

# Drinking Water and Groundwater Study Group Charter

Updated 05/02/2017

This charter outlines the purpose, structure, membership and meeting organization for the Drinking Water and Groundwater Study Group.

## **Background**

The Drinking Water and Groundwater (DG) program works to protect the quality and quantity of the state's water resources and ensure the safety of drinking water. The DG program implements public drinking water and groundwater quality standards, water quality regulations and the Great Lakes Compact. The DG program reviews public water engineering plans, approves high capacity well applications and conducts oversight on well drillers and pump installers.

Recognizing the benefits of working with a broad group of internal and external stakeholders, DG created a stakeholder group called the Drinking Water and Groundwater Study Group (Study Group). The Study Group is a forum for the department to provide information and receive input and feedback from external interest groups.

## **Purpose and Scope of Responsibilities**

The Study Group is not a forum for decision-making. It is a forum to provide input and feedback on the following topics:

- General state and/or federal drinking water and groundwater policies, including rule-making, guidance development and other initiatives
- Specific state and/or federal drinking water and groundwater topics or regulations
- Specific state well construction and pump installation regulations and related licensing
- Improvement process related to the implementation of regulatory authority
- Opportunities and challenges with implementation plans
- Collaborative efforts with other DNR programs and outside partnerships

## **Membership**

- 10-12 members
- Comprised of members of external interest groups
- Appointed by the DNR Secretary
- Membership is revisited annually in July
- Supported by ad hoc subgroups as needed

## **Operating Guidelines – Timing and Meeting Structure**

The meetings of the Study Group and the ad hoc subgroups will follow these operating guidelines. The guidelines are also intended to facilitate group participation and enhance discussion of the issues.

### *Study Group Operation*

- Members are selected by the DNR Secretary.
- Chair is the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau Director.
- The Study Group is a working group where members may be asked to provide information to the group on various issues. DNR staff will also give presentations and provide documents to the group.
- The recommended frequency of meetings will be quarterly, timed to coincide with major policy decisions and as needed for input on issues. Meetings will primarily be in person, with the option to call in by request.
- Each meeting will be public noticed. No later than two weeks before meetings, all Study Group members and interested parties will be notified of meeting times and locations.
- DNR will prepare meeting agendas and materials. DNR will send information electronically to the Study Group members about one week before the meetings. Agendas and materials will also be posted to the department's public website.
- All meetings of the Study Group and its subgroups are open to the public. o EPA Region 5 representatives will be invited to attend Study Group meetings (and subgroup meetings, as relevant).
- Draft minutes from each Study Group meeting will be distributed to the membership for comments and approval soon after each meeting. A final draft of the meeting minutes will be distributed to the Study Group and put on the Study Group's web page shortly after approval is received from Study Group members.
- Ad hoc subgroups will be established by the Study Group for specific topics. In addition, individual Study Group members may be asked to fulfill certain assignments.
- The Study Group will review the draft recommendations from the subgroups.
- The format for recommendations will include a background narrative, followed by the proposed recommendation, type of recommendation (administrative, statutory, or regulatory) and any resources needed (staff and/or funding).
- The success of the Study Group discussions will be enhanced by regular attendance of the members. Group members are asked to place a high priority on attending the meetings.
- If members cannot attend a meeting, they are asked to discuss this with the chair in advance.

- Substitution of Study Group members will be discouraged to maintain the collaboration and dynamics of the group.
- Every Study Group member's participation and contribution is valuable. Each Study Group member will be allowed to present his/her opinion on topics being discussed and is asked to listen attentively to other group members

#### *Ad Hoc Subgroups*

- Each subgroup will have a chairperson, who is a member of the Study Group. Membership may include Study Group members and /or non-members.
- Each subgroup meeting will be public noticed. No later than two weeks prior to a subgroup meeting, the chairs will notify DNR staff and DNR staff will ensure that all subgroup members and interested parties are notified of meeting times, locations, and agendas.
- Membership in the subgroups will be from a wide variety of interests, to ensure a balanced group and the broadest base for input.
- The chair will provide DNR staff the names and associations of those on the subgroup.
- Each subgroup will take meeting minutes and forward a draft of the minutes to DNR staff for distribution to the subgroup for approval soon after each meeting. A final draft of the minutes will be distributed to the Study Group and put on the Study Group's webpage.
- The Study Group or subgroups will establish the charge of subgroups. A charge may include the following:
  - Identifying options or priorities for resolving drinking water and groundwater issues
  - Identifying whether an issue should be addressed via statutory, regulatory, or administrative (e.g. fact sheet or training) changes
  - Identifying the amount of resources (e.g. staff or money) needed to implement a change