

## Drainfield to Surface Water Setback Distance Subcommittee

Teleconference Meeting Minutes

Friday, 12/10/2010, 10:00 am

Teleconference  
Date: 2010-12-10  
Start: 10:00 am

### **ATTENDEES:**

Athol: George Miles, PE  
Boise: AJ Maupin, PE; Joe Canning, PE  
Coeur d'Alene: Allen Worst  
Hayden: Dick Martindale  
Idaho Falls: Nathan Taylor  
Kimberley: Dr. Jim Ippolito, Ph.D. USDA  
Rapid City, SD: Bill Holder, PE

**Support Staff:** Lindsey Stanton, DEQ clerical

Meeting called to order: 10:00 a.m.

### **Past Meeting minutes:**

Previous meeting minutes were not discussed.

### **Flowchart:**

The subcommittee reviewed the drainfield setback flowchart that AJ developed and made adjustments to the flowchart as needed.

Knowing that there will be some leakage as a drainfield ages, how will that affect horizontal setback distance? The shallowness of the groundwater and the soil volume are both factors to consider.

**Action Item:** AJ will modify the flowchart based on the subcommittee's discussion.

### **Operating Permits:**

There is a need to quantify how well a drainfield is working.

**Action Item:** Subcommittee members will research sampling protocol.

In determining theoretical drainfield life, areas of concern include those lands which were formally agricultural or have active phosphorus mining. Jim will tweak the Calculate Maximum Drainfield Life calculation to account for phosphorus levels in the soil.

The subcommittee discussed operating permits. If monitoring and reporting is required, should an operating permit be required? Also, what will be acceptable enforcement actions? Currently, installation permits that have no expiration date are issued. The only way to enforce this permit is if there is significant groundwater degradation, which the state does not have the resources to monitor. If the installation permit had an expiration date it would create an avenue for enforcement, but what would be an acceptable means of enforcing a permit on a homeowner? DEQ would need to go through negotiated rulemaking to generate draft rules incorporating an operating permit and then sell the legislature on the concept. This is not likely to happen successfully if it comes from DEQ. Ongoing monitoring and reporting could be addressed in the Technical Guidance Manual (TGM).

It is estimated that the approximate life of a drainfield is 30 years. If there were two alternating drainfields, theoretically the lifespan would be 60 years. The drainfields could be used alternately each year and the switch could be automated by a control panel. However, this method is not quantifiable. The homeowner needs to be considered. Concurrent installation would cost more up front but less in the long run. Building both drainfields at the same time would allow for better property planning.

How would the mortgage industry deal with operating permits?

**Action Item:** AJ will research how other states deal with operating permits.

## **Drainfield to Surface Water Setback Distance Subcommittee**

Teleconference Meeting Minutes

Friday, 12/10/2010, 10:00 am

### **Monitoring and Reporting:**

Subcommittee members expressed differing opinions regarding the importance of monitoring and reporting. How would monitoring be done with unsaturated soils? A monitoring well would increase costs to homeowners. Monitoring could be done every five years, perhaps by taking core soil samples at various sites. The soil could be tested for the same things that were tested initially. There are complexities in this process, but nothing that couldn't be overcome. A practical protocol would need to be researched.

**Action Item:** AJ will complete a draft introduction to the white paper.

### **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 11 January 2010, from 10:00 am MDT (9:00 am PDT) to 12:00 pm MDT (11:00 am PDT).

**ADJOURN:** Meeting Adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

### **Next Meeting Topics:**

1. Review and discuss the modified flowchart.
2. Discuss subcommittee members' findings regarding sampling protocols.
3. Discuss AJ's findings regarding how other states deal with operating permits.
4. Review the introduction to AJ's white paper.