

WATER WELL STANDARDS & CONTRACTORS' LICENSING BOARD MEETING

June 3, 2026

Lynn Webster called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. with roll call. The meeting was held at the at the Upper Elkhorn NRD-301 N Harrison St, O'Neill, NE. Copies of the agenda were emailed to board members and other interested parties prior to the meeting. The meeting was advertised on the Water Well Standards and Contractor's Licensing Board webpage on the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment website. The Open Meetings Act was posted at the front entrance of the room.

Item 1. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mike Thompson
Laura Johnson
Katie Cameron

Tara Wulfekoetter
Lynn Webster
Jim Remmenga

ABSENT: Cody Christensen, Scott Grosch, Jeff Ironshell, Daniel Mackin

OTHERS: Dave Miesbach, Bill Allen, Dan Egeland, Tim Sizer, Jaiden Dufek

Item 2. Introduction of New Member

Dave Miesbach introduced Katie Cameron. Katie Cameron officially replaced Sue Lackey as the representative of Conservation and Survey Division of the University of Nebraska.

Item 3. Adoption of Agenda

Laura Johnson moved to adopt the agenda. Jim Remmenga seconded the motion.

Voting Yes: Laura Johnson, Tara Wulfekoetter, Katie Cameron, Mike Thompson, Lynn Webster, Jim Remmenga Voting No: none. Abstain: none. Motion carried.

Item 4. Consideration of Minutes of Board Meeting – April 15, 2026

Mike Thompson moved to adopt the minutes. Tara Wulfekoetter seconded the motion.

Voting Yes: Tara Wulfekoetter, Katie Cameron, Mike Thompson, Jim Remmenga, Lynn Webster

Voting No: none. Abstain: Laura Johnson. Motion carried.

Item 5. Continuing Education Requests

- 1- AIPG 2025 National Conference, St. Louis, MO, by American Institute of Professional Geologists was held October 4-7, 2025; Douglas M Burge

Requests: 4 hrs.

Recommended: defer/more info needed

- 2- 34th Annual International Conference on Soil, Water, Energy and Air, San Diego, CA, by AEHS Foundation was held March 17-20, 2025; Douglas M Burge

Requests: 4 hrs.

Recommended: defer/more info needed

- 3- South Atlantic Well Drillers Jubilee, Tallahassee FL, by South Atlantic Well Drillers will be held July 25-27, 2026; Debra Kelly

Requests: 25.5 hrs.

Recommended: 25.5hrs but no more than 9.5hrs per individual

- 4- The Power of Written Procedures, online, by National Ground Water Association was held May 5th, 2026; Michael F Gerdes

Requests: 1 hr.

Recommended: 1hr

- 5- Emerging Contaminants, online, by National Ground Water Association was held May 5th, 2026; Michael F Gerdes

Requests: 1 hr.

Recommended: 1hr

- 6- Agrochemical Transport and Fate in Soil, Groundwater, and Surface Water Training Course: A Focus on Pesticides, Nitrate, and Phosphate, Webinar, by National Environmental Management Academy was held March 26-27th, 2026; Jacqueline Morrissey

Requests: 6 hrs.

Recommended: 6hrs

- 7- Groundwater Monitoring Well Installation Field Day, Lincoln, NE, by DWEE will be held September 2026; Ross M. Schumacher

Requests: 6 hrs.

Recommended: 6hrs

- 8- Focused Remediation Seminars, Webinar-Microsoft Teams, by Field Environmental & Data Solutions was held May 21, 2026; Megan B Seymour

Requests: 2.5 hrs.

Recommended: 2.5hrs

Mike Thompson submitted the recommendations for board approval of CEU hours as stated. Voting Yes: Katie Cameron, Mike Thompson, Lynn Webster, Jim Remmenga, Laura Johnson, Tara Wulfekoetter. Voting No: none. Abstain: none. Motion Carried.

Item 6. Program Report

Dave Miesbach presented the program report that was included in the Board Packet. It outlined the declaratory orders/pre-notifications, violations, licensure information and testing information.

- Review of the Program Report
- Big Loop Project occurring in Lincoln 2 drill rigs
- The final public hearing on NAC Title 134 occurred on 5/26/2026 no public comments were made. It moved forward. Which has a fee increase, which is pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-1224. It includes a \$10 increase for wells pumping 50 gallons per minute or less (GPM) and for wells pumping more than 50 GPM. A request has been made to push back the fee increase to July 18th as opposed to July 1st to coincide with the fee increase from \$40 to \$200 in pursuant of Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-606. That will occur after LB759 passed.
- Issue with language in the regulation 12-012.06 Decontaminating “disinfectant equivalent to at least 200 parts per million chlorine must be introduced into the well before any material is placed into the well” this is ill advisable due to chloride and bentonite reactions, and it poses risk for oxidization of contaminants. A policy is being developed and will be proposed at the next meeting.
- Geological Services monitor Livestock facilities, and those facilities have had water monitoring wells on their premises since the 90s. Within the last 5 years we have been observing the wells themselves in cases of water quality issues. Inspector Dan Egeland went out and videotaped three monitoring wells at one of these facilities
 - Video 1-2” PVC monitoring well with threaded casing and full-length grout that had been constructed according to regulations at the first joint the casing is shown being able to be lifted despite being threaded casing, it also shows no grout. Casing was observably loose at surface level.
 - Video 2-another water monitoring well where the camera goes down to the first joint of what should be a watertight flush joint threaded with an O ring that shows the sand outside the well, showing it has separated and not watertight.
 - Video 3- last video is not a construction issue. In it shows the 2” pipe has visible kinks making it impassible by camera. This is a display of obstruction where the owner pushed the well over and tried to fix it by pulling it back up, causing the casing to be kinked and requires the well to be decommissioned.
- The videos display a common reoccurrence showing that when people are using bentonite products, that the material settles and is no longer watertight. Pumpable grouts are posing an issue where once they settle, they dry out. Chip bentonite being recommended. Guidance documents will be made available on the DWEE website to address this issue.

- Proposal requested as stated “We ask for the board to vote on the approval of four tentative testing dates for the Natural Resource Ground Water Technician Exams between now and the next Board approved exam date of August 19th. The proposed dates are 6/10/2026, 6/24/2026, 7/8/2026, and 7/22/2026. There are 105 days in between the board approved dates of 5/6/2026 and 8/19/2026. In such a peak season, this will allow us the flexibility to coordinate with the NRD’s to get their employees tested and licensed, without having to bring each candidate up to the Board for a vote. These dates will be set with the stipulation that no examinee will take the same test twice in a calendar year, and all exams will take place in the Lincoln testing location of 245 Fallbrook Blvd. Lincoln, NE 68521.”
 - Jim Remmenga made a motion to approve the proposal as stated and Mike Thompson seconded the motion. Voting Yes: Mike Thompson, Lynn Webster, Jim Remmenga, Laura Johnson, Tara Wulfekoetter, Katie Cameron Voting No: none. Abstain: none. Motion Carried.
- Discussions with NRDs have brought to light old license positions of Water Well Monitoring Supervisor in 1991 that would allow you to supervise the duties of Water Well Monitoring Technicians, and in 2001 we introduced the natural resources groundwater technician position to the regulations and removed the Water Well Monitoring Supervisor position removing any supervisory capacity to water well monitoring. This requires every NRD technician that needs to sample a well to be licensed. NRDs are requesting that there be a Natural Resources Groundwater Supervisor position to get their technicians working despite testing restraints and getting the opportunity for some hands on training, under the stipulation that the technicians will still take their Groundwater Technician Training, receive their Proof of Completion of Training, take the exam and get licensed. More discussions will need to take place before a solution can be resolved.
- The Well Registration and Water Well Standards Sections have been moved merged with Drinking Water Program. The other programs under the former Groundwater Division have been reunited with the Drinking Water Program and will now be called the Division of Drinking Water and Water Wells overseen by Laura Johnson. Mike Thompson will be overseeing the Surface Water Division, which will have the Groundwater Transfer Program, which is a water-quantity-focused program.

Item 7. Legislative Report

- The final public hearing on NAC Title 134 occurred on 5/26/2026 no public comments were made. It moved forward. Which has a fee increase, which is pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-1224. It includes a \$10 increase for wells pumping 50 gallons per minute or less (GPM) and \$10 increase for wells pumping more than 50 GPM. A request has been made to push back the fee increase to July 18th as opposed to July 1st to coincide with the fee increase from \$40 to \$200 in pursuant of Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-606. That will occur after LB759 passed.
- Taking Effect July 18th Chief Water Officer will be recognized as a member of the board and will designate a member of the board. Matt will write a letter to the board with his designation.

Item 9. Agency Reports

A. HHS – Division of Public Health – Tara Wulfekoetter

- Program is dealing with a New computer system.
- Lead and Copper season has started
- Waiting on PFAs and chlorates

B. DWEE-Drinking Water Program – Laura Johnson

- DWEE restructuring – Old Groundwater Division was split, and the Groundwater Transfer Program was merged into the Surface Water Division, and the remaining programs were merged into the Drinking Water Division.
- Staffing – we have three vacancies in the Drinking Water program and are fully staffed in Geological Services programs
- Updating Title 179 – Regulations Governing Public Water Systems and expecting this to be completed this fall
- PFAS – finishing up a project to complete initial sampling for our small Public Water Systems
 - i. 5/14/25 - EPA announced PFOA and PFOS will remain as new regulated contaminants, rescinding the other PFAS contaminants and extending the compliance deadline for PWS to meet the 2 remaining PFAS by 2031.
 - ii. PFAS Out - EPA's new initiative to target assistance towards systems with elevated PFAS. Provides guidance and tech assistance to small rural PWS
- Lead - May 20th - EPA announced 2.9 billion in lead funds to replace lead pipes
 - i. This is not new monies, this is the 5th and last annual disbursement of Biden Area funds

C. Department of Water, Energy and Environment (DWEE)– Mike Thompson

- Mike Thompson has been reassigned to lead the Surface Water Division at DWEE
- The Little Blue Public Water System groundwater transfer orders are being finalized for official orders to be issued by the Chief Water Officer. This is a rural domestic water system that serves part of the LBNRD and includes a small service area in northern Washington County, Kansas
- The eastern part of the state has received much needed rain.
- The western portion of the state is experiencing extreme drought and very limited water supplies in the North Platte River Basin. Major canals are preparing for a short irrigation season.
- Currently there are about 750 surface water rights closed by the prior appropriation system due to lack of sufficient stream flow for all appropriators.

D. UNL – Conservation & Survey – Katie Cameron

- The CSD position “open rank geoscientist” opening with Sue Lackey retiring is now advertised: go.unl.edu/geoscientist. Hopefully CSD will get a good pool of candidates for the hiring process, the application window closes June 24, 2026.
- CSD was part of a grant submittal to the Water Sustainability Fund with USGS and ENWRA which included the TEM survey work for eastern Nebraska (presentation by principal investigator, Dr. Jesse Korus for the preliminary Plainview survey results with approximately 15-20 times the resolution of the AEM, imaging down to the Cretaceous shale, was well received by the Lower Elkhorn NRD board last week in Norfolk, NE)
- CSD will be working to continue the Nebraska GeoCloud 10 NRD interlocal for housing AEM and other supporting geologic datasets (renewal comes due June 30, 2027).
- Aaron Young is working with Shane Tucker of the State Museum to create an interactive map of aerial photograph mosaics so we can research historical changes of the land surface. Many counties are done but still working on adding them for the whole state. Also, the CSD Interactive map on the SNR website had a hiccup last week left over from the domain change from unl.edu to Nebraska.edu which should be resolved. Hopefully this is the last residual issue from the changeover on the CSD-related web pages for the foreseeable future.
- Giltner CSD test hole in Upper Big Blue NRD is planned for next week and Newman Grove test hole in Lower Platte North NRD is done.

E. Natural Resources Districts – Lynn Webster

- Western Nebraska is still facing dry conditions
- Early Irrigation starting to combat the dry conditions
- Getting into the busy season of chemigation as public is water sampling for quality purposes

- Tree Programs are wrapping up, they were delayed due to the dry conditions
- Pushing to assist in well registration
 - i. Goal to sample high activity wells every 4 years
 - 1. Not yet achieving this goal but coming close
 - 2. Issues with land properties changing hands and information being lost between transfer of ownership
 - 3. Working on updating water well registration data including ownership, status and location. If the NRD's or Well Inspectors have investigated these locations, they will be converted to Decommissioned status

Item 10. Public Comment

None.

Item 11. Closed Session

None.

Item 12. Adjournment

Mike Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:37 a.m. and Lynn Webster seconded the motion.

Mike Thompson

June 8, 2026

Mike Thompson, Board Secretary

Date