

April
May
June
2004

Kent Wilkins, OWRB
Drillers Program Coordinator



Published Quarterly
by the
**Oklahoma Water
Resources Board**
3800 N. Classen Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

405-530-8800
FAX 405-530-8900

www.owrb.state.ok.us

- Coordinator's Corner
- Oklahoma Relies on Groundwater; Let's Protect It
- OGWA Scholarship Program Announced
- Renewal Period for 2004 Ends

Coordinator's Corner

Kent Wilkins, OWRB

Drillers Program Coordinator

Summertime in Oklahoma means increased demand for good quality water supplies, and that is always good news for the well drilling and pump installation business. Municipalities and irrigators, as well as private users, usually reach their peak usage during the season's typically hot and dry weather. As a result, the need for new wells and pump repair is at its highest this time of year. While we have been fortunate to receive an abundance of precipitation within the last couple of months, some of Oklahoma's groundwater basins will inevitably be stressed at some point during the summer.

The renewal period for even-numbered firms ended June 30. Theda Adkisson has single-handedly processed approximately 136 firms and 227 operators so far this renewal period. I want to thank her for her hard work and diligence.

New rules and regulations for Chapter 35 will go into effect this August. Copies of the rules have been sent with renewal letters and will be sent out to the remaining firms at a later date. If you do not receive a copy by the end of August or if you have any questions, please contact us.

On a sad note, Gary Glover, my predecessor as coordinator of the well drillers and pump installer program, passed away June 30. Gary was well-known by all in the water well industry and will be missed. It seems that good water and good health are similar in that we usually don't appreciate either of them until they are gone. Good luck and good health to all!

Oklahoma Relies on Groundwater; Let's Protect It

Groundwater plays an important role in Oklahoma's natural environment, our economy, and our very lives. It represents a huge natural storage bank for fresh water, providing essential "base flow" in rivers and streams during dry weather. Irrigation is the number one use of groundwater in Oklahoma followed by public water supply and livestock watering. Municipal, commercial and industrial water users are allocated 3.2 million-acre feet per year for use from groundwater sources. Groundwater is also a major source of drinking water for private residents.

For private well users, now is a good time to do a three-part well check-up: 1) get your well water tested, 2) check the physical condition of your well, and 3) review activities in the well's vicinity that may affect its quality. Although groundwater quality in Oklahoma is generally good, many private wells have



Kent Wilkins, Drillers Program Coordinator, shows a well owner how to measure depth to water.

Oklahoma Groundwater . . . continued

natural contaminants, such as arsenic and radon, at levels associated with elevated health risks. A much smaller percentage of wells have contaminants resulting from human activity, such as the gasoline additive MtBE.

Well check-ups are important because improper well construction and maintenance are the main causes of bacterial contamination of private wells. Checking the physical condition of a well requires some basic knowledge about proper well construction. Well covers should be secure and provide a good seal. Well casings should be free of cracks. The ground around the well should be sloped to drain away from the well. For a complete well check-up involving a check of the pump and pressure tank, contact a licensed well contractor.

Preventing groundwater contamination should be a concern for users of both private wells and public water supply wells. To help keep a well free from human-caused contaminants, the OWRB recommends keeping hazardous chemicals, such as paint, fertilizer, pesticides, and motor oil, away from the well, and maintaining a "clean zone" of at least 50 feet (up to 300 feet for public wells).

State and federal programs go a long way in protecting groundwater from threats such as leaking underground storage tanks, improperly designed or inappropriately sited septic systems, and unsafe disposal of hazardous waste. Local communities have a key role in regulating land uses over sensitive groundwater resources, ensuring the proper handling of hazardous materials, and educating business owners and the public about groundwater protection. But when it comes to private wells, the homeowner needs to take primary responsibility. Let's all work together to make sure Oklahoma has plenty of clean groundwater for present and future generations.

For more information about private well construction, well checkups, groundwater education, and local groundwater protection, the OWRB can be reached at (405) 530-8800 or www.owrb.state.ok.us.

OGWA Scholarship Program Announced

Robert Keyes, President of the Oklahoma Ground Water Association (OGWA), announced last month the availability of the OGWA Scholarship Program. The deadline for submitting applications this year for a college scholarship is July 31, 2004.

Eligibility applies to all biological and adopted children or stepchildren of OGWA members, living or deceased, who are enrolled as incoming freshmen or returning undergraduate or postgraduate students. Scholarship money can be used for payment of tuition and fees, purchasing books, or related expenses.

For more information, please contact Mr. Keyes at (405) 360-1434 or check out the OGWA website at www.ogwa.biz.

Renewal Period for 2004 Ends

Drilling pump/contractor's license renewal for the year 2004 ended June 30, 2004. Any licensee or operator who allows his or her license or certification to lapse will be given a grace period until July 31, 2004, to renew without an examination, provided a late fee of \$150.00 is submitted. After the grace period, all applications for license renewal will be treated as new applications.

www.owrb.state.ok.us

Oklahoma City, OK 73118
3800 N. Classen Blvd.

OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD

Oklahoma Driller's Log

