



<http://synergyalberta.ca/group/battle-lake-watershed-synergy-group>

A meeting of the Battle Lake Watershed Synergy Group was held on Thursday May 7, 2020 via Conference Call due to Covid-19 Paul McLauchlin acting as Facilitator.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Paul called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

AGENDA:

- Introductions
- Review of Minutes
- Follow-up Action Items
- AER Updates
- Industry Updates
- Community Updates
- Next Meeting

ATTENDANCE:

In attendance were {1} residents, {7} industry representatives and government officials. (See the attached list.)

Review of Minutes:

Follow-up Action Items:

BMP - Identification on Industry workers vehicles (Rural Crime watch purposes)	Industry Members
Invitation to MLA Rick Wilson to discuss unpaid taxes on May 7, 2020 meeting.	Paul McLauchlin

AER Update: Darcy Allen/Zoriana Wood

May 7, 2020 via email

News Releases:

[Journey Energy Inc. to pay \\$125 000 fine for June 2017 pipeline failure](#)

Journey Energy Inc. has been ordered to pay a \$125 000 fine for a pipeline failure that happened in June 2017. The company pled guilty to one charge under the [Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act](#) in provincial court. Journey's plea comes after a mixture of crude oil and produced water was released from two breakpoints on a pipeline approximately one kilometre southeast of Winfield, Alberta. In total, at least nine cubic metres of emulsion was released from the second breakpoint, adversely impacting the environment. The AER laid charges against Journey in June 2019. The agreed statements of facts and Journey's court submissions are available on the AER's [Compliance Dashboard](#).

[AER announces appointment of new President and CEO](#)

The AER is pleased to announce that after a thorough and exhaustive competition, Laurie Pushor has been named President and CEO, effective April 15, 2020. Mr. Pushor has an in-depth understanding of—and appreciation for—the critical work of the energy regulator. As deputy minister of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Energy and Resources, he played an integral role in ensuring regulation was well-managed and balanced in protecting the environment while allowing responsible energy development. Mr. Pushor also has outstanding experience leading organizations through major transformation and change, which will be a huge asset as the AER continues its journey to ensuring we have not only the structure, but the vision and culture we need to achieve our mandate. The AER's Board of Directors would also like to thank Gordon Lambert for his service to the AER, and for helping ensure a smooth transition.

[AER lays charges against Tamarack Valley Energy](#)

The AER has laid charges against Tamarack Valley Energy and its subsidiary for

- - using water without AER approval,
- - failing to monitor its water use, and
- - failing to properly report its water use to the AER.

The Water Act charges are the result of an investigation into the company's drilling and hydraulic fracturing operations near Veteran between January 2017 and April 2018. To ensure Tamarack's right to a fair prosecution, the AER cannot release further details. Tamarack's first court appearance is scheduled for June 12, 2020, in Coronation.

Announcements:

[The AER is adjusting its business in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.](#)

As the situation around COVID-19 continues to evolve, the AER is taking steps to protect our staff and stakeholders, while continuing our work to deliver on our mandate. This includes making decisions on applications, enforcing our requirements, and responding to energy-related incidents across Alberta.

Effective immediately:

- - All AER offices remain open. However, AER staff are encouraged to work from home, where possible.
- - Meetings with stakeholders will be held virtually, instead of in-person.
- - The AER will continue to respond to energy-related [incidents](#) 24-hours a day.
- - Oral portions of AER hearings will not be held. We are reviewing our current and future adjudicative functions to ensure they remain fair and transparent, while protecting the health of everyone involved.
- - Our [Customer Contact Centre](#) will continue to respond to inquiries.
- - The AER will continue to monitor and provide updates as the situation evolves

[OneStop Release Update](#)

A series of updates to OneStop have been made to improve the user experience, and overall function of the system. Highlights of what is included in these updates are available on the AER OneStop [landing page](#) under fixes and enhancements. Additionally, updated quick reference guides (wells and public lands) have been posted on the OneStop [help page](#). If you have questions about OneStop, please contact the AER's Customer Contact Centre by phone at 403-297-8311 (1-855-297-8311 toll free) or by email at [inquiries@aer.ca](mailto:inquiries@ aer.ca).

[Relief for Industry During COVID-19 Pandemic Response](#)

Physical distancing and other safety protocols that have been put in place to support the COVID-19 response may impact the availability of industry staff and limit capacity to comply with reporting requirements. Alberta Environment and Parks and Alberta Energy have temporarily suspended a number of reporting

requirements that affect Alberta's energy industry. This direction does not affect monitoring requirements, which must continue to be met.

On April 9, 2020, we issued [Bulletin 2020-10: Relief for Industry During COVID-19 Pandemic Response](#), which explained how two ministerial orders apply to parties regulated by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER). Section 6 of [Alberta Energy ministerial order 219/2020](#) modifies the operation of the acts, to the extent it's necessary, to enable reasonable compliance with the COVID-19 orders issued under the *Public Health Act*, including guidelines issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Industry must continue to report as directed in compliance and enforcement orders. They must also continue to report emergencies, including incidents, notifications, contraventions, and releases that have or may have the potential to impact the environment or public safety to the Energy and Environmental Emergency 24-Hour Response Line at 1-800-222-6514 or 780-422-4505. In addition, volumetric reporting, and reporting related to very high and extreme consequence dams is still required. During the period of temporary suspensions, parties must continue to record and retain complete documentation and make it available upon request.

We cannot list all requirements contained within approvals issued under each piece of legislation. If you have questions not answered here, please contact Industry.Relief@aer.ca. These suspensions and modifications will apply for so long as ministerial orders [17/2020](#) and [219/2020](#) are in effect.

[Training: Methane emissions reporting](#)

The AER is offering training on methane emissions reporting. These one-hour tutorials will prepare industry for mandatory submission requirements that comply with [Directive 060: Upstream Petroleum Industry Flaring, Incinerating, and Venting requirements](#). Submissions are due by June 1, 2020. Please contact methane.reduction@aer.ca to request a session. Quick reference guides are also posted on our website under [Guides for Directive 60 Emissions Reporting](#).

Bulletins:

[Process Change When Resuming Drilling Operations after Setting Surface Casing](#)

Drilling a well involves a number of discrete activities. Sometimes an operator drills to full licensed depth all at once, while at other times they break the activities up. Licensees who continued their drilling operations more than six months after it was started filed for and received a "resume approval." There was no operational reason for this approach (for example, there is no safety or environmental concern when resuming drilling after the surface casing has been set). This secondary filing and issuance of another approval was necessary due to how our legacy systems were configured. Recent changes to [OneStop](#) and the [Digital Data Submission](#) (DDS) system have resolved this issue. Effective immediately, we are discontinuing this process. No additional application or approval is required when the licence has been acted upon by the well being spud and the setting of surface casing has occurred, regardless of the length of time between this and the continuation of the drilling of the main hole. Licensees must provide the appropriate drilling activity notifications in the DDS system as explained in and required under [Directive 059: Well Drilling and Completion Data Filing Requirements](#). Licensees should use the notifications "Drilling to Set Surface Casing Only" followed by "Drilling to Licensed Depth."

Licensees must still apply to resume drilling when performing additional drilling operations after a previous completion, suspension, or abandonment of their well, as outlined in section 3.010(1)(e) of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules* and section 7 of [Directive 056](#). If you have any questions, contact the Customer Contact Centre by phone at 1-855-297-8311 or email to inquiries@aer.ca.

[Water Intake Fish Screen Requirements](#)

Water diverted for oil and gas activities is often withdrawn from fish-bearing lakes, rivers, and streams. To prevent fish from being drawn into intake systems, screens must be installed. The specifications of these screens are outlined in the licence conditions. However, recent inspections have found that many screens do not comply with these conditions.

Operators holding *Water Act* licences should review their licence conditions and must ensure that fish screens are installed where necessary and meet the required standards (such as Fisheries and Oceans Canada's *Interim Code of Practice: End-of-pipe Fish Protection Screens for Small Water Intakes in Freshwater*; <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/codes/screen-ecran-eng.html>). Any noncompliance with AER requirements will be addressed in accordance with *Manual 013: Compliance and Enforcement Program*. For more information, contact our Customer Contact Centre by phone at 403-297-8311 (1-855-297-8311 toll free) or by email at inquiries@aer.ca.

[Regulatory Documents Review](#)

The AER continually works to improve its regulations and processes to ensure Alberta's energy resources are developed in a manner that is responsible, safe, and efficient. As part of its contributions towards the Government of Alberta's *Red Tape Reduction Act*, the AER will be making modifications to its regulatory instruments to reduce requirements.

The AER will continue to improve the clarity of our regulatory framework by amending, deleting, or rescinding obsolete and duplicative requirements that place regulatory and administrative burden on regulated parties. These changes will not impact public safety, environmental protection, or resource conservation.

Usually, updates to regulatory instruments are announced by bulletin. Given the number of instruments affected by this initiative, this bulletin is the primary announcement at this time.

Changes to regulatory instruments, including additions, amendments, and rescissions, can be viewed on the AER website, www.aer.ca > Regulating Development > Rules and Directives > [Regulatory Change Report](#). For more information, please contact our Customer Contact Centre by phone at 403-297-8311 (1-855-297-8311 toll free) or by email at inquiries@aer.ca.

[Relief for Industry During COVID-19 Pandemic Response](#)

Physical distancing and other safety protocols that have been put in place to support the COVID-19 response may impact the availability of industry staff and limit capacity to comply with reporting requirements. Alberta Environment and Parks and Alberta Energy have temporarily suspended a number of reporting requirements that affect Alberta's energy industry. This direction does not affect monitoring requirements, which must continue to be met.

Industry must continue to report as directed in compliance and enforcement orders. They must also continue to report emergencies, including incidents, notifications, contraventions, and releases that have or may have the potential to impact the environment or public safety to the Energy and Environmental Emergency 24-Hour Response Line at 1-800-222-6514 or 780-422-4505.

Alberta Energy [Ministerial Order](#)

Alberta Energy has suspended the following:

- All of the following requirements to report information pursuant to provisions in the *Coal Conservation Rules* and approvals:

- - Annual reporting under section 65(2)(a) and (b)
- - Exploration reporting under section 40

- - All plans specified within approval conditions under the *Coal Conservation Act* except
 - conditions related to geotechnical reporting
- The following requirements to report information pursuant to provisions in the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules*, directives, approvals, licences:
- - All deliverability, annual, and initial reservoir pressure surveys for resource conservation
 - (including enhanced oil recovery, disposal, oil and gas production depletion strategy) and pool
 - delineation required under *Directive 040: Pressure and Deliverability Testing Oil and Gas Wells* and section 11.102 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules*
 - - All annual progress reports and performance presentations for scheme approvals required
 - under section 2.1.4.1 of *Directive 065: Resources Applications for Oil and Gas Reservoirs* and
 - section 39 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*
 - - Submission of well logs and summary reports required under section 7.2 of *Directive 080: Well Logging* and sections 11.005 and 11.140 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules*
- The following requirements under *Directive 013: Suspension Requirements for Wells* and section 3.020 of the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules*:
- - Inactive wells not part of the Inactive Well Compliance Program
 - -initial suspension requirements in *Directive 013* for all wells considered low and medium risk type 6
 - -on-going inspection requirements in *Directive 013* for all wells considered low and medium risk
 - -Inactive wells in the Inactive Well Compliance Program
 - -compliance deadline for the final year of the program
- All of the following requirements to report information pursuant to provisions in the *Oil Sands Conservation Rules* and approvals for both oil sands mining and in situ:
- -Annual mine plans under section 30
 - -Report of mining operations under section 31
 - -Report of operations under section 58
 - -Annual geotechnical report under section 32
 - -All plans specified within approval conditions under the *Oil Sands Conservation Act* except
 - conditions related to geotechnical reporting requirements.

Alberta Environment and Parks [Ministerial Order](#)

As it relates to Alberta Energy Regulator requirements, with some exceptions, Alberta Environment and Parks has suspended the following:

- -All requirements to report information pursuant to provisions in approvals or registrations authorized
- under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.
- -All requirements to report information pursuant to provisions in licences or approvals authorized under
- the *Water Act*.
- -All requirements to report as required under a formal disposition under the *Public Lands Act*.
- While these reporting requirements have been suspended, the following exceptions apply (meaning the
- following reports must still be submitted).

Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act

- - Bird protection plans for oil sands sector
- - Annual Mine Financial Security Program submissions for oil sands and coal sectors
- - Research program for Base Mine Lake and Miwasin Lake

Water Act

- - Final reclamation summary reports for all sectors
- - Dam safety submissions for all high-, very-high-, and extreme-consequence dams.
- - Baseline studies at the McClelland Lake Wetland Complex

Public Lands Act

- - Annual aggregate management plan update for oil sands and coal sectors
- - Annual disclosure of area cleared for oil sands and coal sectors

During the period of temporary suspensions, parties must continue to record and retain complete documentation and make it available upon request.

We cannot list all requirements contained within approvals issued under each piece of legislation. If you have questions not answered in this bulletin, please contact Industry.Relief@aer.ca. We will continue to work with the Government of Alberta and industry to ensure the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of Alberta's energy resources. These are exceptional times, and we will remain flexible and responsive to the changing circumstances.

Q: EDS system is essentially gone and now moved to OneStop?

ZW: Yes. There are online training sessions available, follow the link provided in update.

Q: Where was water drawn from in the Tamarack case:

ZW: Not known. Will follow up.

Q: Concern over energy reporting requirements; standards are all intertwined (health, environment, etc.).

ZW: Work is still required to be done, only the reporting requirements allow for a grace period. Objective is to reduce cost until restrictions are lifted. Work will continue, reporting will be done at a later time.

INDUSTRY UPDATES:**Baytex: Shane Koss**

April 21, 2020 via email

Baytex has canceled its capital drill plans for 2020 in the Battle Lake area, and production is currently shut-in.

Resourceful Petroleum: Bill Dolan

No Update.

Journey Energy: Dale Guidi

No Update.

Sifton Petroleum Inc: Davin Chandler

No Update.

Cenovus: Leon Heck

Not currently shutting anything in. No drilling or production. Normal operations withing the watershed. Offices are closed, social distancing practiced.

County of Wetaskiwin: Dale Woitt

No Update.

Land Consultant: Graham Gilchrist

No Update.

COMMUNITY UPDATES:**Battle River Watershed Alliance: Sarah Skinner**

Looking forward to engagement, education and awareness opportunities with residents of Battle Lake Watershed when able.

Q: How is abandoned well reclamation rolling out?

ZW: Funding from the federal government was available and applications opened May 1, 2020. Hopefully there are more applications and will resolve liabilities.

MC: \$100 million available May 1st. Infor sessions on how to apply are available. 18000 applications have been made so far. The cap for individual applications is \$30,000. Some applications have not met the form requirements so are having to reapply.

MR: Good initiative to boost employment. Information on requirements of wells continuing to be the responsibility of company and what is in store for abandoned wells. Paul can provide information on abandoned well reclamation.

Solstice Environmental: Michelle Cotton/Jon Potter

Working with Louis Bull Tribe on a new program "Lands for Prosperity". Louis Bull Tribe owns 10,000 acres of privately owned lands between Pigeon Lake and Maskwacis. Programs aims to reconnect members to the land which has been historically leased out to third parties, reduce herbicides and inorganic fertilizers being used on the land, as well as integrate crops and livestock for effective land management. Jon Potter is the project manager.

Meeting Dates:

September 3, 2020

November 5, 2020

*Options for zoom or call in will be explored as necessary for next meeting to accommodate COVID restrictions of that time.

ATTENDANCE LIST

INDIVIDUAL	REPRESENTING
Paul McLauchlin	Facilitator
Linda Black	Secretary
Leon Heck	Cenovus
Zoriana Wood	AER
Michelle Cotton	Solstice Environmental
Sarah Skinner	Battle River Watershed Alliance
Margaret Rathnavalu	Camrose Resident
John Potter	Solstice Environmental