



Master Well Owner Network

A program of Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment.

Winter 2007

Newsletter

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What is the Penn State Master Well Owner Network?

The Master Well Owner Network is a program dedicated to educating Pa residents about proper private water system construction and management. Our goal is to promote better management of private wells, springs, and cisterns throughout the state.



MWON Attends the 2007 PA Farm Show

Thanks for your help: Jon Reichel, Oliver McKeithan, Tim Tuttle, Rick Grant, Jan Arnold, Edwena Eger, Barry Stump, Jim Clark, Bill Anderson, Herb Bomberger, David Churchill, David English, Dwight Beavan, Tom McCarty, Peter Wulfhorst, and Bryan Swistock.

The annual PA Farm Show was held from January 7 - 13, 2007 in Harrisburg, PA at the PA Farm Show Complex. This was the second consecutive year that the Master Well Owner Network purchased space to help spread our message to private well owners throughout PA.

Farm Show is a really wonderful opportunity to educate rural homeowners about management of their private water system. Since Farm Show is a seven-day

event, Stephanie Clemens solicited input from volunteers and project partners to improve our booth this year. Tim Tuttle suggested a quiz board, which really helped volunteers engage the passing crowds. Tom McCarty deserves the credit for the design and construction of the framed display used this year. It was much more appealing and most importantly, people knew that we were affiliated with Penn State. Thanks to everyone that helped out this year!



Jim Clark (above) with McKean County Cooperative Extension, worked the MWON Farm Show booth on Monday evening, January 8, 2007. Rick Grant, a Carbon County Master Well Owner (left) worked the MWON booth on Sunday, January 7, 2007. The new MWON display was built by Tom McCarty of Cumberland County Cooperative Extension with help from Stephanie Clemens, MWON Coordinator.

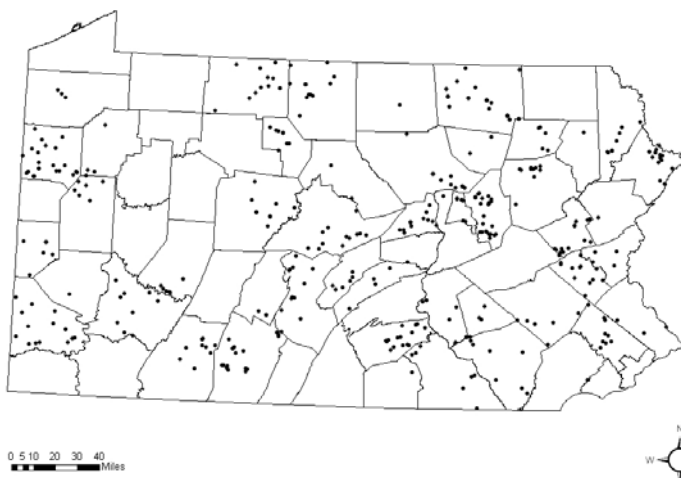
For more information or to fill out an application, visit <http://mwon.cas.psu.edu>.

MWON Well Study Complete for Year 1

The MWON private well owner study is complete for 2006 and we have successfully collected 450 private well samples thanks to the efforts of the 124 MWON volunteers that helped out. This study was funded by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center. A summary of the results from the 2006 well sampling will be available on the MWON website (<http://mwon.cas.psu.edu>) in March. A summary will also appear in the next MWON newsletter. We were pleased to have received another grant from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania for an additional 250 samples and surveys to be collected during 2007. The sampling for 2007 will be targeted at regions of the state that were under-represented in the 2006 study. The map below indicates where well samples were taken during the first year of the study (some sample locations are not included on the map). Email and phone calls will be made by Stephanie Clemens beginning in February of 2007 in hopes of finding MWON volunteers that are willing to help collect samples and surveys in various locations throughout PA.

Priority Counties for 2007:

Adams	Greene
Armstrong	Indiana
Cambria	Jefferson
Chester	Lawrence
Clarion	Monroe
Elk	Northumberland
Erie	Perry
Fayette	Schuylkill
Forest	Snyder
Franklin	Susquehanna
Fulton	Warren



Any Master Well Owner that is from one of the counties listed that would like to be involved with sample collection, should contact Stephanie Clemens at 814-865-2250 or by email at mwon@psu.edu.

Volunteers from counties not included on the priority list that would like to participate are welcome to contact Stephanie, but no guarantees can be made that we will accept samples from your county.

Ground Water Awareness Week March 11 - 17, 2007

Schedule an event in your area to celebrate Ground Water Awareness Week. Visit www.wellowner.org for ideas and additional information. Ground Water Awareness Week is sponsored by the National Ground Water Association



MWON Ground Water Awareness Week Challenge

As a volunteer of MWON please use Ground Water Awareness Week as an opportunity to talk to your friends and neighbors about testing and maintenance of their private water system. Keep track of how many people you talk to and submit a report to MWON by March 23, 2007. The volunteer with the most contacts during Ground Water Awareness Week will be recognized in the next issue of the MWON newsletter and on the MWON web page!

Submit reports to Stephanie Clemens at sclemens@psu.edu.



You can still Recertify and Remain part of MWON!

Master Well Owners that were trained during 2004 need to take a recertification exam in order to remain on "active" status as a volunteer for Penn State. If you are a 2004 trainee that wants to stay part of MWON and you have not yet taken the test, please visit the recertification course online at <http://mwon.cas.psu.edu/Recertification.htm>.

If you need additional assistance with recertification, please contact Stephanie Clemens or your MWON Regional Coordinator today!

Statewide:	Stephanie Clemens	814-865-2250
Northwest:	Gary Micsky	724-662-3141
Southwest:	Susan Boser	724-774-3003
	Melanie Barkley	814-623-4800
	Dana Rizzo	724-837-1402
Central:	Jim Clark	814-887-5613
Capital:	Tom McCarty	717-240-6500
Northeast:	Peter Wulfhorst	570-296-3400
	Mark Madden	570-928-8941
Southeast:	Louise Bugbee	610-391-9840

The Facts on Oil and Gas Development in Pennsylvania

Ask The Experts

In each issue, experts at Penn State Cooperative Extension will discuss one issue that will help to keep private water system owners well informed.

If you have a question for ask the experts, please send it to mwon@psu.edu.

How prevalent are oil and gas wells in PA?

Oil and gas development is common throughout the Appalachian Plateau Province. In general, western PA has more oil and gas production than any other area in the state.

What are the major ground water quality concerns associated with oil and gas wells?

Oil and gas well development usually involves the production of brine (saline water) and the major issue is that this water must be disposed of properly so that it does not contaminate surface or ground water resources. Regulations exist to ensure that this brine water does not contaminate nearby water sources and the majority of water quality concerns are a result of older oil and gas fields that were developed before regulations existed. Any older abandoned oil or gas well that was not properly cased has the potential to leak brine, gas, or oil into surrounding ground water.

Although saline water contamination is the greatest concern for surrounding ground water resources, other issues such as methane gas could also be a problem. Methane is a flammable gas that can be a serious concern if it is carried along with water into nearby wells. Naturally occurring methane has no odor so it is very important that a natural gas detector is

used if you suspect that it may be entering your home.

How far should your private well be located from an oil or gas well?

Unfortunately, there is no rule of thumb for determining a safe distance of a water well from an oil or gas well. The distance needed is highly dependent on the local geology and how the oil or gas well was developed. All oil or gas development in PA is now regulated by the state and Section 208 of the Oil and Gas Act specifically addresses protection of water supplies.

How can a homeowner protect their private water supply?

Oil and gas well development is regulated in the state of PA to protect water supplies. However, if you suspect that your well water may be impacted by an oil or gas well, have your water tested for chloride, sodium, heavy metals (lead, barium, strontium), or conductivity. If you think an oil or gas well will be developed in your area in the future, protect yourself by testing your water for these things before it exists. Make sure to have all water testing done at a state certified laboratory.

More information on water supply management can be found at <http://water.cas.psu.edu>.

Check Out This Grant Opportunity!

League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund Water Resources Education Network (WREN) Project Grants Available for Water Resources Education Projects

Who: Partnerships of organizations in Pennsylvania such as watershed associations, civic groups, community water systems, governmental entities (including municipal authorities), and other public interest organizations. All partners must play an active role in the project.

What: Educational projects that raise awareness about protecting the **community's drinking water source** and/or **preventing nonpoint source pollution** in the watershed. Projects must aim at building an informed citizenry who will protect water resources with actions at home, at work, and within the community, including encouraging local officials to make decisions that will promote clean water. Grant award: up to **\$5,000** per project.

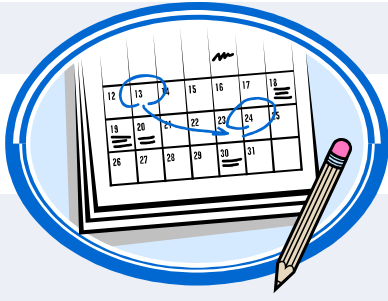
When: Proposals must be postmarked or hand delivered no later than 4:00 pm on **4/2/07**. Successful proposals announced by 5/15/07. Funding/activity period: **7/1/07 through 6/30/08**.

****Grantees must attend Orientation Meeting in mid-June, 2007** (date and location TBA) to network with other WREN grantees and receive resources and tools. There is no cost to the grantee to attend.**

To receive an Application send email to wren@palwv.org or call 800 692-7281 ext 10.

Complete Application may also be downloaded from websites: <http://wren.palwv.org> or <http://www.drinkingwaterwise.org>

Applications postmarked or hand delivered no later than April 2, 2007 to office of League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania CEF, 226 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-3220 (no faxed or emailed applications)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 7, 2007

- Southwest Regional Recertification Workshop. Westmoreland County Cooperative Extension office. Call or email Susan Boser for more information smw16@psu.edu or 724-774-3003.

April 28, 2007

- MWON Training Workshop in Erie, PA. Contact Stephanie Clemens for details or fill out an application at <http://mwon.cas.psu.edu/Volunteer.htm> .

May 12, 2007

- MWON Training Workshop in State College, PA. Contact Stephanie Clemens for details or fill out an application at <http://mwon.cas.psu.edu/Volunteer.htm> .

Fall 2007

- PA Private Water Well Symposium and MWON Statewide Conference (more details will be provided in the next MWON Newsletter).

MWON Program Sponsors

This project is made possible in part by the Penn State Cooperative Extension, the USDA CSREES Mid-Atlantic Regional Water Program, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Ground Water Association.

Funding for the MWON private well study was provided by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center.

MWON Project Partners



Penn State encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact Stephanie Clemens at 814-865-2250 in advance of your participation or visit.

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Visit the MWON website: <http://mwon.cas.psu.edu>

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