



KENTUCKY WATER WELL DRILLER'S QUARTERLY

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Notes from Water Well Drillers' Certification Program Coordinator

Scotty Robertson

We had a busy year here in the Groundwater Section, particularly in the Water Well Drillers Certification and Technical Assistance programs. We had 158 drillers renew their certification for Water Well and Monitoring Well drilling. Currently, we have thirty-two (32) drillers certified to install water wells in Kentucky, sixty-six (66) drillers certified to install monitoring wells, and sixty (60) drillers that are certified to install both. We will be updating the driller's directory and posting it to the Division of Water's water well driller certification website. If you failed to renew, your name and company's contact information will not be in the directory. Please let us know if you are omitted or find errors in the directory.

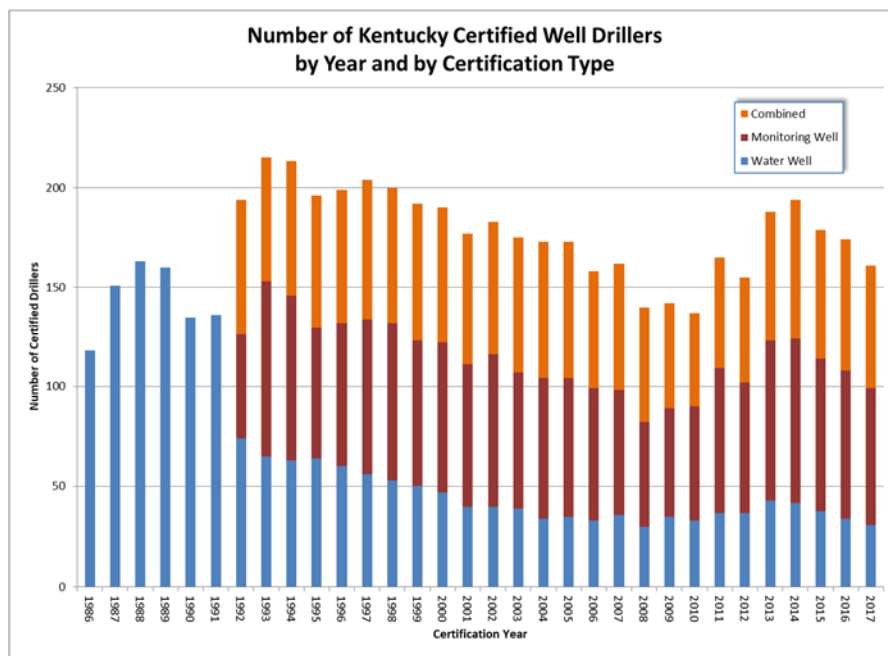


Figure 1 – Number of Certified Driller since Regulation were Promulgated

We are down about twenty (20) renewals from last year. Several drillers retired, a few passed away and some lost their jobs. We had ten new drillers qualify for certification this year to make up for some of the losses. The annual driller certification period ended August 31, 2017.

We managed to conduct several well audits this year along with numerous well inspections. We responded to several complaints, many about groundwater quality and well care. A few were related to methane gas buildups in the water wells.

We inspected multiple wells that were drilled and never tagged and/or a well construction record was never submitted to the cabinet. Some were pre-law water wells (installed before 1985) and the others post-law wells (drilled after 1985). See figures 2 through 6.



Figure 2 – Groundwater Section Personnel Performing Monitoring Well Audit



Figure 3 – Well Contamination Complaint and Inspection



Figure 4 - Methane Gas Complaint, Vented Well Head



Figure 5 – Pre-Law Water Well Inspection



Figure 6 – Post Law Water Well Inspected and Tagged Driller Unknown

Some of the complaints involved drillers and property owners that violated regulations such as set back distances, a gravesite being placed too close to a domestic well or a domestic water well being placed to close septic system. These were some of the issues addressed this year. Several other well owners reported problems with drillers or well construction. Most were easily rectified. See figures 7 through 9.



Figure 7 – NOV for Improper Pad Installations



Figure 8 – Set Back Distance Violation Grave Site to Close to Existing Water Well



Figure 9 – Well Audit Water well installation

The GW section provided technical assistance to many of you, concerning regulatory issues, variance requests, well construction and well abandonment. The GW section fielded hundreds of inquiries concerning groundwater issues and well installation requirements from the public and continued to sample wells and springs in the DOW's Groundwater monitoring program, see figure 10.



Figure 10 – Groundwater Monitoring Network Sampling Program

A large number of inquiries were received from individuals wanting to install a new well, rehabilitate an existing well, or plug an old hand dug well. They were in search of contact information for a certified driller near them to do the work.

The section fielded hundreds of inquiries concerning groundwater issues and well installation requirements from the public and drillers across the county. Many out of state drillers inquired about the possibility of becoming certified in Kentucky. Unfortunately, for the out of state driller's Kentucky does not have reciprocity with any other states. They must become certified by meeting Kentucky's requirements, which we are told are some of the toughest in the nation to meet.

In lean times, many oil well drillers attempt to become certified as water well drillers, some make it and some don't. Either way, please do not drill a water well in Kentucky without a current water well driller's certification.

Groundwater Section Changes

David Jackson

In August of this year **Kurtis Spears** joined the **Groundwater section** in the Watershed Management Branch. He is a graduate of WKU with a Bachelor's of Science in Geology. He enjoys basketball, fishing, hiking, camping, and rock hounding/hunting. He also enjoys poetry (writing and reading), classic novels, sci-fi and comic books.



Figure - 11 Kurtis Spears

Water Well Driller Certification Program Board Meetings

Groundwater Staff

The last meeting of the Water Well Driller Certification Board was held January 12th, 2018 at the Division of Water offices here in Frankfort, Kentucky. The Water Well Drillers Certification Board held an inquiry into Notices of Violation issued to two drillers that had submitted well abandonment records containing fraudulent information and documentation to the cabinet. The water well drillers certification board made recommendations to the cabinet that the drillers be disciplined for their actions. They may result in eventual suspension or revocation of the water well drillers certification, fines and other penalties.

The next meeting of the Water well Drillers certification program's board has not yet been scheduled for the second quarter of 2018 but it too will be held at Division of Waters Offices in Frankfort, Kentucky. On the agenda will be old and new business. If there is something specific you would like to see addressed by the board please let us know. All board meetings are open to the public and all drillers are encouraged to attend. If you would like to attend please contact Scotty Robertson or Tekoyia Brown to make arrangements.

Well Records

Groundwater Staff

Even with staffing shortages for the past year groundwater section has processed thousands of well records since last year. You may be contacted by one of our staff, processing a well record you have submitted.

They may initially contact you by phone or email. The reviewer is usually trying to fill in information that was incomplete or missing from the well record, or trying to determine the actual location of the well. Each of the forty-five to fifty items on a well record or a plugging record is checked for compliance against the appropriate regulations before the KDOW can officially send the well record to the Kentucky Geological Survey for storage and presentation in their database. A service many of you use quite often.

Every applicable item on a well record is required to be completed if possible. It is important that you, the driller, endeavor to properly locate and complete these records so that you stay in compliance with the regulations and out of trouble with the KDOW's enforcement branch.

Remember, well records are legal documents ;you can be penalized and/or fined for supplying fraudulent information on these records. That is why it is important for you to be on site and observe all work done during installation, modification, and abandonment of a water or monitoring well. The certified driller signing the well record is liable for the proper installation, modification and/or abandonment of the well in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Several updates are expected to the Groundwater Sections webpages in the near future. You can expect new forms for well construction, modification, and abandonment. New or updated bacteria reports, variance request forms, new example diagrams, and new applications for certification and renewal. It is hoped that this year the DOW will have the water well modification and plugging record e-form up and running to go along with the water well construction record e-form. We also hope to add links to other helpful sites and information.

Certified Water Well and Monitoring Well Driller Coverage

Groundwater Staff

There are several counties within the Commonwealth of Kentucky where there's no longer any one particular certified water well driller providing coverage in those regions. Many times groundwater section personnel must suggest that your potential clients contact water well drillers certified in Kentucky whose home office is out of state or several counties over from your base of operation locations.

There are vast areas along the Ohio River, where there is an absentee of drillers willing to drill domestic water wells without significant arm twisting. Mostly due to distance to these areas from their home bases.

There are counties surrounding the Knobs on the Mississippian Plateau, around the Eastern Kentucky Coal Fields and around the Western Kentucky Coal Fields where certified driller home bases are not present.

This office received several calls this past year, from residents of Jefferson County in particular, seeking certified drillers to install, repair, or abandon domestic water wells. They contacted the Division of Water and reported that they had called every driller in the phone book,

only to be told, that those firms only drill agricultural, industrial or irrigation wells. Many well owners called this office during the past year requesting contact information of drillers that do repair and rehabilitation work or for well installation or disinfection.

We also had many calls from people performing internet searches for certified driller information and requirements. Many could not locate our driller's directory icon on the KDOW's website. We are working to rectify that problem.

Annual KYGWA Tradeshow and Workshop

Groundwater Staff

The annual Kentucky Groundwater Association (KYGWA) tradeshow and Workshop was a success again this past March 2nd and 3rd in 2017. The KYGWA now has a new website. Look for future updates for the annual tradeshow and workshops at <http://kygwa.org/>. An application for membership and attending the tradeshow are located on their website along with a letter updating the organizations progress. The KYGWA expects this year's tradeshow will be largest on record with a larger than normal turnout. The DOW will be there a usual to document attendance for the training available and to discuss any issues or needs you may be having.



Figure - 12 2107 KYGWA Tradeshow and Workshop

Quick Links

- Drillers Directory: <http://water.ky.gov/groundwater/Documents/GWDrillersDirectory.pdf>
- Forms and Application: <http://water.ky.gov/groundwater/Pages/FormsApplications.aspx>
- Training Resources: <http://water.ky.gov/groundwater/Documents/training%20resources.pdf>

Division of Water-Well Drillers Program

<http://water.ky.gov/groundwater/Pages/WellDrillersProgram.aspx>

<http://water.ky.gov/>

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