



# NEWS

April 2008

## Florida Water Well Administrator

### Drillers, Geologists, Engineers and Regulators – What do we all have in common?

By Thomas Kwader, Ph.D.

**In** 1976 I began working for the Northwest Florida Water Management District as an entry level hydrogeologist. I worked closely with well permitting and the field well inspectors at a time when well permitting and well construction standards, including the grouting of well casings, were first being introduced. Many of the drillers were adamantly opposed to being regulated.

Ironically, the well construction standards required to protect our precious water resources, so that the groundwater does not become contaminated from surface water runoff or cross-aquifer contamination from saline water-bearing zones, also assure that water well drillers can continue their work. If our groundwater becomes contaminated, or unusable, there will be no need to have permits or well construction rules, because no one will want a well. Also, ironically, it was a group of Florida water well drillers who foresaw the potential for contamination of groundwater in the late 1940's and were in favor of having minimum well construction standards. Well permitting is just a way to keep track of who is following the construction standards. As many of you know, these early drillers started with local Chapters, which eventually became the Florida Water Well Association, and later changed their name to the Florida Ground Water Association. What do drillers, geologists, engineers and regulators all have in common? We are all, including many other concerned citizens, trying to protect our precious groundwater resources.



In March, 2008 a Gallop Poll on environmental issues ranked the state of our drinking water as the No. 1 concern. Water is life. More than 95 percent of us in Florida rely upon groundwater as our primary source of drinking water. Without water, life would not exist as we know it. Fragile forms of life would not live, which would impact the entire food chain. Humans are at the top of the food chain, and some cases of poor water quality have already impacted our health. We are born in water, and our bodies are more than 70 percent water. We consume large amounts of water everyday either directly or indirectly.



In some cases, we have contaminated our groundwater resources with a wide range of chemicals including: solvents, fuels, nutrients, insecticides, herbicides, metals, bacteria and viruses. Fortunately, we began to realize the connection between waste disposal and groundwater contamination in the 1960's and began to take steps in the 1970's, first to change waste disposal methods, and then to begin cleaning up sources of groundwater contamination. Much progress has been made toward prevention and clean-up, and as a whole our groundwater is improving in quality each year. Unfortunately, the long-term health effects of many of the chemicals on our bodies, even in low concentrations, are not well known because of the number of variables that can impact our health many years later.

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### ***What do we all have in common? - continued***

Recently in the news you may have seen that low levels of pharmaceuticals, including prescription drugs for pain, antibodies, hormones, infection, cholesterol, epilepsy and anxiety, not to mention illegal recreational drugs, have been found in our drinking water. Fortunately, the levels detected are very low (parts per billion or trillion). The fact that they are in our drinking water means that they were most likely flushed down a toilet, traveled with the waste through a septic tank or wastewater treatment plant and made their way into our drinking water supply. This proves that they do not readily break down in the environment. What is the long-term effect of drinking low concentrations for a lifetime? No one knows, but we would all agree that we would rather have none of these compounds in our drinking water.

Protecting our natural resources is everyone's responsibility – not just the environmental cops. The more we learn the more we find out how little we know. Thirty-five years ago we began regulating well construction. It's a fact of life now, we need it, and it's not going away - nor should it. Five years ago the Water Well Contractor profession began requiring Continuing

Education Units (CEU's) like many other professions; and, yes well contractors are a profession and one of the most important. CEU's for Water Well Contractors provide a means to force us to keep up and learn what's new in the profession. I know most of you would be learning on your own anyway, but think of the CEU program as a way to bring the rest of the pack up with us for the benefit and protection of our groundwater.

As the population continues to grow, there are more and more impacts on groundwater from septic tanks, sprayfields, fertilizers, stormwater runoff, etc. Out of sight, out of mind does not work with groundwater. Even as we are using more "environmental friendly" products in prudent ways, there are more and more people crammed in smaller areas, which will require us to be even smarter about how we protect resources, such as groundwater for the generations to come. Groundwater is one resource we cannot live without.

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## **Register Now for the 2008 Florida Ground Water Annual Convention & Trade Show May 8-10, 2008 at the International Plaza Resort & Spa**

Registration Information can be found at [www.fgwa.org](http://www.fgwa.org) at the Events Page

*This year's theme is Building A Better Business featuring world renowned speakers presenting the following topics:*

- Evaluation of Well Development Techniques
- Update on Rules & Regulations
- Troubleshooting Electrical Components
- The Ins & Outs of Line Shaft Turbines
- Rigging Safety
- Management for the Contractor
- FGWA Membership Meeting & NGWA Update
- How Much is Enough? Making Decisions in the Water Well Industry—2008 McElhiney Lecture
- Constant Water Pressure
- New Technology to Enhance Your Career and Business
- Geothermal Earth Coupling Design Principles
- Workers' Compensation Overview & Business Insurance

## Earn Your Credit Hours Today

**We** are fast approaching another milestone in the Continuing Education program. On **July 31, 2008**, all water well contractors whose licenses are in an **inactive** status will have their licenses terminated, and if they wish to continue working as a licensed water well contractor, they will have to “start from scratch” to obtain a new license. Licenses were placed in an inactive status if the holder of the license failed to obtain 12 CEUs by the July 31, 2007 license renewal deadline date. If your license is currently inactive and you wish to re-activate it, you have less than four months to fulfill your CEU requirement. If you are unsure of your credits toward re-activating your license, they are posted on the FWWA Web site at [www.flwwceu.org](http://www.flwwceu.org) under the 2005 - 2007 CEU cycle heading.

For those of you working on your credits for your 2009 renewal, now is the time to get ahead of the game and earn your credits. Once you convert all of your 12 CEUs you will be covered for your July 31, 2009 renewal. If you are unsure of your credits, they are posted on the FWWA Web site at [www.flwwceu.org](http://www.flwwceu.org) under the 2007- 2009 CEU cycle heading.

Our FWWA approved Course Providers will be offering a variety of courses in the upcoming months. Detailed course descriptions and course provider contact information is located at [www.flwwceu.org](http://www.flwwceu.org) under the Course Offerings heading.

## Upcoming Courses

Date	Title	Provider	Hours/Type	Location
4/29/08	Water Wells: From Planning to Development	<b>BAROID IDP</b> Contact: (850) 910-2037	8 R/R	Fort Walton Beach
4/29/08	VFD Training for Technicians	<b>Coast Pump Water Technologies</b> Contact: (386) 208-0888	5 R/R	Lake City
5/1/08	Water Wells: Fluid Management to Grouting	<b>BAROID IDP</b> Contact: (850) 910-2037	4 R/R	Pensacola
5/8/2008 - 5/10/2008	FGWA Annual Convention & Trade Show	<b>FGWA</b> Contact: (850) 205-5641	Up to 6 R/R, 8 S/B	Orlando
5/17/08 & 8/16/08 & 11/15/08	Multiple Courses Offered	<b>Con-Techs Health &amp; Safety</b> Contact: (850) 228-9548	10 R/R, 2 S/B	Quincy
6/6/08 - 6/8/08	FWQA Annual Convention Seminars	<b>FWQA</b> Contact: (863) 644-6622	8.5 R/R, 1 S/B	Orlando
10/16/08	Employment Related Documents	<b>Gulfshore Insurance</b> Contact: (239) 435-7137	2 S/B	Naples



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



### **CEU By the Numbers**

- Total Number of Licensed Contractors in the CEU Database: **1192**
- Total Number of Pending Drillers in the CEU Database: **190**
- Number of Licensed Contractors who completed 12 CEUs for the 2007-09 cycle: **37**
- Number of Licensed Contractors who have 0 CEU hours for the 2007-09 cycle: **1,020**
- Number of Licensed Contractors who have 1—11 CEU hours for the 2007-09 cycle: **325**
- Number of Course Providers: **46**
- Number of Approved Courses in 2008: **27**

*All statistics are current as of April 7, 2008*