support and assistance from the NGWA. Please check out more conference and association information on the website at [www.ogwa.biz](http://www.ogwa.biz).

Please be aware that a number of rule changes have been proposed for 2010. Feel free to give me a call for a copy or download an Adobe PDF file from our website at [www.owrb.ok.gov](http://www.owrb.ok.gov). As always, if I can

be of any assistance, please contact me at (405) 530-8852.

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## Water Board Initiates Annual Water Use Reporting Survey

As part of an annual process, in January the OWRB will mail water use report forms to every holder of a water right in Oklahoma.

According to Julie Cunningham, chief of the OWRB's Planning and Management Division, information provided through these forms is vital to the fair and efficient appropriation of water to both current and future users throughout the state.

"Much like a person tracks spending and balances his or her checkbook to determine how much money is available for withdraw when needed, we ask citizens, municipalities, and businesses to account for their water usage," she explains. Resulting data not only provides collective information on the amount of water currently used for various purposes, but it helps determine how much is available to future users.

"As the Water Board continues its ongoing update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, which will include 50-year projections of water use, this information is critical to addressing future water needs and accomplishing the state's economic development goals," Cunningham says.

Oklahoma law requires the OWRB to review stream water rights for nonuse and cancel a water right if the water is not actually placed to beneficial use.

State law requires all reports to be completed and returned to the Board--in addition to a required annual file maintenance fee (for stream water users only)--within 30 days of receipt. The agency encourages water rights holders to fill out the forms as accurately and completely as possible, including a current mailing address. Because many users don't use meters or possess other means to accurately account for their usage, each form includes detailed instructions on how to estimate water use for a specific purpose. Failure to submit the form is considered to be "nonuse" of a water right in that particular year.

In Oklahoma, stream water is considered a public resource while groundwater belongs to the overlying private property owner. This unique difference makes groundwater permit holders subject to a separate set of rules, although both surface and groundwater users are required to submit annual usage reports.

**Oklahoma Driller's Log** 4th Quarter, 2009

Duane A. Smith, Executive Director  
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To ensure the integrity of water well construction, and thus prevent potential pollution of state groundwaters, the OWRB supervises the state licensing program of pump installers and drillers of water supply, geothermal, observation, and monitoring wells. The OWRB has published the *Oklahoma Driller's Log* quarterly since 2001 as a source of information for the state's licensed water well drillers and pump contractors. Please e-mail your comments and article ideas to [pubinfo@owrb.ok.gov](mailto:pubinfo@owrb.ok.gov). Visit the OWRB web site at [www.owrb.ok.gov](http://www.owrb.ok.gov) and click on "well drilling" for more information or to access the online well log filing program or the water well record search program.

## Water Well and System TLC

Just as you check your furnace or smoke detector batteries seasonally, NGWA recommends spring as a good time to have an annual water well checkup before the peak water use season begins.

Preventative maintenance usually is less costly than emergency maintenance and can prolong the life of your well and related equipment.

Have your water tested whenever there is a change in taste, odor, or appearance. You should periodically check the well cover or cap on top of the well casing to ensure it is securely attached and in good condition.

A check of your well by a qualified water well contractor may include a flow test to determine system output, water level before and during pumping (if possible), pump motor performance, pressure tank and pressure switch contact, and general water quality. It may also include a well equipment inspection to assure your well is sanitary and meets local code and a test of your water for coliform bacteria and nitrates, and anything else of local concern.

You should keep hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides, and motor oil far away from your well, and maintain at least 50 feet between your well and any kennels and livestock operations as well as proper separation between your well and buildings, waste systems, and chemical storage areas.

Keep your well records in a safe place.

**Remember: Groundwater Awareness Week is March 8-14, 2010**

## 2009 Annual Report for the Well Driller and Pump Installer Program

During 2009, the OWRB Well Driller and Pump Installer staff maintained licenses for 345 licensed Well Drilling and Pump Installer firms and 600 licensed operators. The OWRB licensed 36 new firms and 61 new operators during this period. The OWRB in association with the Oklahoma Ground Water Association also provided continuing education training for 322 licensed individuals.

The OWRB also received well reports for 2,754 new water wells, 3,034 new monitoring wells/geotechnical borings and 561 new heat exchange wells. Staff maintains a well log database that currently has over 120,000 well records accessible to the public. The OWRB's well driller online application, which allows drillers to renew and submit well reports online, has saved the state approximately 9000 pages of paper as reported on the Go Green Oklahoma website.

The OWRB also conducted well driller and pump installer enforcement activities during 2009. The Board took action against a licensed water well driller for multiple surface seal violations and non-submittal of well logs. Results of the action included an agreed settlement and consent order, a two month suspended license, a six month probationary period and a \$5,000.00 administrative fine.

A second legal action was taken against an unlicensed pump installer. Results of that action included an agreed settlement and consent order and a \$1,000.00 administrative fine for performing commercial pump installation without being licensed.

## The 2010 Oklahoma Ground Water Association Trade Show and Conference

**Don't miss the opportunity to obtain up to 8 hours of continuing education credit!!**

The OGWA invites you to attend the 8th Annual Conference and Trade Show to be held February 18 and 19, 2010 at Clarion Meridian Hotel & Convention Center, 737 S. Meridian, in Oklahoma City. On February 18, 2009, all attendees will have the opportunity to hear from a representative of the National Ground Water Association (NGWA).

Presentations from Franklin Electric will be of interest to Pump Installers while Drilling operators can gain knowledge by attending a presentation on rig safety and Oklahoma Corporation Commission's presentation

on inspection and compliance. Geothermal drillers will also have an opportunity to learn more about ground source grouting procedures and tax credits. OWRB Rules and Regulations will also be presented both days of the conference. Of special interest will be a presentation on the results of the Nebraska Grout Study. Participants may attend a number of excellent technical courses for continuing education credit as well.

Registration costs are as follows: Member with CEUs \$75.00, non-member with CEUs \$225.00, member without CEUs \$40.00, and non-member without CEUs \$120.00. Membership for a contractor is \$100.00. For further information contact Beth Vannoy, OGWA Executive Secretary at P.O. Box 58130, Oklahoma City, OK 73157 (888) 884-6492 or visit the OGWA website at [www.ogwa.biz](http://www.ogwa.biz). Registration includes admission to the exhibit hall, all educational sessions and lunch both days. Educational sessions may count towards the Kansas and Arkansas CEU requirements.