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What is the Penn State Master Well Owner Network?

The Penn State Master Well Owner Network (MWON) is a program dedicated to educating PA residents about the proper construction and management of private water systems.

The goal of this program is to educate private water system owners and promote better management of private wells, springs, and cisterns throughout the state.

MWON Sponsors

This project is made possible in part by the Penn State Cooperative Extension, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Ground Water Association.

The Master Well Owner Network - Making a Difference! Annual Accomplishments for 2012

Penn State Extension recently released an annual report of accomplishments for the Master Well Owner Network for 2012. MWON is dedicated to providing unbiased, research-based education for the millions of rural homeowners using private water wells, springs and cisterns in Pennsylvania. The program is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Ground Water Association.

Over the past year, 39 new volunteers were added to the network of 589 MWON volunteers located in 64 counties across the state. These volunteers donated nearly 1,000 hours of their time to provide direct education to 2,449 private water supply owners through individual consultations and group presentations. Thousands of additional water supply owners were reached through indirect educational methods including newsletters and newspaper articles. MWON volunteers and support staff from Penn State Extension also provided Safe Drinking Water Clinics and Water Test Interpretation workshops to nearly 1,100 private water supply owners.

Since its inception in 2004, the Master Well Owner network has now provided direct consultation to over 30,000 private water supply owners while reaching another 100,000 through newsletters and mailings. Thanks to all of the volunteers, extension educators and project partners who continue to make MWON a successful program in Pennsylvania!



Private water supply owners attend a water test interpretation workshop in Lock Haven, PA sponsored by Headwaters RC&D, Clearfield Conservation District, the Colcom Foundation and the Pennsylvania Master Well Owner Network.

EPA Progress Report on Hydraulic Fracturing

On Dec. 21, 2012 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a report highlighting the progress it has made on its national study to understand the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources.

EPA initiated the study in 2010 at the request of the Congress and the progress report outlines work currently underway. The progress report summarizes the current status of 18 research projects undertaken as part of the study and updates information about the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing. The report does not draw conclusions about the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on drinking water resources.

The report and various other background information on this EPA study can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/hfstudy>.



(Photo: Jim Clark, Penn State Extension, McKean County)



Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium

May 8, 2013—Penn State University

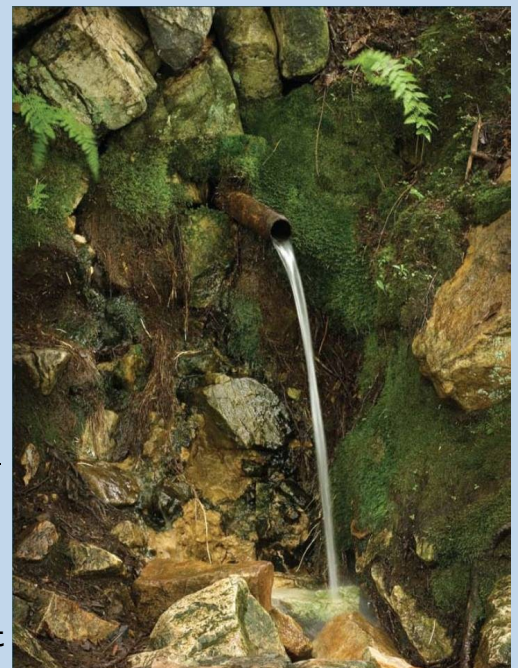
In celebration of National Drinking Water Week, Penn State Extension and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection along with numerous other sponsors are organizing the 2013 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium at Penn State University in University Park, PA on May 8, 2013. The Symposium theme: *Emerging Issues in a Changing Landscape* will provide a forum for researchers, students, and professionals working in the groundwater field to exchange information and promote protection of groundwater resources.

The daylong symposium will begin at 9:00 AM with several keynote speakers focusing on emerging groundwater issues in the Commonwealth. The remainder of the day will feature a poster session, buffet lunch and several concurrent sessions on:

- Groundwater Tools for Natural Gas Exploration
- Groundwater Budgets and Yield Studies
- Characterizing Groundwater and Water Wells
- Potential Groundwater Impacts from Natural Gas Exploration

An online registration website and complete agenda for the symposium will be released in early February at: <http://agsci.psu.edu/pa-water-symposium>. Additional abstracts will be accepted for poster presentations only through April 8, 2013. To submit a poster abstract go to: <http://agsci.psu.edu/pawaterabstract>.

Current sponsors for the symposium include: Penn State Extension, the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Ground Water Association, U.S. Geological Survey, and Susquehanna River Basin Commission.



(Photo: Steve Williams, Penn State, College of Ag Sciences)

Opportunities for New Volunteer Training

The Penn State Master Well Owner Network (MWON) has released its schedule of training opportunities for new MWON volunteers for 2013. New volunteers can choose from any one of the following full-day, Saturday workshops or a seven week online training course starting in February.

- February 11-March 25, 2013 – Online training module
- Saturday, March 16, 2013 – York, PA - 9 AM to 3 PM – lunch provided
- Saturday, June 8, 2013 – Forest County - 9 AM to 3 PM – lunch provided

Those interested in becoming a MWON volunteer should complete the online application form available at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mwon_application or call Bryan Swistock at 814-863-0194. All newly trained volunteers receive an 80-page Guide to Private Water Systems handbook, discounted water testing through the Penn State testing laboratory, and access to a variety of experts and educational resources available through Penn State Extension. Trained volunteers are asked to pass along their knowledge about private water systems to family, friends, co-workers and neighbors and provide an annual report of their accomplishments.

Upcoming Penn State Webinars on Private Water Supplies

The Penn State Extension Water Resources Team provides free monthly webinars on the last Wednesday of each month. Some upcoming webinars will be presented on private water supply topics including:

- January 30, 2013 – 12:00 to 1:00 PM—*A Study of Pre-Drilling Groundwater Quality in 700 Water Wells and Springs in North Central Pennsylvania*, Jim Clark, Water Resources Educator, Penn State Extension, McKean County.
- March 27, 2013 – 12:00 to 1:00 PM—*Results from a Study of Drinking Water Quality for 200 Dairy Herds in Pennsylvania*, Bryan Swistock, Water Resources Specialist, Penn State Extension.

To learn more about these and other water-related webinars presented by Penn State Extension, visit our website at: <http://extension.psu.edu/water/webinar-series>

MWON to Remove “Inactive” Volunteers in January

Since its inception in 2004, the Pennsylvania Master Well Owner Network has trained nearly 600 volunteers throughout the state. In return for free training, MWON volunteers are asked to educate others and report annual accomplishments to the MWON coordinator. Each MWON volunteer is provided with annual liability insurance to conduct education (at some cost to the MWON program).

The policy statement signed by each MWON volunteer designates that “inactive” volunteers will void their designation as a Penn State Master Well Owner and no longer receive annual liability insurance. The MWON policy statement defines an inactive volunteer as “MWON volunteers who do not conduct outreach or report annual accomplishments for two successive reporting years”.

Over the next few weeks, MWON volunteers who have not submitted accomplishments for the two years (since 2010) will be notified by mail of their removal from the MWON program. Based on the MWON policy, volunteers who receive these letters are legally defined as inactive and should no longer represent themselves as Penn State Master Well Owners. Inactive volunteers who believe they have mistakenly been designated as inactive OR those who wish to be re-instated as an active volunteer should contact Bryan Swistock at 814-863-0194 or brs@psu.edu.

extension.psu.edu/water/mwon:
Master Well Owner Network.

extension.psu.edu/water:
Penn State Cooperative Extension
Water Resource Information.

Important Web Links

<http://www.pgwa.org>:
PA Ground Water Association

<http://www.wellowner.org>:
National Ground Water Association's
website for consumer information

Take the PA Water Survey!

This is your chance to be heard on the value and importance of water resources in Pennsylvania! Researchers from Penn State along with several other partner agencies are conducting an online survey of Pennsylvania residents about the state's water resources. The objective of this survey is to collect opinions from a large number of Pennsylvania residents on the current status of our water and how to prioritize funding and other resources to best protect and manage our water resources. This informal survey is intended as a public engagement project and does not necessarily represent a statistical sampling of opinions. The 5-minute survey can be accessed at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PaWater>

The survey is open to Pennsylvania residents who are at least 18 years of age and will remain open until February 28. This survey is funded by the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center and Sea Grant Pennsylvania in partnership with Penn State Extension and the Pennsylvania American Water Resources Association.

A Sampling of Upcoming Events

- January 24-25, 2013— PGWA Winter Conference (learn more at: http://pgwa.org/2013_winter_conf_.htm)
- January 30, 2013—Statewide webinar: *A Study of Pre-Drilling Groundwater Quality in 700 Water Wells and Springs in North Central Pennsylvania*—visit <https://meeting.psu.edu/water1> to attend).
- February 26, 2013—Safe Drinking Water Clinic—Bucks County
- March 5, 2013—Safe Drinking Water Clinic—Lancaster, PA
- March 13, 2013—Safe Drinking Water Clinic—Orbisonia, PA (Huntingdon County)
- March 16, 2013—Master Well Owner volunteer training course, York, PA
- March 27, 2013 – Statewide webinar: *Results from a Study of Drinking Water Quality for Dairy Herds in Pennsylvania*—visit <https://meeting.psu.edu/water1> to attend)
- April 9, 2013—Water Test Interpretation workshop—Potter County
- April 25, 2013—Safe Drinking Water Clinic—Erie, PA
- May 8, 2013—Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium, Penn State University
- May 16, 2013—Water Test Interpretation workshop—Clarion County
- May 23, 2013—Safe Drinking Water Clinic—Jefferson County
- June 8, 2013—Master Well Owner volunteer training course—Forest County

Visit the water extension events page for more details about any of these upcoming events as they become available (<http://extension.psu.edu/water/events>)