

**SEPTEMBER-  
OCTOBER 2001**

# OKLAHOMA Water News

*Bimonthly Newsletter of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board*

## In This Issue

**OWRB to Host 22nd Annual Governor's  
Water Conference**

**Judge Issues Injunction Against  
Johnston County Water Well Driller**

### **FLOOD CURRENT:**

**Training and Certification are  
Invaluable**

**State Receives National Floodplain  
Management Award**

**Floodplain Manager of the Year  
Is Your Floodplain Administrator  
Up to Speed?**

### **WATER RESOURCES UPDATE:**

**Reservoir Storage  
Drought Update**

**Financial Assistance Program Update**



*Duane A. Smith  
OWRB Executive Director*

## From the Director

I encourage all readers of the *Oklahoma Water News* to attend the Annual Governor's Water Conference on November 14. Each year, the Conference provides a unique forum for the discussion of pertinent issues related to water rights, water quality, and the many emerging political and technical developments in the water arena, both in Oklahoma and throughout the nation.

State and national water experts will address a variety of topics, including water marketing, water rights, and potential economic and environmental impacts of statewide water planning. State and Tribal representatives will also be on hand to discuss specifics of the ongoing water compact negotiations between the State and Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. If those discussions are completed, officials also hope to formally release the draft State/Tribal Water Compact, which will establish a water rights and quality administration system and facilitate a plan for economic development in south-east Oklahoma.

## OWRB to Host 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Water Conference

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Water Conference, sponsored by the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and 31 other water-related organizations, will be held on November 14, 2001, at the Myriad Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the Myriad.

OWRB Chairman Grady Grandstaff will contribute opening remarks at 8:30, followed by a brief address from Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating. The theme of the Conference is "Water—The Key to Oklahoma's Future."

Texas State Senator J.E. "Buster" Brown, the senior ranking Republican member of the Texas State Senate and Chairman of the Senate Natural Resources Commit-

tee, will deliver this year's luncheon address. Senator Brown has authored and/or sponsored 64 bills addressing the implementation and financing of statewide water plans and is the founder and chairman of the Texas Water Foundation, a non-profit organization designed to raise public awareness of water issues. In 2000, Senator Brown co-hosted the first symposium on water financing for the state of Texas. This symposium brought together international, national, and state-wide experts to examine financial requirements related to the planning and creation of reliable water/wastewater infrastructure and programs in Texas. Senator Brown also co-founded the Texas Council on Environmental Technology,



*Texas Senator J.E. "Buster" Brown*

which examines technological advances the state can utilize in finding solutions to current and future environmental challenges.

Another featured speaker is Roberta Savage, Executive Director of the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) in

**See Water Conference, Page 2**



*Roberta Savage, Executive Director of ASIWPCA*

Washington, D.C. In 1989, Ms. Savage created America's Clean Water Foundation, a nonprofit organization that serves as a forum for citizen outreach, youth education, and technical program exchange. Part of the Foundation's mission is to build public understanding and rekindle public interest in clean water while promoting personal stewardship of water resources. The National Environmental Dialogue on Pork Production, International Water-

shed Symposium, Global Assembly for Women and the Environment, and The World Water Summit are a few of the Foundation's notable successes.

Other guest speakers include Ted Coombes, President of the Southwest Power Resources Association; Dean Couch, General Counsel for the OWRB; Danny Ewbank, member of the Well Drillers Advisory Council; Robert Johnson, CEO of the National Rural Water Association; Gene Rainbolt, BancFirst Chairman of the Board; Senator Cal Hobson; and Representative Larry Adair.

Duane Smith, Executive Director of OWRB, will address upcoming water planning activities, including the change in focus from state- to locally-driven planning initiatives, as Oklahoma prepares for its 2005 update of the *Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan*. The conference will close with presentation of Oklahoma Water Pioneer awards, recognizing the lifetime achievements of outstanding Oklahomans in the planning, development, conservation, and protection of the state's water resources.

For more information, please call the OWRB at 405-530-8800. For advance registration, please complete the registration form below and mail it to the address listed on the form along with your \$40 check, money order, or purchase order.

***Sponsoring Organizations for the 22nd Annual Governor's Water Conference***

- American Water Resources Association
- American Water Works Association
- ArkansasAmerican Water Resources Association
- American Water Works Association
- Arkansas BasinDevelopment Association
- Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma
- Association of Oklahoma General Contractors
- Clean Lakes Association
- Environmental Federation of Oklahoma
- Garber-Wellington Association
- Ground Water Protection Council
- League of Women Voters
- Office of the Secretary of Environment
- Oklahoma Aquaculture Association
- Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts
- Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation—Waterways Branch
- Oklahoma Energy Resources Board
- Oklahoma Farm Bureau
- Oklahoma Farmers Union
- Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association
- Oklahoma Homebuilders Association
- Oklahoma Municipal Contractors Association
- Oklahoma Municipal League
- Oklahoma Rural Water Association
- Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Oklahoma Water and Pollution Control Association
- Oklahoma Waterways Advisory Board
- Oklahoma Wildlife Federation
- Port of Muskogee
- Soil and Water Conservation Society
- Southwestern Power Resources Association
- Tulsa Port of Catoosa

**Clip and Mail to:**  
 Governor's Water Conference  
 3800 N. Classen Boulevard  
 Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Please enclose **\$40** check, money order or purchase order payable to:  
**Oklahoma Water Resources Board**  
**No refunds** after November 7.

Call **405-530-8800** or e-mail:  
**mnbrueggen@owrb.state.ok.us** for more information.

**Governor's Water Conference Registration**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome  
OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD

## Judge Issues Injunction Against Johnston County Water Well Driller

Prompted by recent alleged violations, the District Court judge of Johnston County has granted the Oklahoma Water Resources Board a temporary injunction to prevent a local, unlicensed water well driller from unlawfully practicing his trade in the state.

The order against Max Jones, a driller from Mannsville whose license expired in 2000, and his firm, Jones Water Well Drilling, was issued October 5 by the Honorable Judge Robert M. Highsmith. The OWRB sought the injunction — which prevents Jones Drilling from drilling or plugging groundwater wells and test holes, observation wells, and heat exchange wells until such time as the OWRB issues a final administrative order — in response to numerous reports of unlawful and poorly-constructed wells drilled by Jones. The Johnston County District Attorney has also filed misdemeanor charges against Jones, which could result in substantial fines for the operator. An administrative hearing was held for Jones's firm on September 10; formal revocation of his license will be considered by the nine-member Board at its November 13 meeting.

According to Kent Wilkins, Coordinator of the state's Well Drillers Program, violations of minimum construction standards for wells drilled by Jones Drilling were identified by OWRB field inspectors at multiple sites in Johnston, Marshall, and Bryan Counties.

"The observed wells had no cement seal, which is the primary mechanism to prevent contamination of groundwater, an important source of water supply for numerous municipalities and rural water districts in Oklahoma," Wilkins pointed out. "Mr. Jones has also been responsible for numerous unplugged test holes and has drilled and completed at least one well in an underground saltwater formation, another violation of state well construction standards and a potential health hazard to the public."

The OWRB licenses water well drillers in Oklahoma, and in concert with the state's Water Well Advisory Council, sets minimum construction standards that must be followed in the completion of water wells.

"Shoddy or irresponsible well construction in Oklahoma will not be tolerated by the Water Board," emphasized Duane A. Smith, OWRB Executive Director, "and we will pursue all available means to alleviate such problems and prosecute individuals who purposely ignore state regulations intended to protect our vitally important groundwater supplies."

Citizens who have concerns about improper construction of their water wells or related questions are urged to contact the OWRB in Oklahoma City at (405) 530-8800 or the agency's McAlester Field Office at (918) 426-5435.

### *Did you know . . .*

*Nearly one half of the world's population lacks access to clean water for sanitation, drinking, and other human needs.*

*Twelve percent of the Earth's land surface is permanently covered by ice.*

*There is the same amount of water on Earth today as there was 3 billion years ago--326 million cubic miles covering 71% of the earth.*

*Evenly distributed, the Earth's annual rainfall could cover every square foot of land to a depth of about three feet.*

*Three quarters of the weight of a living tree is water.*

*You could survive about a month without food, but only 5-7 days without water.*

*An adult body is 65%-70% water.*

*Six million cubic miles of water locked in the ice caps could feed all the world's rivers for 1000 years.*

*The Earth's water cycle transfers 10.3 quadrillion gallons from the oceans to the land every year.*

Source: America's Clean Water Foundation

# FLOOD CURRENT



## Training and Certification are Invaluable

W. Kenneth Morris, CFM  
State Floodplain Manager, OWRB



Ken Morris

Oklahoma is proud of its 95 Certified Floodplain Managers, all members of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, who guide and encourage intelligent development along the state's rivers and streams. I can tell you from personal experience that these men and women really know their stuff and their job is a difficult one.

However, concerns remain about the administration of local floodplain management programs by undertrained and unqualified staff in some Oklahoma communities. In this regard, the OWRB provided valuable training of local officials during six separate months last year. Of the 363 communities in Oklahoma that administer flood ordinances, only approximately

150 floodplain administrators attended OWRB-sponsored training opportunities. As a result, less than one-half of officials are likely unaware of recent changes in state and federal regulations and the latest floodplain management procedures. In addition, individuals who missed our training sessions deprived themselves of any opportunity to become certified floodplain managers and the many benefits that designation provides.

The CFM program, a major aspect of community NFIP compliance, enhances the status of professional floodplain managers, raises the awareness of the role of the floodplain manager to citizens and local officials, increases opportunities for training and continuing education, facilitates flood loss reduction, decreases loss of life from flood, and results in the preservation of the many natural and cultural benefits provided by Oklahoma's scenic and valuable floodplain areas.

I urge you to call me at 405-530-880 if you would like more information about the CFM program, or go to <http://www.okflood.org>, the web site of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association.

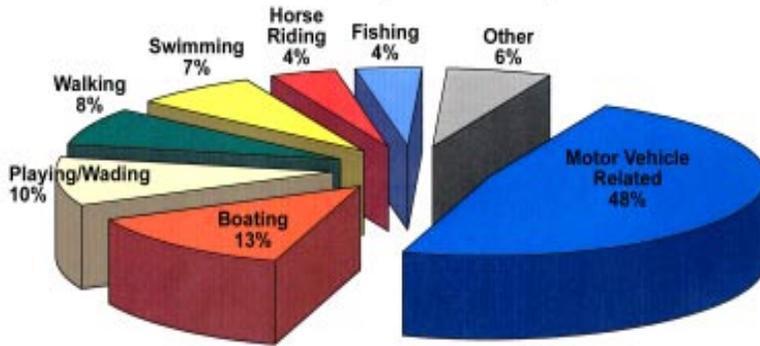
## State Receives National Floodplain Management Award

On June 7, 2001, Oklahoma was presented with the Tom Lee State Award of Excellence for the quality of its floodplain management program. The award was presented by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) at the organization's 25th annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The success of Oklahoma's floodplain management program lies in the quality and extent of the many partnerships developed between state and federal agencies, organizations, businesses, elected representatives, and private citizens. Among recognized programs and publications were the Oklahoma Water Resources Board's annual Spring Flood Campaign, the biannual *Flood Current* newsletter, the state's floodplain permitting program on state-owned and -operated property, the 1999 Guidebook for Local Floodplain Ordinance Administrators, and various publications and videos on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and hazard mitigation. The award also recognized many of the partnerships and team-building approaches used by the OWRB in its general floodplain management program. Partners in this effort include the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, University of Oklahoma, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Association of County Commissioners, Oklahoma Municipal League, State Legislature, Oklahoma Emergency Managers Association, and Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association (OFMA).

The organization also awarded OFMA the first John Ivey Award for Superior Certification Program for establishing the first nationally accredited certified floodplain manager program in the U.S. Although Oklahoma has only two percent of NFIP member communities in the nation, state and local floodplain management activities are directed by 12 percent of all certified, professional floodplain managers in the U.S.

### Flood-Related Injuries by Activity Oklahoma (1988-2000)



The risk of flooding and flash floods is high for Oklahomans. Severe storms occurring sporadically during the year, especially in the spring months, along with Oklahoma's clay soils, account for this risk. A total of 75 flood-related or fatal submersion injuries occurred in Oklahoma from 1988-2000; 65 of these were fatal. Motor vehicle flood-related submersions accounted for 36 of the injuries.

### Floodplain Manager of the Year

Each year, OFMA selects an individual who has shown significant excellence in the field of floodplain management. This individual has demonstrated dedication through the administration of his or her community's floodplain management program in pursuing the goals of flood loss reduction and in the prevention of loss of life. OFMA is pleased to announce the 2001 recipient of the Floodplain Manager of the Year Award, **Nancy Wade** of Bartlesville.



**Training is available for floodplain administrators throughout the year.**

**For more information, please contact Ken Morris or Rhonda Kouba at (405) 530-8800.**

## Is Your Floodplain Administrator Up to Speed?

In Oklahoma, 363 communities currently participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Each has adopted a flood hazard prevention ordinance containing a set of regulations to mitigate flood losses and protect the natural floodplain environment.

A floodplain administrator—a mayor, city manager, or appointed individual—is responsible for ensuring that there are no floodplain violations in the community that could lead to probation or suspension from the NFIP. However, frequent turnover in this position often leaves communities with floodplain administrators who have insufficient training, and quite often, they are simply unaware of measures to enforce local ordinances. Here are the most common NFIP violations of Oklahoma communities:

- Failure to Require Permits for Floodplain Development

*A permit is required for development that occurs in a special flood hazard area. Development is defined as any manmade change to improved or unimproved real estate, including buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations.*

- Failure to Submit Corporate Limit Changes to FEMA

*The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) must be notified any time a participating community changes its corporate limits.*

- Failure to Require Elevation of Structures Built in special flood hazard areas to the Base Flood Elevation

*Any residential structure built in a special flood hazard area must be elevated at least to the base flood elevation. (Non-residential structures can be elevated or flood-proofed.)*

- Failure to Require "No Rise" Certificates for Structures Located in a Regulatory Floodway

*Any structure built or placed in a regulatory floodway is required to have a certificate of "no rise" completed by a certified engineer.*

- Failure to Notify the OWRB of a New Floodplain Manager

*The OWRB must be notified by letter when a new floodplain administrator is appointed.*

## ***OWRB Staff Say “We Care”***

Nineteen Water Board employees joined together to actively mark United Way’s Day of Caring on September 7. The group volunteered to paint the inside of Mid-Del Youth and Family Center in Del City. Shelly Bacon and Laura Oak, of the Board’s Financial Assistance Division, coordinated the project. This is the fifth year the OWRB has participated in the event, which promotes long-term volunteerism.



*Pictured above are Nathan Kunhert, Angela Thompson, Tony Mensah, Laura Oak, Theda Adkisson, Katera Whitaker, Stephenie Snode, Jalisha Petties, Joyce Boyd, Tiger Feng, Anita Ray, Frank Young, Barry Fogerty, Matt Cogburn, Mike Binck, Jerry Barnett, and Jim Schuelein.*



*Matt Cogburn*



*Tony Mensah*



*Laura Oak*



*Angela Thompson*

# Water Resources Update

## Reservoir Storage

Reservoir storage levels continue to slowly rebound from the summer dry period, although some lakes remain low or very low. As of October 22, the combined normal conservation pools of 31 selected major federal reservoirs across Oklahoma (see below) are approximately 93.5 percent full, a 1.6 percent increase from that recorded on September 25, according to information from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Tulsa District). Sixteen reservoirs have experienced lake level decreases since that time, including all three in the southwest. Twenty reservoirs are currently operating at less than full capacity (compared to 23 four weeks ago); six reservoirs (**Lugert-Altus, only 36 percent; Hulah, 57.2 percent; Canton, 71.8 percent; Birch, 72.8 percent; Tom Steed, 75.9 percent; and Copan, 79.3 percent**) are below 80 percent capacity.

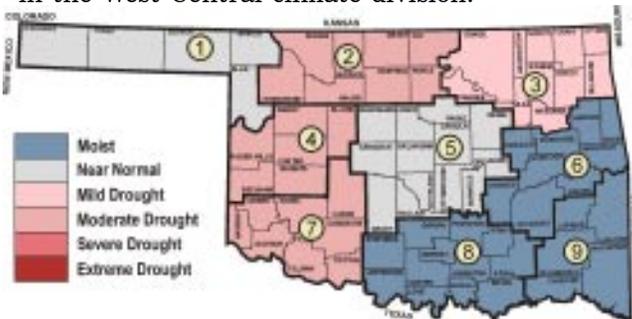
### Storage in Selected Oklahoma Lakes & Reservoirs

As of October 22, 2001

Climate Division	Conservation Storage (acre-feet)	Present Storage (acre-feet)	Percent of Storage	
			Conservation	Flood
NORTH CENTRAL	442,446	437,100	98.8	0.09
NORTHEAST	3,484,317	3,261,895	93.6	0.61
WEST CENTRAL	276,790	229,898	83.1	0.00
CENTRAL	154,225	153,259	99.4	0.16
EAST CENTRAL	2,968,681	2,725,926	91.8	0.00
SOUTHWEST	301,810	189,230	62.7	0.00
SOUTH CENTRAL	3,029,708	2,978,315	98.3	0.30
SOUTHEAST	1,481,575	1,370,305	92.5	1.56
<b>STATE TOTALS</b>	<b>12,139,552</b>	<b>11,345,928</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>0.49</b>

## Drought Indices

According to the latest Palmer Drought Severity Index (October 20 below), drought conditions linger in several areas of the state and four regions remain in drought. The West Central, Southwest, and North Central climate divisions are in the “moderate drought” category while the Northeast region is in “mild drought.” Four of Oklahoma’s nine climate divisions have undergone PDSI moisture decreases since September 22. The greatest decrease occurred in the West Central climate division.



The latest monthly Standardized Precipitation Index (through September, below) indicates that North Central and Northeast Oklahoma are experiencing long-term dryness. Among the selected time periods (3-, 6-, 9- and 12-month SPIs), those climate divisions report **moderately dry to very dry conditions** throughout the last six to nine months. Among other periods, the 15-month SPI also reports moderately dry conditions in the Northeast, Oklahoma’s most consistently dry region.

### Palmer Drought Severity Index

Climate Division (#)	Current Status 10/20/2001	Value		Change In Value
		10/20	9/22	
NORTHWEST (1)	NEAR NORMAL	0.02	0.76	-0.74
NORTH CENTRAL (2)	MODERATE DROUGHT	-2.14	-1.70	-0.44
NORTHEAST (3)	MILD DROUGHT	-1.96	-2.66	0.70
WEST CENTRAL (4)	MODERATE DROUGHT	-2.25	-1.39	-0.86
CENTRAL (5)	INCIPIENT MOIST SPELL	0.70	-0.32	1.02
EAST CENTRAL (6)	MOIST SPELL	1.13	0.05	1.08
SOUTHWEST (7)	MODERATE DROUGHT	-2.17	-1.42	-0.75
SOUTH CENTRAL (8)	UNUSUAL MOIST SPELL	2.05	1.62	0.43
SOUTHEAST (9)	MOIST SPELL	1.35	0.40	0.95

### Standardized Precipitation Index

Through September 2001

Climate Division (#)	Standardized Precipitation Index			
	3-Month	6-Month	9-Month	12-Month
NORTHWEST (1)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	MODERATELY WET
NORTH CENTRAL (2)	MODERATELY DRY	MODERATELY DRY	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL
NORTHEAST (3)	VERY DRY	VERY DRY	MODERATELY DRY	NEAR NORMAL
WEST CENTRAL (4)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	MODERATELY WET
CENTRAL (5)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	MODERATELY WET
EAST CENTRAL (6)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL
SOUTHWEST (7)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	MODERATELY WET
SOUTH CENTRAL (8)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	VERY WET
SOUTHEAST (9)	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	NEAR NORMAL	MODERATELY WET

# Financial Assistance Program Update

*Approved at September 11 and October 9, 2001 Board Meetings*

Financial Assistance Program Update		
<b>FAP Loans</b>		
09/11/01	1	Durant City Utilities Authority, Bryan County \$1,585,000.00
10/09/01	1	Arkoma Municipal Authority, LeFlore County \$565,000.00
<b>CWSRF Loans</b>		
09/11/01	1	Cushing Municipal Authority, Payne County \$6,500,000.00
	2	Durant City Utilities Authority, Bryan County \$14,560,000.00
	3	El Reno Municipal Authority, Canadian County \$1,936,409.69
10/09/01	1	Miami Special Utility Authority, Ottawa County \$9,260,000.00
	2	Rural Water District #2, Comanche County \$1,045,000.00
<b>DWSRF Loans</b>		
09/11/01	1	Durant City Utilities Authority, Bryan County \$3,717,000.00
<b>Hardship Grants</b>		
None		
<b>Emergency Grants</b>		
09/11/01	1	Harrah, City of, Oklahoma County \$14,373.50
10/09/01	1	Brooksville Public Works Authority, Pottawatomie County \$57,800.00
	2	Nowata Municipal Authority, Nowata County \$79,000.00
	3	Madill, City of, Marshall County \$100,000.00
	4	Weleetka Public Works Authority, Okfuskee County \$37,400.00
<b>Reap Grants</b>		
None		
<b>Totals as of 10/09/2001</b>		
<b>FAP Loans</b>		
#Approved		243
Amount		\$372,000,000.00
<b>CWSRF</b>		
#Approved		119
Amount		\$428,272,788.35
<b>DWSRF</b>		
#Approved		18
Amount		\$51,823,254.90
<b>Hardship Grants</b>		
#Approved		2
Amount		\$1,038,752.30
<b>Emergency Grants</b>		
#Approved		479
Amount		\$28,056,274.91
<b>REAP Grants</b>		
#Approved		292
Amount		\$24,229,034.83

# OKLAHOMA Water News

*Bimonthly Newsletter of the*

## **Oklahoma Water Resources Board**

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Oklahoma City, OK 73118

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