



NEBRASKA WELLHEAD PROTECTION NETWORK

Wednesday September 26, 2018

**Auburn Water Treatment Plant
603 9th Street
Auburn NE**

Summary

Present:

Ryan Chapman - Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ), Sam Radford – NDEQ, Dave Miesbach – NDEQ, Carla McCullough – NDEQ, Gregory Brekel – Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Shelley Rekte – DHHS, Laura Johnson – NDEQ, Sara Brock – Groundwater Foundation, Chuck Wingert – Nemaha NRD, Alan Britton – City of Syracuse, Jeff Vogt – City of Syracuse, Russel Iwan – Metropolitan Utilities District (MUD), Heather Duncan – US EPA Region 7, Jonathan Mohr – JEO Consulting, Ken Swanson – City of Auburn, Dave Hunter – City of Auburn, Brent Peterson – HDR Engineering, Chuck Starbuck – City of York, Rob Schmidt – City of York, Alan Slater – City of Auburn, Bob Wintz – City of Auburn, Jay Theye – City of Auburn, Kiefer Coatney – City of Auburn

Round Robin Notes:

The Groundwater Foundation – Sara Brock talked about the progress on the Recharging Groundwater Education Project, which has completed eight educator training workshops in order to integrate groundwater education tools into classrooms in a way that is aligned with the new state science standards. Sara also announced that the next Wellhead Protection Network would feature a training on the Groundwater Evaluation Tool from Olsson Associates and would take place in late November.

York – Rob Schmidt and Chuck Starbuck shared their progress on creating a Drinking Water Protection Area as well as replacing a 100 year old water main. They also talked about their success with the GROW program, a program that encourages rotational cover crop production in wellfields.

MUD – Russ Iwan announced that Douglas County had approved a comprehensive groundwater protection plan. MUD relies on Sarpy and Saunders Counties to enforce zoning restrictions as the MUD has no regulatory authority.

Auburn – Dave Hunter shared that Nemaha County has zoning authority and assists the Board of Public Works (PBW) in enforcing regulations for Auburn’s Wellhead Protection and Drinking Water Management Plans. They are incorporating the risk communication training they learned from the workshops provided by NDEQ and JEO Consulting into the informational meetings and conversations they are having with the community. Ken Swanson shared that the education and outreach efforts within the community are primarily about responding to questions about how the water system works and how farming and urban practices affect the water quality.

Alan Slater announced that they had performed 60 in-house well closures, 12 of which as a part of a grant from NDEQ.

Nemaha NRD – Chuck Wingert shared that the NRD was seeking funding for a comprehensive Drinking Water Protection and Management Plan and that they had installed static water level data monitors in the public water system.

JEO – Jonathon Mohr added onto Chuck Wingert’s statement, sharing that they would be looking at tributaries to the Nemaha River to be included in the Drinking Water Protection and Management Plan. Additional funding from FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was being looked for the area.

In other regions, Tecumseh was starting an aquifer assessment as a precursor to a Drinking Water Management Plan or WHP and Broken Bow was getting started on wellhead protection zoning. JEO was providing assistance to the Lower Elkhorn NRD in developing a detailed flow model and to Ashland in siting a new wellfield.

NDEQ/DHHS– Dave Miesbach stated briefly that NDEQ now processes all CEUs for well drillers and water operators in-house. Ryan Chapman announced that, after the retirement of Howard Isaacs, Sue Dempsey is now the Drinking Water Administrator.

Sam Radford announced that the redrafting of the Auburn Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan was approved by the EPA and that next steps include using it as a framework for developing and revising WHP plans in areas like the city of Syracuse. NDEQ is working with Olsson on a new water management tool: the Groundwater Evaluation Tool (GET). The GET will improve efficiency with mapping groundwater flow and time of travel. Carla McCullough announced that the Upper Big Blue NRD is working on an integrated management plans with NDEQ and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In addition to reiterating the improved efficiencies of the GET, McCullough also shared plans to improve the Nebraska Clearinghouse, a statewide database of groundwater contaminants, to include more than just nitrates and agricultural contamination.

Presentations:

See attached PowerPoint. Meeting concluded in a tour of the water treatment plant.