



State of New Jersey

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New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection NJ State Well Drillers and Pump Installers Examining and Advisory Board Conference Call Minutes for February 15, 2018

Approved by the Board on March 8, 2018

Board Members Present at NJDEP Headquarters Building: Richard Dalton, Steve Domber

Board Members Participating Via Telephone: Art Becker (Chairman), Gary Poppe (Vice Chairman), Jeff Hoffman, Gordon Craig and Joe Pepe,

Board Members Absent: Carol Graff, Joe Yost

NJDEP Water Supply (Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting) Staff Present: Terry Pilawski, Pat Bono and Steve Reya

1. **Call to Order** –A. Becker called the meeting to order at 10:02 am with a quorum present via telephone.
2. **Update on Development of NJ Regulatory Exams**–

Following the exam development of all NJ regulatory exam modules by Board members, Bureau staff worked on the formatting of all exams and provided them to the exam the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) on the previously agreed upon deadline. S. Reya noted that Mark Ortega, Pat Bono and he worked to finalize the wording on all question and answer choices. Additionally, multiple exam variants for each license category were developed to allow the vendor to administer exams in which different pool questions appear on each exam. This was done by rotating in questions from a “bank” of available questions while other questions were marked as mandatory, and as such will appear on each exam of the appropriately coded license type.

On February 12, 2018 the Department sent NGWA eight (8) licensing exams, of which there were between two (2) and four (4) versions of each exam. The following was provided to NGWA:

- Master well driller – four (4) versions
- Journeyman – three (3) versions
- Journeyman (Class B) – four (4) versions
- Environmental Resource & Geotechnical driller – three (3) versions
- Elevator borehole driller – two (2) versions
- Dewatering well driller – two (2) versions,
- Vertical closed loop geothermal driller – two (2) versions
- Pump Installer – three (3) versions

The anticipated date for when the new exams will be offered to license candidates is late-April/early May of 2018.

P. Bono noted that the agreement containing the project scope of work and associated financial aspects of the agreement is nearly finalized. She expects that it will be completed and signed by representatives for both parties in the next few weeks.

3. Examination and Continuing Education Program Manager-

A motion that the National Ground Water Association (NGWA) be selected by the Department as the Examination and Continuing Education Program Manager was made by S. Domber, seconded by R. Dalton and approved unanimously. As noted previously, the initial phase (examination) is currently being developed for implementation within the next few months.

4. Potential License Applicant Issue-

Board members questioned a license applicant requirement prescribed by section 1.8 of the recently amended well rules, N.J.A.C. 7:9D, which states that that the certification exams obtained for NJ licensure must be passed within two (2) years of the application date. A potential issue with this limitation was noted. The initial intent in drafting the rules was that the chosen examination and CEP manager would be the National Ground Water Association (NGWA), as that is the nationally recognized group that has administered technical exams for the well drilling and pump installation for many years. As has been discussed over several years at Board meetings, the existing NGWA technical exams are currently utilized by a number of other states' licensing programs and is the only nationally recognized program in the industry. The Department/Board's intent was like that of other states in that the existing technical exams would be utilized for the technical topics of which license applicants must demonstrate competency. For NJ license applicants, however, those exams would also be supplemented with NJ regulatory exams for each license type, which would all be developed by the Board. This would ensure knowledge of regulatory requirements specific to NJ.

Board members noted that individuals who hold a valid NGWA well driller (CWD) or pump installer (PI) certification that is current with NGWA would have had to obtain continuing education credits every year since passing the certification exam(s). Board members questioned whether such individuals would essentially be exempt from the two (2) year window because they have current/valid certifications. The argument was made that these individuals should be in a different class from those who may have passed an exam many years ago and failed to remain current with the industry by demonstrating the completion of continuing education credits

through NGWA's voluntary certification program. If this is not the case, individuals with current certifications would potentially have to re-take technical exams that they already passed and kept up with associated continuing education requirements.

It was requested that this item be placed on the March 8 Board meeting agenda for further discussion and to seek legal input from the Board's legal counsel.

5. Adjournment- The call was adjourned at 10:34 am.