

WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (GMD3)
A GOVERNING BODY CONTROLLED BY LOCAL PEOPLE

Volume 4, Issue 5

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MEETINGS:

2ND WED. EACH MONTH

9:00 A.M. - DISTRICT OFFICE

409 CAMPUS DR., SUITE 108

GARDEN CITY, KS 67846

<http://www.gmd3.org>

GMD3 STAFF RECEIVE CERTIFICATION

GMD3 Conservationists Kent Shaw and Jason Norquest, along with GMD3 Assistant Manager Jan King recently attended the "Third Flowmeter Certification Course" at Kansas University (KU) in Lawrence, Kansas. Participants took advantage of the newly established Flowmeter Lab in order to certify the accuracy of their flowmeter equipment. Dr. Bruce McEnroe, KU Department of Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering, provided instruction on hydraulic principles of pipe flow. Kelly Warren, Division of Water Resources in Topeka, reviewed Kansas Rules and Regulations that relate to flowmeters as well as provided instruction on non-intrusive flowmeter equipment. In order to receive certification as flowmeter operators, the participants had to pass both a written exam as well as a practical exam in the lab.

GMDA AGAINST CHANGING THE WATER MARKET SYSTEM

During an April 20, 2004 Groundwater Management District Association meeting, all of the state's GMD managers voted unanimously against changing or interfering with the "free market" system currently used to buy or sell water rights in Kansas. District Managers agreed that current law hasn't proven to be a serious impediment to the purchase or trade of existing water rights by cities, industries, or individuals. The Kansas Water Office (KWO) has established a Groundwater Marketing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that has met twice to discuss the possibility of changing the current water marketing system. Tom Huntzinger, Kansas Division of Water Resources, suggested it might be wise to have technical assistance available to entities that are unfamiliar with purchasing water rights. The state's goal is to avoid giving the impression that it's difficult to establish an industry or business in Kansas because of any misconception that Kansas is having a critical water shortage. In lieu of appearing to be dry on the surface, most of Western Kansas has stable groundwater supplies that can facilitate future municipal and non-irrigation industrial development. A common theme among water managers is that "Kansas has plenty of water, it's just not located exactly where we sometimes want it to be".

REVISED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AWAITS POPE'S APPROVAL

The District's Revised Management Program is proceeding right on schedule. Last July the Chief Engineer, David Pope, publicly challenged the 3 Groundwater Management Districts located in Western Kansas to have their Management Programs revised to include Aquifer Subunit Management Protocols by November of 2004. Tom Huntzinger, Chief Engineer's office, informed the Groundwater Management District Association (GMDA) during their April 20, 2004 meeting that the Management Programs for each of the 3 GMD's appear to be on schedule. The GMD3 Board of Directors has tentatively scheduled a Public Hearing for September 8, 2004 to receive public comment on the Revised Management Program. The public hearing cannot be formally scheduled until the District has received written approval of the proposed Revised Management Program from the Chief Engineer. The Chief Engineer has informed GMD3 that as long as he and his staff complete their final review without discovering the need for additional changes, then his approval should be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT NO. 3

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**DISTRICT SEEKS AT-LARGE INDUSTRIAL REPRESENTATIVE**

On April 14, 2004 the Board of Directors accepted the resignation of the At-large Industrial Representative, Thomas Ford. Director Ford accepted new employment on April 5, 2004 as the Plant Manager of an electric generation plant at Great Bend, Kansas. Great Bend is not located within the District's boundary. Mr. Ford was elected on February 26, 2003. Tom also served currently as the Chairman of the Cimarron Basin Advisory Committee, which provides input on water management issues to the Kansas Water Authority. Being a professional engineer and manager of an electric generation plant enabled the District to benefit greatly from Tom's experience. We'll especially miss Tom's subtle sense of humor as well as his compassionate desire to preserve our American values of liberty & freewill.

CIMARRON BAC SEEKS INDUSTRIAL USER REPRESENTATIVE

The Cimarron Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) seeks a candidate to fulfill the Industrial User position recently vacated by Thomas Ford. Persons interested in providing this crucial voluntary service should contact Susan Stover of the Kansas Water Office by calling 1-888-KAN-WATER, or get an application on-line at www.kwo.org, under Organization/People, then BACs. According to Mrs. Stover, this would be a person who uses water in manufacturing, production, transportation or storage of products or in providing commercial services. It would also include water used in connection with steam electric power plants, secondary and tertiary oil recovery, air conditioning and aggregate extraction including hydraulic dredging. The KWO web site also provides background information on BAC's, of which the following is a portion: "In 1985, K.S.A. 82a-903 was amended as recommended in the Kansas Water Plan to require the Kansas Water Office and the Kansas Water Authority to seek advice from the general public and from committees consisting of individuals with knowledge of and interest in water issues in the water planning areas. Basin Advisory Committees were first established in each of the 12 river basins in Kansas on June 28, 1985. The 11-member committee for each basin consists of at least one member representing each of the following six water user categories: domestic; municipal; other public water supplier; industrial; irrigation and recreation, fish and wildlife. The remaining five members are selected based on user category, geographic distribution and other criteria at the discretion of the basin advisory committee."

METER INSPECTION CONTRACTORS READY TO GO

Following a publicized contract bid process, GMD3 has selected 4 private contractors to conduct flow meter inspections during the 2004 irrigation season. The field inspection includes recording general information about the meter installation, along with performing a timed test used to verify the instantaneous flow rate. The inspection contractor has only 24 hours to report non-compliant flow meter installations. Enforcement action isn't initiated until the non-compliance is field verified by regular district employees. It's become a common practice for irrigators to remedy their non-compliant meter installation immediately upon finding the orange tag left behind by the inspection contractor. The inspection contractors carry photo-identification cards issued by the district as well as wear a highly visible yellow vest. Their vehicle also displays a bright yellow roof light that is required to be flashing while an inspection is underway. Contracted inspections are to begin on May 15, 2004. In addition to that, District employees also conduct compliance inspections at all times during the year which are in addition to those conducted by the private contractors.

STATIC WATER LEVELS

GMD3 Staff has recently completed 84 static water level measurements for 2004. Of these 84 measurements, 68 of them were also measured last year. This follows our initial response to the abnormally severe declines identified by the Kansas Geological Survey (KGS) back in April of 2002. According to the KGS, seven separate and remote areas of Southwest Kansas experienced water level declines totaling 15 to 24 feet from 1998 to 2001. For measurement details and site-specific information please visit the District's web-site: <http://www.gmd3.org> and search under "Information" and then "Data".

BYLAW CHANGES PENDING

The Board of Directors will be considering revisions and updates to the districts bylaws over the next few months. If the Board of Directors decides to proceed with changes to the bylaws, then public notice will be provided at least 30 days prior to the February 23, 2005 Annual Meeting. Bylaws can only be changed during the Annual Meeting. These changes are being proposed as part of our ongoing efforts to simplify and trim all facets of the Districts operations.