



WELL DEVELOPMENTS

Fall - 2010

BWWC

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Surface Casing

The Board has received many phone calls with questions pertaining to the new rules. The majority of the calls are specific to the rules that include the 25 ft of casing and surface sealing of the casing. The sealing and grouting material and methods did not change. Drillers can still use the continuous feed method for the surface sealing. The new requirement is all domestic wells are now required to have 25 feet of steel, ASTM 53, casing. Wells that are less than 25 feet and are for irrigation and/or livestock do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Board. There are some areas of the state where the only water available is less than 25 feet. Domestic wells that are less than 25 feet or have perforations in the casing less than 25 feet can be approved for use with a variance permit.

ARM § 36.21.80 allows the BWWC to grant a variance when due to special circumstances or unusual conditions, the variance accomplishes two things: (1) the variance will adequately protect the public, and (2) the variance will adequately protect the groundwater sources. Variance permits are issued to the licensed driller, not the customer.

Applications for the Variance Permit can be found on the BWWC web site www.bwwc.mt.gov. There is a \$100 fee for the permit. The applicant must submit plans detailing the construction/abandonment work that will be performed.

Since the inception of the BWWC Administrative Rules in 1987, it is recognized that the well construction standards cannot meet every conceivable situation that may arise when drilling. Due to special circumstances beyond the control of the contractor, variances are sometimes necessary.

Pat Byrne Reappointed



Pat Byrne was reappointed to the Board of Water Well Contractors (BWWC) by Governor Brian Schweitzer to serve a 3-year term. Pat was first appointed to the

Board in 1992 by then Governor Stephens. Pat has served as the Chairman of the Board for a number of years. Pat is one of two licensed Water Well Contractors that serve on the Board of Water Well Contractors. Pat, with his brother and son, owns and operates Pat Byrne Drilling Company of Great Falls, MT. Pat has been in the drilling business since the 1960's.

Unlicensed Drillers

This summer, the Board conducted three separate investigations regarding reports of unlicensed drillers. Of the three investigations, two are in litigation at this time. Unlicensed drillers, in accordance with Montana Codes Annotated (MCA) § 37-43-312(1) "...shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment in a county jail for a term not exceeding 6 months or both..." and "...shall be prosecuted by the county attorney in the county in which the violation occurred..."



Iba Drilling, geothermal wells, Havre

Safety Training

This summer, there have been multiple instances of drillers hitting gas pockets unexpectedly. No injuries have resulted from encounters with gas, but one drill rig was burned beyond repair. At this year's Montana Water Well Drillers Association's (MWWDA) annual convention in February, a course on gas safety is planned. Learn what to do and not to do when drilling into gas pockets. Let's ensure everyone goes home to their family each and every day. Please reserve February 2-3, 2011 on your calendars. The convention will be held in Helena. Convention registration and information can be found at the MWWDA's web site: <http://www.mwwda.org/>

Drillers can obtain all of the continuing education hours required for their annual license renewal by attending the convention and the training courses offered.



License Renewals

This year there were 257 license holders that renewed their licenses. There were 19 license holders that did not renew, resulting in the revocation of their license. The breakdown of types of license that were not renewed is as follows:

Inactive licenses: 7
Water Well Contractor licenses: 3
Monitor Well Constructor licenses: 3
Water Well Driller licenses: 6

In the state of Montana the license breakdown is as follows:

Water Well Contractors/Monitoring Well Constructor licenses: 87
Water Well Contractors licenses: 49
Monitor Well Constructors licenses: 65
Water Well Driller licenses: 35
Water Well Driller/Monitoring Well Constructors licenses: 1
Inactive licenses: 19



Burnt rig

New Licenses

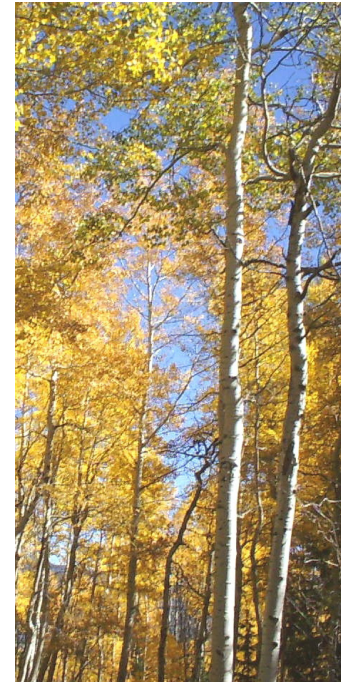
James Cantrall, Monitoring Well Constructor,
Environmental West Exploration, Spokane, WA

Doug Rider, Water Well Driller,
Main Harbor Pumps & Well Drilling, Ronan, MT



Continuing Education Opportunities

October 7-9, 2010	Washington State Ground Water Association Convention, Pasco, WA
October 22, 2010	Hydrology/Geology for Drillers, Helena, MT 1-406-444-6643
December 7-10, 2010	National Ground Water Association Convention, Las Vegas, NV
January 13-14, 2011	Utah Ground Water Association Conference, Mesquite, NV
January 26-28, 2011	Wyoming Water Well Association Convention, Casper, WY
January 26-28, 2011	Idaho Ground Water Association Convention, Boise, ID
February 2-3, 2011	Montana Water Well Drillers Association Convention, Helena, MT
February 10-12, 2011	Mountain States Ground Water Association Expo, Laughlin, NV
February 16-17, 2011	Nebraska Well Drillers Convention, Lincoln, NE



Dry or Inadequate Wells

Recently the Board has received complaints from well owners concerning the condition in which drillers have left dry or inadequate wells. Dry or inadequate wells are addressed by Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) § 36.21.679. This rule requires that water wells which are constructed and do not provide adequate supply of water shall **not** be considered completed until the **well driller** either:

1. removes the casing and fills the hole with cement, grout, concrete or bentonite clay grout; or
2. constructs the well in accordance with minimum well construction standards and welds a ¼ inch thick steel plate fully covering the top of the casing providing a watertight seal.

If the well is filled with sealing material, method #1 of above, the top of the well also will need to be buried or filled with 3 feet of naturally occurring soils, ARM § 36.21.670(2).

Well owners are responsible for abandoning dry or inadequate holes. Drillers should try to convince well owners to abandon these wells while they are set up and have the equipment on site to abandon the wells. Drillers may charge the well owner for abandoning dry or inadequate wells. A well log report form must be completed and filed within 60 days after moving the drill rig from the hole.



Improperly abandoned dry well



Improperly abandoned well

Next Board Meeting

October 1, 2010
9 AM
DNRC Water
Resources Building
9th and Roberts
Helena MT



Websites to Bookmark

The Internet is a huge information bank and finding what you are looking for can be time consuming and frustrating. Provided below is a list of websites that relate to the BWWC.

Board of Water Well Contractors

The BWWC web page with links, dates, newsletter, information for drillers and Board members contact information
www.bwwc.mt.gov

Ground-Water Information Center

Provides ground water information and filed well logs
<http://mbmgwic.mtech.edu/>

Montana Codes Annotated

Provides the Montana Statutes for the BWWC
http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/mca_toc/37_43.htm

Administrative Rules of Montana

Provides the Rules for the BWWC
<http://www.mtrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=36.21>

Well Log Report Forms

Contains the Well Log Report Form 603 for drillers
http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_op/bwwc/pdfs/603-R2-04.pdf

Driller's license Renewal Form

Provides the yearly license renewal form
http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_op/bwwc/pdfs/renewal_form.pdf

Montana Topographic Map Finder

By using the "Search Tools" on this site, a driller can enter well location information and the well site will be marked on a topographic map
<http://maps2.nris.state.mt.us/scripts/esrimap.dll?name=LocMap&Cmd=Map>



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