

# Utah Department of Environmental Quality Press Releases

## For the Year 2004

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## Air Quality Update

January 16, 2004

Contacts:

Laura Vernon, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, 801.554.4944

Mike Weibel, Bear River Health Department, 435.994.1122

The air quality alert in Cache County has changed from "very unhealthy" to "unhealthy." The red wood-burn condition is still in effect. The health advisory is for sensitive individuals. Children, the elderly and those with respiratory and heart disease should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors.

"We are pleased the levels of pollution are somewhat lower, but the situation is still serious," Air Quality Division Director Rick Sprott said.

Residents are encouraged to "Choose Clean Air" by carpooling, using mass transit, consolidating trips, conserving energy, avoiding traffic delays, obeying the speed limit and limiting their car's idling time. More ideas are available on the Web at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

As the final regulatory monitoring methods for measuring particulate matter results were performed, the real-time values of particulate pollution reported for Cache County turned out to be lower. However, the final pollution levels still far exceed the health standard. Therefore, the health advisory and actions for curbing pollution are still valid.

The real-time monitoring instruments and methods allow scientists to measure pollution every hour, but the ultimate measure of particulate matter comes from a paper filter used for an entire 24-hour period. The filters must then be dried and weighed in a laboratory. This process is too lengthy to allow regulators to warn the public in advance of increasing pollution. The real-time monitors take readings hourly but are known to be affected by humidity.

State scientists have already made adjustments to account for humidity, but the extraordinarily high values over the past few days entered new territory never experienced in the nation. The correction factors are now being updated to adapt to the extreme inversion and humidity experienced in Cache County.

"We are ensuring our methods and health advisories are as accurate as possible, ensuring the public is protected without being alarmist," Sprott said.

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## **Pollution Level in Cache County Continues to Climb**

January 16, 2004

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, 801.536.4000  
Laura Vernon, UDEQ Public Information Officer, 801.536.4484

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The particulate matter pollution level in Cache County is getting worse as the inversion persists. The level is at 184 micrograms per cubic meter, which is two and a half times above the health standard of 65. This level is the highest ever recorded in Utah since monitoring of fine particulate matter began four years ago.

"The air is very unhealthy and we are concerned about the high level of pollution," said Division of Air Quality Director Rick Sprott.

A red wood-burn condition and a health advisory for the general population are in effect for Cache County. All individuals should avoid prolonged exertion outdoors. A red wood-burn condition prohibits the use of wood- and coal-burning fireplaces and stoves.

Sprott said that everyone can help reduce pollution. "We all need to take action. Since cars cause 50 percent of the pollution, driving less or not at all will make a difference."

Activities that will help bring pollution levels down include carpooling, using mass transit, postponing errands, consolidating trips, conserving energy, telecommuting, avoiding traffic delays, limiting your car's idling time, obeying the speed limit and keeping your car well-tuned.

More ideas are available on the Web at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

According to Sprott, the Bear River Health Department and City of Logan have proactively implemented a number of programs in the last two years to help curb pollution.

They include a mandatory wood-burn control program and a smoking vehicle program. The Logan City Power Plant has replaced diesel engines with natural gas. The lights on Main Street in downtown Logan are timed to ease congestion. The heating plant at Utah State University now runs on natural gas instead of coal.

"City and county leaders, the university and the local health department have implemented a variety of voluntary measures to bring pollution levels down, but we still need help from everyone during this time," Sprott said.

State air quality officials are consulting with city, county, local health department and university leaders to discuss more ways to reduce pollution.

As always, monitoring of the air will continue during the weekend.

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## **Logan's Air Not the Worst in the Nation**

January 23, 2004

Contact:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, 801.536.4000

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Logan does not have the worst air in the nation, officials said today. Logan may have had the highest readings for the last few days, but it's not a record and other areas of the country have dirty air almost all year long.

Although preliminary numbers indicated that Logan had record-breaking pollution levels in Utah and the nation last week, the real numbers from paper filters weighed in a laboratory painted a more accurate picture. The pollution levels turned out to be significantly lower, but they were still twice the health standard.

"That leaves a lot of work to do to cut pollution and protect health. The problem is real," said Air Quality Division Director Rick Sprott. "We use the preliminary numbers to notify people of current conditions and actions they can take to reduce pollution," Sprott said. "Our first priority is to protect public health."

According to Sprott, extreme humidity and low temperatures skewed the readings on the real-time monitoring instruments. These instruments allow scientists to measure pollution every hour. However, the ultimate measure of particulate matter comes from a paper filter used for an entire 24-hour period. The filters are then dried and weighed in a laboratory.

"Scientists have already made adjustments to account for humidity, but the high humidity and extreme inversion in the past few weeks entered new territory," Sprott said. "The instruments have been corrected to adapt to these conditions."

Cache Valley is unique because it is much smaller and narrower than the Salt Lake Valley. In addition, snow cover and dense fog are common. "All these ingredients make the perfect recipe for pollution in spite of its modest population and industry," Sprott said.

Logan City, the Bear River Health Department and Utah State University (USU) have taken proactive measures in the last two years to reduce pollution.

For example, the health department established a wood-burn control program and a smoking vehicle program with police enforcement and a hotline. Logan City synchronized traffic lights on Main Street that reduced congestion by 100 percent. The city also converted from diesel to natural gas at the municipal power plant. USU replaced its coal-fired heating plant with a modern natural gas plant. USU also uses natural gas buses for on-campus shuttles.

"We recognized early on that we could take preventative measures, and residents have been very supportive," said Lloyd Berentzen, acting director of the Bear River Health Department. "While the situation is still serious, it's not as bad as it could have been without these changes."

To help reduce pollution during the current inversion episode, Logan City has curtailed road crews, required city employees to carpool or use mass transit, obtained electricity from the grid rather than run its plant and had some businesses close "drive-through windows" to reduce idling.

"The community has really come together to do extraordinary things," said Logan City Mayor Douglas Thompson. "I'm proud of the work we've done, but there's still more to do."

One additional action being taken is research. State air quality scientists and USU faculty are conducting joint research to better characterize the extraordinary situation in Cache Valley to find solutions.

"We feel it is important for us to take a role in finding solutions now and in the future," said Darrell Hart, USU assistant vice president for facilities. "Not only do we live and work in the community, we also have highly qualified staff and concerned leaders willing to make a difference."

The Division of Air Quality will continue to work with local officials and USU to find immediate steps to reduce pollution this season and in the future. The greatest challenge will be to find enough emission reductions to meet the health standards during these extraordinary conditions.

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## **DEQ Names New Radiation Control Manager**

February 2, 2004

Contacts:

Dane Finerfrock and Loren Morton, Utah Division of Radiation Control,  
801.536.4250

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Loren Morton has been promoted to manager of the Radioactive Waste and Environmental Monitoring Section in DEQ's Division of Radiation Control. Dane Finerfrock vacated the position in November when he was appointed division director.

Morton has been the division's senior hydrogeologist for nine years, specializing in radioactive waste and uranium mill tailings. He's been instrumental in licensing and monitoring low-level radioactive waste landfills as well as plans for cleanup of the Moab Mill Tailings.

He also worked for DEQ's Division of Water Quality for 10 years as a hydrogeologist in the ground water protection and underground injection control programs.

"Loren knows radioactive waste issues well because he has dealt with them firsthand for many years," Finerfrock said. "His experience and technical ability are tremendous assets."

As section manager, Morton will oversee a staff of 11 scientists and engineers and a number of programs, including regulation of low-level radioactive waste facilities, radioactive materials and uranium mills; ground water discharge permits; and radon outreach and prevention.

"I look forward to carrying on the good work done in the past and continuing my association with an excellent staff as we work together to protect the environment," Morton said.

Morton is a member of the Association of Ground Water Scientists and Engineers and the Utah Geological Association. He is a licensed professional geologist.

Morton earned his geology degrees from Brigham Young University. His past experience includes working for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as an engineering geologist.

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## **"Red Light-Green Light" Air Quality Program Extended Two Weeks**

February 26, 2004

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, 801.536.4000

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality Planning Manager, 801.536.4015

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The Department of Environmental Quality's "Red Light - Green Light" program, which curtails wood burning during winter inversions, has been extended two weeks to March 14 in Cache, Weber, Davis, Salt Lake and Utah counties.

State air quality officials and the Bear River Health Department have extended the program, which normally runs Nov. 1 to March 1, because of continuing winter conditions and the possibility of more inversions. Inversions trap pollution near the ground where it can impact respiratory health, especially for children, the elderly and those with respiratory illnesses.

"With snow still on the ground and inversions still hanging around, it makes sense to extend the program so that people know when to protect themselves and how they can help keep the air clean," said Division of Air Quality Director Rick Sprott.

"When it comes to public health, it's better to be cautious and protective," he said. "We've had a challenging winter, especially in Cache County."

Through March 14, residents are asked to adhere to the wood-burn control program and follow any health advisories that may be issued.

As a reminder, wood-burn conditions are identified as "red, yellow, and green." A "red" condition indicates burning is prohibited, "yellow" means a voluntary no burn, and "green" means burning is allowed.

Residents are asked to drive as little as possible during "red" and "yellow" days because cars contribute significantly to the area's air pollution. More information on actions residents can take to reduce pollution is available on the "Clean Air Utah" web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

Also, during this extension period, fines can be levied against individuals who use a wood-burning fireplace or stove during a red-burn condition. A first-time offender is charged up to \$25; a second-time offender pays \$50 to \$150; and a third-time offender faces fines from \$150 to \$299.

The "Red Light - Green Light" program reduces particulate air pollution (PM10 and PM2.5) and carbon monoxide. PM10 particles are 10 microns or less in diameter, approximately 1/10 of the diameter of human hair. PM2.5 are particles smaller than PM10.

Pollution conditions are monitored by DEQ's Division of Air Quality and announced daily by newspapers, television and radio stations. Recorded updates can be obtained from the Air Pollution Index Hotline at 975-4009 for Salt Lake and Davis counties and (800) 228-5434 elsewhere, and on the "Clean Air Utah" web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

Cache County residents may call (435) 792-6612 for recorded daily updates on the wood-burn conditions in their area. Residents may also report illegal burning on "red days" by calling (435) 792-6611.

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## **Air Quality Wood-Burn Season Ends**

March 12, 2004

Contacts:

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality Planning Manager, 801.536.4015  
Bob Dalley, Air Monitoring Center Manager, 801.887.0762

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announces the end of this season's "Red Light, Green Light" air quality program, which curtails wood burning along the Wasatch Front and Cache County during winter inversions, on Sunday, March 14. The program normally ends March 1, but because of continuing winter conditions and the possibility of more inversions, DEQ decided to extend this winter's program by two weeks.

During the season, which began Nov. 1, 2003, the Division of Air Quality called 23 "red" days and four "yellow" days in Salt Lake and Davis counties; 15 "red" days and three "yellow" days in Utah County; and nine "red" days and 12 "yellow" days in Weber County.

Furthermore, in January 2003, the Bear River Health Department implemented a mandatory wood-burn program for Cache County as a measure to improve air quality. The local health department called 25 "red" days and four "yellow" days in Cache County.



"The good news is that even though we had a challenging winter, especially in Cache County, we are still in compliance with the federal health standards," Division of Air Quality Director Rick Sprott said.

"We were impressed with the voluntary actions taken by individual citizens, local businesses and community leaders on behalf of our air quality," he said. "The individual actions each of us took collectively made a difference. I encourage the public to keep up the good work."

Wood-burning conditions are identified as "Red, Yellow, Green" - similar to traffic lights. The program is used to notify citizens when they can burn wood in a fireplace, depending upon pollution levels. "Red" means burning is prohibited and people are asked to reduce vehicle trips, use mass transit and conserve energy. Likewise, industries are asked to minimize their release of air pollutants and ensure that air pollution control equipment is functioning properly. "Yellow" means a voluntary no burn, and "green" means burning is allowed.

Particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) is the primary winter pollutant. Wood burning produces soot and dust that are components of particulate, as are emissions from vehicles and other engines. Fine particles can become lodged in delicate lung tissue, decreasing lung function, especially for people with respiratory and cardiovascular ailments.

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## **Division of Air Quality Manager Announces Retirement**

March 12, 2004

Contacts:

Marv Maxell and Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4000

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Marv Maxell, manager of the Air Standards Branch in DEQ's Division of Air Quality, has announced his retirement after 30 years of service with the State of Utah. Maxell's last day is Friday, March 12.

"I've had more opportunities in Utah than I could have had anywhere else in the Rocky Mountains," Maxell said. "I feel I have worked through many issues to do the right thing for the environment and public health."

One of Maxell's accomplishments was writing the fugitive dust rule. It was the result of eight years of work with the Association of General Contractors and the Wasatch Front Regional Council to control dust at construction sites and gravel pit operations. The reconstruction of I-15 was the first major project in the western United States to be permitted for fugitive dust by a state agency.

"Marv has made many noteworthy contributions to communities all over the state to improve air quality and visibility," said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality. "His personal style and sense of humor, even during the toughest times, will be fondly remembered for many years."

Maxell began working for the State of Utah in 1973 as a water biologist for the Division of Wildlife Resources. Two years later he went to the Bureau of Water Pollution Control and established Utah's first water monitoring program.

In 1979 he became the manager of the Bureau of Environmental Chemistry at the State Health Lab. For a year in 1981 he was acting director of the Division of Environmental Health, after which he became assistant director of the Division.

For six years starting in 1986 Maxell was the assistant director of the Bureau of Air Quality in charge of cleaning up toxic waste sites now known as Superfund sites. Then in 1992 he became the Division of Air Quality's Air Standards Branch manager in charge of compliance and air monitoring. He established Utah's hazardous air pollutants program and hired the Division's first toxicologist.

Born in Nebraska and raised in Colorado, Maxell holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Fort Lewis College and master and doctoral degrees in zoology from the University of Wyoming.

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## **Division of Drinking Water Receives Award of Excellence**

March 15, 2004

Contact:

Kevin Brown, Division of Drinking Water Director, (801) 536-4200

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Utah Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Drinking Water has received an award of excellence and has been recognized as the 2003 Associate Member of the Year by the Rural Water Association of Utah.

"We're honored to receive this award," said Kevin Brown, director of the Division of Drinking Water. "We appreciate working in cooperation with the association to make sure water system operators in Utah are providing the best drinking water in the nation."

The division works with association members to provide operator certification training and help in preparing consumer confidence and monitoring reports. The division also offers training at the association's winter and summer conferences.

"We work hand in hand to achieve compliance and provide quality services," Brown said.

The Division of Drinking Water was honored with the award February 25 at the Rural Water Association of Utah's winter conference, which is the third largest Rural Water Association conference in the nation, behind Kansas and Texas. More than 1,500 water industry professionals attend each year.

More information about the Utah Division of Drinking Water is available on the Web at [www.drinkingwater.utah.gov](http://www.drinkingwater.utah.gov). The Rural Water Association of Utah also has a Web site at [www.rwau.net](http://www.rwau.net) (opens in a new window).

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## **Trustee Forms Stakeholder Forum for Southwest Jordan Valley Groundwater Cleanup Project**

March 16, 2004

Contact:

Dianne Nielson, Natural Resource Damage Trustee, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Natural Resource Damage Trustee Dianne Nielson announces the formation of a Stakeholder Forum for the Southwest Jordan Valley Groundwater Cleanup Project.

The purpose of the Forum is to share information with affected parties, facilitate a better understanding of technical issues and discuss issues surrounding the cleanup of groundwater contamination by historical mining activities in the Oquirrh Mountains in Salt Lake County.

"This Forum is a response to requests from the public that communication be strengthened," Nielson said. "It is in addition to formal public comment periods, which will remain an important part of the overall process."

The Forum consists of representatives from area private well owners; environmental groups; duck clubs; Salt Lake County; cities of Copperton, Herriman, South Jordan, West Jordan and Riverton; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Geological Survey; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Department of Environmental Quality; Division of Oil, Gas and Mining; Division of Water Rights; Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District; and Kennecott Utah Copper Corporation.

Nielson chairs the Forum and will work with a vice chair, selected by Forum members, to develop agendas. The Forum will meet at least quarterly. Discussions will focus on agenda items and will be limited to those issues over which the Trustee has authority, Nielson said.

The Forum's first meeting will be Wednesday, March 17 at 5:30 p.m. at the South Jordan City Council Chambers, 1600 W. Town Center Dr., in South Jordan.

"Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and listen to the presentations and Forum discussions," Nielson said. No formal votes will be taken.

Meeting agendas and summaries will be posted on the Web at [www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd/index.htm](http://www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd/index.htm).

Kennecott Utah Copper Corporation, in partnership with the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District, is proposing to extract and treat sulfate-contaminated groundwater in southwest Salt Lake County. The resulting municipal-quality drinking water will be distributed by the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District to the cities of West Jordan, South Jordan, Riverton and Herriman. This treatment process will also help Kennecott contain the contaminated groundwater plumes.

The Trustee's public comment period on the proposal closed in late November. Nielson is reviewing public comments and finalizing the response summary.

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## **Water Quality Director Nominated as Engineer of the Year**

March 23, 2004

Contacts:

Don Ostler and Kiran Bhayani, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6146

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The American Academy of Environmental Engineers has nominated Utah Division of Water Quality Director Don Ostler as one of eight nominees to the Utah Engineers Council for the 2004 Engineer of the Year award.

"Don has made significant contributions as a professional engineer and a leader, using engineering principles to implement programs to protect and enhance water quality in Utah and serve as models for national programs," said Dianne Nielson, executive director of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality.

"I'm honored to be nominated for this award," Ostler said. "It is a pleasure and privilege to work as an environmental engineer, contributing to the field, protecting and improving water quality in Utah and providing expertise on national issues."

As director of the Division of Water Quality since 1988, Ostler has provided leadership in the development of projects and programs to protect and improve water quality in Utah. He's been involved in various programs such as construction grants, state wastewater loans, groundwater protection, animal waste management and water restoration plans.

He is associated with the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators, the Western State Water Council's Water Quality Committee and Utah Soil Conservation Commission. He has served as chairman of the Bear River Commission's Water Quality Committee and as a member of the University of Utah's Civil Engineering Advisory Committee.

Ostler's career in environmental engineering began more than 30 years ago. He has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Utah. He's been a registered professional engineer since 1971.

Individuals nominated for the 2004 Engineer of the Year award exemplify the highest professional engineering standards and practices, and demonstrate significant enduring benefit at local, state and national levels.

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## **Division of Air Quality Names New Branch Manager**

April 13, 2004

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Air Quality Division Director, (801) 536-4000

Bryce Bird, Air Standards Branch Manager, (801) 536-4000

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Utah Division of Air Quality Director Rick Sprott has named Bryce Bird as the new manager of the Air Standards Branch. Bird replaces Marv Maxell, who retired in March after 30 years with the State of Utah. Bird has been serving as the manager of the branch's Hazardous Air Pollutants Section.

"Bryce is the right person to step into this job," Sprott said. "He has provided outstanding leadership to a staff that has accomplished great work. And just as important, he is committed to doing the right thing for the environment and improving Utah's quality of life."

As manager of the Air Standards Branch, Bird will ensure that citizens have the best available information about the air they breathe, assist companies in maintaining compliance with air quality regulations and fairly resolve violations of air quality regulations. Furthermore, he will ensure that generators of air pollution apply all required practices to reduce the amount of pollutants they release into the air.

"We have a proven track record at doing our job of protecting the health and environment of the citizens of Utah," Bird said. "I'm looking forward to building on our successes and continuing to move our work forward in a positive direction."

Bird earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Utah in 1991. He began his career with the State of Utah in DEQ's Division of Environmental Response and Remediation in 1991 as an environmental technician, moving to the Division of Air Quality in 1992 to work as an environmental scientist. In 1999, he became manager of the Division of Air Quality's Hazardous Air Pollutants Section.

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## **Water Quality Manager Receives Service Award**

May 10, 2004

Contact:

Walt Baker, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6088

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Walter L. Baker, manager of the Engineering and Water Quality Management Branch in the Utah Division of Water Quality, received the Water Environment Association of Utah's Grant K. Borg Extraordinary Service Award, which recognizes long-term commitment and achievement in the area of water quality improvement in Utah. Baker joins 11 leaders in the field of water environment who have received the award since it was implemented in 1983.

"This award is a tremendous and humbling honor," Baker said. "Grant Borg is known in the circle of water quality professionals as a giant. It's humbling to have my name in the same sentence as his."

As a civil and environmental engineer and Division of Water Quality branch manager, Baker's responsibilities include overseeing loans and grants for wastewater infrastructure; administering Utah's water quality standards and clean lakes program; and overseeing the certification program for the state's wastewater facilities operators.

Baker recently completed a term as chair of the national advisory board for the State Revolving Fund program. In 1988, he was instrumental in developing the federal wastewater loan program in Utah, which became one of the first states to implement it. Under his direction, nearly \$300 million has been provided for wastewater treatment and collection systems throughout the state. More than 140 projects in Utah have been constructed through this program.

During a term as president of the Water Environment Association of Utah, Baker oversaw programs for water environment education and planning and heightened emphasis on wastewater re-use. He is a past recipient of the Arthur Sidney Bedell Award, given by the national Water Environment Federation for extraordinary service in the area of water environment leadership. Baker resides in Centerville, Utah with his wife, Celia R. Baker. They are the parents of three daughters.

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## **State Water Quality Director to Leave Post**

May 10, 2004

Contacts:

Don Ostler, Division of Water Quality Director, (801) 538-6081  
Dianne Nielson, UDEQ Executive Director, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The nation's longest-serving state water quality director, Don Ostler, today announced his resignation after 32 years of service with the State of Utah. He has accepted the position of executive director for the Upper Colorado River Commission. His last day at DEQ will be Friday, May 14.

"I am excited for the future, but I will miss the people at DEQ so very much," Ostler said. "There are some great and dedicated people at DEQ, and much has been accomplished to improve our environment and protect our water. I am proud to have been a part of it with them."

"Utah's water quality is better because of Don's work," said DEQ Executive Director Dianne Nielson. "His leadership and commitment to quality surface water and groundwater are reflected in the quality of our environment."

Ostler became director of the Utah Division of Water Quality in 1987. He provided leadership in the development of projects and programs to protect and improve water quality in Utah, including implementation of the Clean Water Act and development of the state Groundwater Protection Program. Recognizing the value of "National Standards, Neighborhood Solutions," Ostler and other state, federal and private partners developed

the state environmental program for concentrated animal feeding operations, which became a model for the federal regulatory program. He has also been involved in the administration of various programs such as construction grants, state wastewater loans and water restoration plans.

During his career, Ostler has served as president of the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators, chairman of the Bear River Commission's Water Quality Committee, chairman of the Western State Water Council's Water Quality Committee and member of the University of Utah's Civil Engineering Advisory Committee and the Utah Soil Conservation Commission.

Ostler was recently nominated by the American Academy of Environmental Engineers as one of eight nominees to the Utah Engineers Council for the 2004 Engineer of the Year award. He has also received a public service award from the Water Environment Association.

Ostler has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Utah. He has been a registered professional engineer since 1971.

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## **Acting Water Quality Director Named**

May 13, 2004

Contact:

Walt Baker, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6088

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Walter Baker has been selected to serve as acting director of the Utah Division of Water Quality and acting executive secretary of the Utah Water Quality Board. His selection follows the resignation of Don Ostler, who accepted a position with the Upper Colorado River Commission. Baker manages the division's Engineering and Water Quality Management Branch.

“Walt has extensive knowledge and experience managing water quality issues,” said DEQ Executive Director Dianne Nielson. “We are fortunate to have Walt's leadership abilities and expertise moving the division forward.”

Baker began his career with DEQ's Division of Water Quality in 1984 as an environmental engineer. In 1988 he became the manager of the division's Construction Assistance Section. He was then promoted in 2003 to manager of the Engineering and



Water Quality Management Branch. Before DEQ, he worked for five years at a consulting engineering firm in Vernal.

“The quality of our water is key in determining our future quality of life,” Baker said. “I believe in a well-informed and involved public, collaboration for the common good and resolve to do what’s best and right.”

Baker has been widely recognized for his service to protect and improve water quality. He recently received the Water Environment Association of Utah’s Grant K. Borg Extraordinary Service Award. In 2000 he received the Water Environment Federation’s Arthur Sidney Bedell Award. The Utah Rural Water Association named him a “Friend of Rural Water” in 1998.

His leadership experiences include serving as president of the Water Environment Association of Utah in 1998 and on the association’s Board of Directors for eight years. He has been a committee chair for the last five years. He recently completed a one-year term as chair of the national State/EPA Revolving Fund Workgroup.

Baker participates in a number of water quality management committees, including the Utah Wastewater Operator Certification Council and the Upper Colorado Basin Salinity Control Forum. Baker is a registered professional engineer in Utah. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in civil and environmental engineering in 1979 from Utah State University.

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## **Free Environmental Management Systems Training Available**

May 17, 2004

Contact:

Sonja Wallace, DEQ Pollution Prevention Coordinator, (801) 536-4477

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is sponsoring free training for Utah businesses and military and government agencies on how to successfully implement and audit an Environmental Management System (EMS).

An EMS focuses on improving an organization’s environmental performance through increased compliance with environmental regulations, reduced environmental liabilities and greater eco-efficiency.

“This program is the most significant pollution prevention program available because it encourages proactive protection of the environment in the most cost-effective way,” said

Sonja Wallace, DEQ pollution prevention coordinator. “Thousands of organizations around the world will be implementing EMSs over the next decade.”

An introductory workshop is being offered on Tuesday, May 25 at DEQ, Room 101, 168 N. 1950 West, Salt Lake City, from 9 to 11:30 a.m., with a repeat session from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Included in the workshop is a brief presentation on the new Clean Utah! program. It is a voluntary program designed to recognize and reward facilities that are willing to take steps, beyond those required by rule or statute, to prevent or reduce pollution.

The three-day course on “Implementing a Performance-Based Environmental Management System” is June 21-23, followed by the two-course course on “Auditing a Performance-Based Environmental Management System” on June 24-25. Both courses are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at DEQ, Room 101, 168 N. 1950 West, Salt Lake City.

DEQ is teaming with ERM Certification and Verification Services to provide these high-intensity, high-quality training sessions.

Space is limited and reservations are required. For more information and to reserve your space, please contact Sonja Wallace at (801) 536-4477 or [swallace@utah.gov](mailto:swallace@utah.gov).

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## **Wasatch Front Enters Summer Ozone Season**

May 28, 2004

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, (801) 536-4000  
Laura Vernon, UDEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Beginning June 1 through Sept. 30, Salt Lake, Davis, Weber and Utah county residents are asked to “Choose Clean Air” in an effort to reduce ozone, an invisible gas formed when emissions from automobiles, industry and other sources react to bright sunshine and high temperatures. Ozone is a major health and environmental concern in Utah’s most urban counties during the summer.

As such, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is asking residents to participate in voluntary “no-drive days” when high ozone concentrations are forecast. To help residents know what other actions they can take, especially if they can’t get out of their vehicles, DEQ has a “Clean Air Utah” Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov). By visiting the Web site, people can develop a daily plan of action, personalized to their needs, that includes steps they can take at home and at work, as well as ways to drive less and drive smarter.

For example, residents can help keep pollution levels down by carpooling or taking the bus or TRAX, walking to lunch, filling the gas tank or mowing the lawn in the evening, avoiding use of gasoline-powered engines on polluted days, keeping your car well-tuned and tires properly inflated, driving the speed limit, avoiding idling in drive-through lanes, delaying errands and consolidating trips.

Plus, the good habits that help to reduce air pollution and improve the quality of the air we breathe can also save money at the gas pump.

“There are plenty of simple things drivers can do to help reduce air pollution and save money at the pump at the same time,” said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality. “By taking daily action, people can make a difference all summer long, and they may be surprised at just how much money they can actually save without having to make a lot of big adjustments.”

Residents are also encouraged to watch out for signs that pollution levels are increasing and to be extra vigilant at doing their part to keep pollution levels at a minimum.

“The brown haze you see hovering over the valley is a mix of ozone-forming pollutants,” Sprott said. “That haze coupled with temperatures at or above 95 degrees and calm winds create the perfect recipe for ozone - and the perfect time to leave the car parked.”

According to Sprott, any exposure to ozone can be harmful. Continued exposure to ozone can cause breathing problems, reduce lung function, irritate eyes and nasal passages and reduce resistance to colds and other infections.

“Every little bit that residents can do helps the air we breathe in big ways. High ozone levels threaten our children’s health, especially those with asthma, and we must do a better job at protecting our most precious resource,” Sprott said.

Some people are more at risk of health impacts than others. Those most at risk are children who are active outdoors, adults who work or exercise vigorously outdoors and people with respiratory diseases such as asthma or emphysema.

At-risk people can reduce their exposure to ozone, especially between 2 and 8 p.m. when ozone concentrations are at their highest, by spending less time participating in vigorous outdoor activities, taking it a little easier when outside and exercising in the morning or later in the evening.

For the latest air pollution information, residents are encouraged to visit the “Clean Air Utah” Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov), or call the Air Pollution Hotline at 975-4009 in Salt Lake and Davis counties or (800) 228-5434 in Utah and Weber counties. Information on air quality is updated at least twice a day - once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

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## **Trustee Opens Public Comment Period on Revised Groundwater Cleanup Plan**

June 17, 2004

Contact:

Dianne Nielson, State of Utah Natural Resource Damage Trustee, Utah  
Department of Environmental Quality, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – A proposal to clean up sulfate-contaminated groundwater in the Southwest Jordan Valley area of Salt Lake County has been revised and public comment is being reopened, according to Dianne Nielson, State of Utah Natural Resource Damage (NRD) Trustee and Executive Director of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

After considering feedback from the public and, later, from the Stakeholder Forum, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District and Kennecott Utah Copper Corporation revised the proposal. Specifically, Zone B/Lost Use operations include revised options for managing reverse osmosis concentrates from water treatment, with no discharges to the Jordan River and associated wetlands. The District has withdrawn its permit to discharge waste concentrate from the reverse osmosis treatment to the Jordan River. The proposal for Zone A remains unchanged.

New opportunities for public and scientific review include establishing the Stakeholder Forum to facilitate review and discussion of issues concerning groundwater cleanup, and coordination with stakeholders and agencies to study selenium in the Great Salt Lake and establish a numeric standard for the lake.

As a direct result of public comment, DEQ established the Stakeholder Forum. This group is comprised of representatives of communities, interest groups and agencies affected by the groundwater cleanup project and other remediation work underway by Kennecott. The Forum provided feedback to the District on alternatives for managing wastes from the Zone B/Lost Use treatment. It will continue to serve as a forum for review and discussion of various aspects of Kennecott's remediation programs under EPA and DEQ oversight.

The District has proposed working with agencies and interested parties to conduct a two-year scientific study on selenium in the Great Salt Lake. In coordination with local, state and federal agencies and stakeholders, the DEQ Division of Water Quality is initiating a program to establish a numeric selenium standard for the Great Salt Lake. Discharges to

the lake are subject to regulation and permit. Currently, standards exist for tributaries and are established on a case-by-case basis for the lake.

The revised project means that the provisions of the Consent Decree will be implemented. It will provide 8,235 acre-feet per year of municipal-quality drinking water from a resource that is currently not available because of contamination. One acre-foot per year is equivalent to 325,851 gallons of water, the amount of water a family of four uses in a year.

The revised project also means that the contaminated groundwater will be removed and treated, thereby shrinking the contaminant plumes and restoring the aquifer. This is especially important in order to prevent further migration of the plumes to adjacent municipal well fields, private wells and the Jordan River.

Furthermore, the revised project means that the movement of the contaminated plume toward private wells will be minimized. The Consent Decree does not address third-party claims or private well owner water rights. However, as the project moves forward, there is a commitment from both Kennecott and the District to address quality (contaminant-related) and quantity (drawdown) impacts to individual well owners. This will be done on a case-by-case basis, using specific review procedures.

Public comment is being reopened for 45 days to allow the public to consider the revisions to the original proposal. Comments will be accepted on only the revisions to the proposal and the implementing agreements. The public comment period begins June 18 and runs through Aug. 2, 2004. The public is invited to comment on the proposed changes, detailed in the revised proposal to the NRD Trustee and the implementing agreements.

Public comments can be provided to the Trustee via e-mail at [nrdtrustee@utah.gov](mailto:nrdtrustee@utah.gov) or by fax to (801) 536-0061 or by mail to Utah Department of Environmental Quality, NRD Trustee, P.O. Box 144810, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4810. Comments must be transmitted or postmarked on or before Aug. 2, 2004.

Public comment will be accepted at a public hearing to be held on Wednesday, July 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Jordan City Council Chambers, 1600 W. Towne Center Dr., South Jordan.

Copies of the revised proposal and the agreements which implement the proposal are available online at [www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd](http://www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd). Hard copies of the documents can be viewed on business days from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the West Jordan City Hall, 8000 S. Redwood Rd., West Jordan, and at the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, 168 N. 1950 West, Salt Lake City.

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## State Drinking Water Manager Announces Retirement

June 24, 2004

Contact:

Michael Georgeson, Division of Drinking Water, (801) 536-4197

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – After 29 years with the Utah Division of Drinking Water, Engineering Section Manager and Assistant Executive Secretary to the Utah Drinking Water Board Michael Georgeson will retire on Wednesday, June 30, 2004.

A hallmark of Georgeson’s contribution to Utah’s quality of life is his management of the state and federal financial assistance programs to help communities build drinking water infrastructure. He built the state program from the ground up beginning in 1983. Georgeson became responsible for the federal program when it was launched in 1997. Using both programs, he has managed the lending of \$115 million in loans or other financial assistance to 200 communities in Utah.

“Mike helped shape the Utah Drinking Water program to what it is today,” said Division of Drinking Water Director Kevin Brown. “His positive contributions to the water industry during his career are immeasurable. Mike's steadfastness, professional ethics and service to the public will be truly missed.”

“It has been a very rewarding experience to have overseen the drinking water loan program from its inception,” Georgeson said. “I have felt a great sense of personal satisfaction being part of providing drinking water to the residents of Utah over the past 29 years.”

Georgeson received a bachelor of engineering science degree from Brigham Young University in 1966. He worked as a design engineer in California before returning to Utah in 1972 to work for the Central Utah Water Conservancy District as a district engineer. While there, he was involved in the building of the Jordan Valley Water Treatment Plant. Georgeson began his tenure with the Division of Drinking Water in 1975 as a public health engineer. He became the engineering manager in 1983.

Georgeson has been a licensed professional engineer in Utah since 1973 and has been associated with the Utah Well Drillers Association since the early 1980s.

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## Everyone's at Risk From Ozone Pollution

June 29, 2004

### Contacts:

Laura Vernon, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, (801) 536-4484  
Pam Davenport, Salt Lake Valley Health Department, (801) 468-2757  
Cobie Spevak, Utah Department of Health, (801) 538-9209

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Ozone, the main ingredient of summertime smog, is not just harmful to the elderly, children and those with respiratory conditions. Everyone is at risk for health problems from exposure to ozone. And there are easy, convenient choices Utahns can make to protect their health and the environment from ozone's damaging effects, according to the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) and Utah Department of Health (DOH).

According to SLVHD, one in three Utahns experiences some respiratory problems when ozone levels are high. Moreover, studies show that, over time, exposure to low levels of ozone can reduce a healthy adult's lung function by 15 to 20 percent, making it more difficult to breath as deeply and as vigorously as usual. It's even harder on children.

"We are concerned about ozone because lung damage can occur for most people without any noticeable signs," said Dr. Dagmar Vitek, medical services director at the Salt Lake Valley Health Department. "No one is immune."

Ozone can irritate the respiratory system, causing coughing, throat irritation and/or an uncomfortable sensation in the chest. It can lower an individual's resistance to diseases such as colds and pneumonia. Those who are most sensitive to its impacts are the very young, the elderly and those with pre-existing breathing problems. People with respiratory diseases whose lungs are more vulnerable to ozone may experience health effects earlier and at lower ozone levels than less sensitive individuals. Ozone also makes people more sensitive to allergens, the most common triggers of asthma attacks. Even healthy adults doing heavy exercise or manual labor outdoors may experience unhealthy effects during high ozone periods. This is because, during physical activity, ozone penetrates deeper into the parts of the lungs that are more vulnerable to injury.

Studies have shown that ozone can inflame and damage the lining of the lungs. Within a few days, the damaged cells are shed and replaced — much like the skin peels after a sunburn. However, if this type of inflammation happens repeatedly over a long time period, lung tissue may become permanently scarred, resulting in less lung elasticity, permanent loss of lung function and a lower quality of life.

According to DEQ, reducing the pollution that forms ozone and protecting yourself from the harmful effects of ozone are critical. There are many easy, convenient choices that make a difference. The one choice that makes the biggest difference is driving less or not at all on polluted days, because emissions from cars and trucks cause over 50 percent of the air pollution along the Wasatch Front.

By simply parking your vehicle for one day, the average driver would keep just over one-fourth pound of pollution out of the air. While that may not seem like much, if every driver along the Wasatch Front would park his/her vehicle for one day per week, emissions would decrease by 125 tons that week.

Reducing or eliminating the number of short trips you take is another good choice.

“Simply starting your car and pulling out of your driveway causes nearly as much air pollution as commuting many miles to work,” said Rick Sprott, director of the Utah Division of Air Quality. “That’s because a vehicle emits a lot of pollution during the first few minutes of operation, before emission controls have warmed up and reached peak efficiency. Combining errands cuts smog because the engine systems stay warm.”

According to a 2004 survey of Wasatch Front drivers by the Division of Air Quality and a University of Utah communication research class, drivers reported that about one-third of their car trips were short trips less than five minutes long. Respondents also started their cars an average of four times the previous day.

“You could walk instead of drive for some of those short trips and consolidate the others,” Sprott said. “You walk because it’s good for your heart and lungs. It just makes sense to make the same choice for clean air.”

Vitek agrees. “Walking helps to decrease the amount of vehicle emissions that form ozone, and is also good for preventing obesity and other chronic diseases.”

“Regular walking can result in a 30-to-40 percent reduction in the risk of heart disease, a 50 percent reduction in the incidence of diabetes, a 20 percent reduction in the risk of stroke and a 50 percent reduction in the risk of premature death,” said LaDene Larsen, director of the Bureau of Health Promotion at the Utah Department of Health. For more information about walking in Utah, visit [www.UtahWalks.org](http://www.UtahWalks.org) (opens in a new window). To start a walking program and earn incentives, log on to [www.health.utah.gov/stepitup](http://www.health.utah.gov/stepitup) (opens in a new window).

Other good choices include carpooling, using mass transit, conserving energy, postponing errands, avoiding gasoline-powered engines, keeping a vehicle well maintained, obeying the speed limit, avoiding drive-through lanes, choosing a route to avoid traffic delays, waiting to gas up until evening hours and using a non-charcoal barbecue. More ideas are available on the Web at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).



Utahns must also protect themselves from exposure to ozone by taking simple precautions even when they don't feel obvious symptoms. Ozone concentrations are at their highest between 2 and 8 p.m. During this time, Utahns may need to adjust their daily activities. For example, exercise in the morning or later in the evening, when pollution levels are usually lower; spend less time participating in vigorous outdoor activities; take it a little easier when you're outside and don't overexert yourself; limit children's prolonged, strenuous outdoor activity; pay attention to your respiratory system such as coughing, wheezing and discomfort when you take a deep breath. If you have questions or concerns, contact your health care provider.

Utah has a new online air quality tool called the "Utah Air Quality Index." Shaped like a speedometer, it shows the level of ozone every hour in Utah's four urban counties in categories from healthy to hazardous. The index is accessible through the [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov) Web site.

"This new tool makes it easier for people to decide which actions they are going to take each day to protect themselves and the environment from ozone," Spratt said.

During the summer ozone season, which runs from June 1 through Sept. 30, DEQ will call voluntary no-drive days and issue health advisories when pollution levels are expected to increase to unhealthful levels. No-drive days and health advisories are posted online, recorded on the hotline and announced by the news media. In addition to the Web for the latest air pollution information, Utahns may call the Air Pollution Hotline at 801-975-4009 in Salt Lake and Davis counties or 1-800-228-5434 in Utah and Weber counties. Information on air quality is updated at least twice a day - once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

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## **Small Business Panel Seeks Nominations for Air Quality Recognition Program**

July 2, 2004

Contacts:

Russ Larsen, Chairman, Air Quality Compliance Advisory Panel, (801) 292-1411  
Renette Anderson, Small Business Ombudsman, Utah Department of  
Environmental Quality, (801) 536-4478

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Do you know of a small business owner who has consistently taken steps to help improve air quality? If so, the Utah Division of Air Quality's Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) would like to hear from you.

The CAP - a seven-member advisory panel that includes six small business representatives - wants to recognize those businesses that "are making an effort to put

their best foot forward in preventing air pollution,” said Russ Larsen, CAP chairman and vice president of Herm Hughes and Sons.

“So much of our focus is on what’s wrong and getting people to comply,” Larsen said. “We wanted to look at it compliance assistance in a different way by sharing approaches that are working for real small business.”

To this end, the CAP, in conjunction with the Utah Division of Air Quality and the Air Quality Board, will present give eight recognition awards - four to Wasatch Front small businesses and four to small businesses in other areas of the state.

Nominations are currently being sought and will be accepted through August 31, 2004. Winners will be selected by the CAP and will be formally recognized in an Air Quality Board meeting and in follow-up publicity.

To be considered, nominees should be a small business in compliance with state and federal air quality rules, actively taking steps to reduce or prevent air pollution and participating in professional association or community business activities.

Submit nominations by mail to Renette Anderson, Small Business Ombudsman, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, PO Box 144810, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4810, by fax at 801-536-4457 or by e-mail at [airsmallbiz@utah.gov](mailto:airsmallbiz@utah.gov). For more information, contact Renette Anderson at 801-536-4478, 1-800-458-0145 or [airsmallbiz@utah.gov](mailto:airsmallbiz@utah.gov).

The recognition program is in its second year. Last year’s winners included Red Hanger Cleaners, Geary Construction and the Association of General Contractors.

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## **DEQ Issues Call to Action to Help Fight Summertime Air Pollution**

July 18, 2004

Contacts:

Laura Vernon, Utah DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 554-4944  
Justin Jones, UTA Media Relations Specialist, (801) 971-4551

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Utah DEQ Executive Director Dianne Nielson today issued a call to action to Wasatch Front residents to help in the fight against summertime air pollution by parking their cars and using public transit at least one day each week.

Vehicle emissions generate over 50 percent of the air pollution along the Wasatch Front. By parking their vehicle for one day, the average driver would reduce air pollution by just over one-fourth of a pound. “That may not seem like much,” said Nielson, “but if every

driver parked his or her vehicle for one day per week, emissions along the Wasatch Front would decrease by 125 tons that week.”

Nielson, a regular rider of public transit, acknowledged that parking the car seems a little less desirable in the July heat but pointed out that public transit provides a good alternative to get people where they’re going without a car and without adding to the pollution problem.

“The Utah Transit Authority’s (UTA) public transit system is one of the best in the nation,” Nielson said. “It is providing Utahns with a range of affordable, convenient and reliable transportation options, including commuter buses, city buses, van pools, TRAX and Paratransit for people with disabilities. Choose an option that works best for you.”

Nielson said that she regularly rides TRAX and the bus to work. “Even though I drive a low-polluting car, by leaving my car at home, I’m not generating pollution, consuming pricey gasoline and contributing to congestion,” Nielson said. “Plus, I work while I ride. I actually come out ahead by using public transit. And the environment comes out ahead, too.”

According to Nielson, ozone is the primary air quality concern during the summer months because it damages the lungs and is harmful to everyone, not just the elderly, children and those with respiratory conditions. July and August are the worst months because of the hot, dry weather.

Nielson said now is the time to take action to help air quality and public transit is a good choice. “Park your car one day each week and take the bus or TRAX,” said Nielson. “You will be pleasantly surprised at how convenient it is to use, and you’ll be protecting the environment, yourself and your loved ones from the harmful effects of air pollution.”

“UTA is pleased to support the Department of Environmental Quality’s ‘Choose Clean Air’ campaign,” said UTA General Manager John English. “Preserving the environment is just one of the many benefits transit provides, and we can all play a role in helping air quality by taking transit one day each week.”

For more information about air quality, please visit the “Choose Clean Air” Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov). For more information about UTA services and schedules, log on to [www.rideuta.com](http://www.rideuta.com) (opens in a new window) or call 1-888-RIDE-UTA.

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## **State Negotiates Settlement for Damages to Groundwater in Mapleton Area**

August 10, 2004

Contact:

Dianne Nielson, Natural Resource Damage Trustee, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Two proposed agreements, totaling approximately \$12 million, have been negotiated by the State of Utah and The Ensign-Bickford Company to conduct clean up and to settle the State’s claim for damages to groundwater resulting from activities at the Trojan facility in Spanish Fork, Utah.

The agreements include a \$9.375 million fund for pumping and treating the groundwater and a \$2.58 million Trust Fund for natural resource damage. The purpose is to “restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent” of the injured groundwater for the benefit of the public in the impacted area. In this case, the injury occurred as a result of release of contaminants to the groundwater from historic waste disposal practices and past operations.

Explosives were manufactured at the site, and some of the contaminants seen in the groundwater are unique to this type of operation. It is not certain when the groundwater contamination began, but it most likely occurred over the operational history of the Trojan plant.

A major change occurred when the State approved a plan to pre-treat wastewater discharged from the plant, reducing the release of contaminants. The Ensign-Bickford Company now pre-treats its wastewater prior to its discharge to the Spanish Fork Publicly Owned Treatment Works (wastewater treatment plant).

Ongoing studies indicate that The Ensign-Bickford Company facility’s current impact to the groundwater is minimal in comparison to historical discharges. No wastewater is currently being disposed of on the plant property.

The impact to the groundwater exists within an area that begins at the northern end of the Trojan site and extends to Mapleton City Well No. 1, west to State Route 147, and east to the Wasatch Fault. The contaminants have entered the regional unconsolidated aquifer. The damage to the natural resource is largely in the deep regional aquifer, the primary source of public drinking water.

Federal and state laws give the Utah Department of Environmental Quality Executive Director, as Trustee, the authority to file a claim when a natural resource of the State is damaged.

The public is invited to review and make comments on the proposed agreements and other related documents during a 45-day public comment period from Aug. 11 through Sept. 24, 2004.

Copies of the proposed agreements and other related documents are available online at <http://www.deq.utah.gov/issues/EBCo>. Hard copies are available for review during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, at the Mapleton City Offices, 35 E. Maple St., and the Utah Division of Water Quality, 288 N. 1460 West, Salt Lake City.

Public comments can be provided to the Trustee via email at [nrdtrustee@utah.gov](mailto:nrdtrustee@utah.gov), by fax at 801-536-0061 or by mail to Utah Department of Environmental Quality, NRD Trustee, PO Box 144810, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4810. Comments must be transmitted or postmarked on or before Sept. 24, 2004.

Public comment will also be taken during an Open House from 4 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 2, 2004, at the Memorial Building, 80 E. Maple St., Mapleton.

For more information, contact the NRD Trustee at 801-536-4402 or at [nrdtrustee@utah.gov](mailto:nrdtrustee@utah.gov).

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## **Trustee Approves Groundwater Cleanup Plan**

August 31, 2004

Contact:

Dianne Nielson, Natural Resource Damage Trustee, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Natural Resource Damage Trustee Dianne Nielson today approved a plan to clean up sulfate-contaminated groundwater in the Southwest Jordan Valley area of Salt Lake County.

Nielson, Kennecott Utah Copper Corporation and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District signed the agreements, which implement the plan and approve trust funds for the cleanup operations.

“After thoughtful consideration, I’m pleased to announce that an approved plan is now in place that will remove contamination from the aquifer and prevent the spread of

contamination,” Nielson said. “I appreciate the involvement of stakeholders and comments from the public. Their participation and recommendations resulted in changes to the original proposal and led to a better process to clean up contamination.”

The Irrevocable Letter of Credit will be replaced by two Irrevocable Letters of Credit, which will provide funds to construct and maintain two reverse osmosis treatment plants that will remove contamination from the aquifer and provide municipal-quality drinking water to residents in the Affected Area. The original Irrevocable Letter of Credit was provided by Kennecott as part of a Trust Fund established in 1995.

As part of Kennecott's remedial efforts, much of the infrastructure required to implement the project is already in place. However, several tasks remain to be completed. Kennecott will:

Begin expansion of the Zone A Reverse Osmosis Plant to the required capacity, upon Division of Drinking Water approval of the final engineering design for the plant, which was submitted on July 21, 2004.

Release funds to Jordan Valley for design of the Zone B Plant within 60 days of project approval and will provide additional design funds over the ensuing 12 months.

Construct a pipeline to connect to the Jordan Valley system and begin delivering drinking water by early 2006.

Likewise, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District has a series of next steps to implement their part of the plan. They will:

- Purchase the remaining four of the seven deep Zone B well sites.
- Retain an engineering firm by November 2004.
- Begin exploratory drilling of the deep Zone B wells in the winter of 2004-05.
- Begin the drilling of shallow wells in the winter of 2004-05.
- Begin the drilling of deep Zone B production wells during 2005.
- Begin final design of collection pipelines in summer 2005.
- Complete preliminary design of the overall Zone B/Lost Use project by summer 2005.

The Southwest Jordan Valley Stakeholder Forum will continue to facilitate review and discussion of issues concerning the project, including coordinating with stakeholders, the South End Technical Review Committee and the Great Salt Lake Water Quality Steering Committee. Activities related to the Forum are posted online at <http://www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd/index.htm#stakeholderforum>.

Furthermore, the stakeholder-based Great Salt Lake Water Quality Steering Committee has been established to conduct scientific studies on selenium in the Great Salt Lake and recommend a numeric standard for the Lake.

As Trustee, Nielson does not have the authority to address third-party claims or private well owner water rights. However, as the project moves forward, there is a commitment from both Kennecott and Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District to address quality (contaminant-related) and quantity (drawdown) impacts to individual well owners. This will be done on a case-by-case basis, using specific review procedures.

Final documents relating to this project, as well as the Trustee's response to comments made during the public comment periods, are available online at <http://www.deq.utah.gov/issues/nrd/index.htm>.

Hard copies are available for review during regular business hours at the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, 168 N. 1950 West, Salt Lake City, and at the West Jordan City Hall, 8000 S. Redwood Rd., West Jordan.

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## **Utah Launches New Pollution Prevention Program**

September 7, 2004

Contact:

Renette Anderson, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, 801-536-4478

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – The State of Utah and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today signed a unique Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that launched Clean Utah!, a new program that recognizes and rewards business and industry for voluntarily taking steps, beyond those required by rule or statute, to prevent and reduce pollution.

During the signing ceremony, Lt. Governor Gayle McKeachnie recognized and thanked the stakeholder group for its work in developing the program, and encouraged Utah's businesses and industries to participate in Clean Utah!

"Today's action is a significant step forward in protecting and enhancing Utah's environment and quality of life," McKeachnie said. "I commended all the individuals who have dedicated their time and effort to this program."

The MOA between Utah and EPA is unique because it goes beyond a commitment to work together. It spells out exactly how Utah and EPA will coordinate Clean Utah! and Performance Track, which is EPA's corresponding national program.

"This MOA will help guide our partnership in ensuring the success of the Clean Utah! program and the National Environmental Performance Track program," said Jessica

Furey, EPA associate administrator for Policy, Economics and Innovations. “Partnerships such as this play an integral role in institutionalizing performance-based programs as the next step in environmental protection.”

The MOA allows Utah to offer incentives from the EPA Performance Track program to participants in Clean Utah! Utah’s program allows participants to choose environmental projects that make sense for Utah, such as water conservation and smart growth. Although both voluntary programs are distinct, they have common objectives and goals to protect the environment and human health. Participants now have the option to participate in one program or the other, or both.

Another unique aspect of the MOA is the emphasis on meaningful stakeholder involvement in the development of Clean Utah! Since 2001, a diverse group of stakeholders from industry, trade associations, government and the environmental community have worked toward a common goal, clearly dedicated to the notion that some of the most effective environmental protection measures are proactive.

“Clean Utah! is a worthwhile approach to pollution prevention and will make a difference in Utah, just as similar programs have in other states,” said Dianne Nielson, executive director of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, which administers the Clean Utah! program.

Clean Utah! is divided into three tiers that outline requirements, recognition and incentives for each tier. In the “Entry” level, participants develop an Environmental Management System, which is a full or continual cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing and improving the processes and actions that an organization undertakes to meet its business and environmental goals. In the “Partner” and “Leader” levels, participants complete projects aimed at improving their companies’ environmental performance, further minimizing their environmental impact, or benefiting the environment in the area. Applicants are screened at each level to verify their compliance record and are required to file an annual report documenting their progress.

Utah is the eighth state to sign a Performance Track MOA. Performance Track began in 2000. Since then, Performance Track members have cumulatively achieved the following environmental results:

- Reduced energy use by 3.1 million MMBTUs, enough to power nearly 30,000 homes for a year.

- Reduced water use by 775 million gallons, enough to fill 775 Olympic-size swimming pools.

- Reduced hazardous materials use by 17,996 tons, a weight equivalent to 60 Washington monuments.

- Reduced solid waste by 176,126 tons, which is 787 times the weight of the Statue of Liberty.

- Reduced hazardous waste by 6,558 tons.



Reduced emissions of greenhouse gases by 40,193 tons, equivalent to planting more than 11,000 acres of trees.

Increased use of reused and recycled materials by 13,760 tons.

More information about Clean Utah! is available online at <http://www.deq.utah.gov/cleanutah/index.htm> or by calling 801-536-4478 or 1-800-458-0145.

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## **DEQ Water Quality Scientist Receives EPA Environmental Achievement Award**

October 4, 2004

Contact:

Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, 801-536-4484

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) water quality scientist Arne Hultquist has received an Environmental Achievement Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 for his expert insights, commitment and achievements in the field of Environmental Data Management.

“His motivation, commitment to data management and expert insights have made Utah a national environmental data management model and attracted the attention of experts from across the country,” said Martin McComb, EPA environmental data specialist.

Hultquist’s achievements include leading the implementation of a nationwide environmental data management system; helping to develop a batch import tool that has been adopted nationally; and helping to create a retrieval tool that allows DEQ employees to query, analyze and compare water-monitoring data.

“I appreciate this recognition and the opportunity to work on a worthwhile project with very competent and goal-oriented professionals at DEQ and EPA,” Hultquist said.

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## Utah DEQ and EPA Offer Free Petroleum Brownfields Workshop

October 5, 2004

Contacts:

Dale Urban, Division of Environmental Response and Remediation (801) 536-4145

Melissa Turchi, Division of Environmental Response and Remediation (801) 536-0078

(Salt Lake City, Utah) -- The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have teamed up to offer a free Petroleum Brownfields 2004 Workshop on Wednesday, Oct. 27, at the State Office Building Auditorium, Capitol Hill, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Many communities in Utah have been left with vacant contaminated land that hinders redevelopment and restoration of a healthy local economy and tax base. This one-day workshop will give participants a better understanding of redevelopment opportunities at underutilized properties with petroleum-based contamination.

DEQ was recently awarded a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields grant to inventory and assess contamination at abandoned gasoline stations statewide, and is actively looking for sites to consider.

The workshop will focus on the Brownfields and Grant Process, Case Studies of Revitalization Efforts, Regulatory Program Overviews, Panel Discussions on Redevelopment Strategies and Hands-On Problem Solving. Participants will also get a chance to meet federal, state and local leaders and regulators; environmental consultants; insurance representatives; bankers; and commercial developers who are involved in economic redevelopment projects throughout Utah.

Attendance is limited to 100 people. Early registration is encouraged. If you have any questions about the upcoming workshop, please contact Dale Urban or Melissa Turchi at (801) 536-4100 or by email at [durban@utah.gov](mailto:durban@utah.gov) or [mturchi@utah.gov](mailto:mturchi@utah.gov).

Workshop registration forms and additional information are available online at [www.undergroundstoragetanks.utah.gov](http://www.undergroundstoragetanks.utah.gov).

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## **Water Quality Board Approves Use Of Gray Water**

October 12, 2004

Contact:

Kiran Bhayani, Division of Water Quality, 801-538-6080

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - While facing the fifth year of drought conditions in the fourth fastest growing state, the Utah Water Quality Board has adopted a rule allowing the use of gray water for subsurface irrigation. As an alternative method of conservation, a productive use of gray water can save on upgrades and expansion of water and wastewater facilities, conserve energy, and reduce pollution in waterways. It is estimated that in 2050 Utah will need 125 billion gallons of additional water supply. It is projected that 131 billion gallons could be saved through all conservation methods.

Gray water does not include water from toilets, kitchen sinks, dishwashers, photo lab sinks and garage floor drains. It does include water reused from bathtubs, showers, bathroom sinks and washing machines. Using gray water conserves fresh water resources, but it can only be used for subsurface irrigation of nonedible landscape plants. While gray water contains nutrients healthy for plant life, it can also contain bacteria and viruses that could be harmful to people.

Using gray water requires a recycling system, which typically includes storage, subsurface drip irrigation or drainfields to distribute water below the surface. Installations are limited to single-family residences for subsurface irrigation to prevent human contact with the water.

Cost of installation of a gray water system may range from \$4,000 for new systems to \$10,000 in retrofit situations.

The Utah Water Quality Board will delegate the approval authority of gray water usage to local health departments based on adequate resources for administration, technical capability, demonstration of legal authority, and support from the County Commission and Board of Health for implementation and enforcement. A local health department could review, approve, inspect and oversee gray water systems installed within its jurisdiction. The health department may require third-party operation, maintenance and repair contract, and fees for approval and oversight of these systems. Please contact your local health department for further assistance and approvals.

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## Health Officials Issue Fish Advisory for Silver Creek

October 27, 2004

### Contacts:

Utah Department of Environmental Quality: John Whitehead, (801) 538-6053

Utah Department of Health: Jana Kettering, (801) 538-6339

Summit County Health Department: Robert Swensen, (435) 336-3227

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Elevated arsenic levels have been found in trout from Silver Creek in Summit County, prompting the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ), Utah Department of Health (UDOH) and Summit County Health Department to issue a fish consumption advisory.

Officials are recommending that adults should limit their consumption of these trout to no more than two 8-ounce servings per month. Pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under age 12 should not eat more than one 4-ounce serving per month. A serving for meat and fish is the size of a deck of cards.

As a part of a water quality and mine waste investigation on Silver Creek, trout were sampled from four different locations on Silver Creek. Elevated arsenic levels were found in about one-fourth of the fish sampled. A risk assessment shows that adults eating more than two 8-ounce servings per month over a long period of time could result in an intake of arsenic that exceeds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency health standards, based on UDOH analysis. Any health risks associated with eating fish from Silver Creek are based on long-term consumption and are not tied to eating fish occasionally. Other metals that were analyzed did not appear to pose a human health risk, according to the UDOH analysis. No known illnesses have been associated with consuming trout from the creek to date.

Fish consumption advisory signs will be posted at access points along the creek, primarily along the rail trail that parallels Silver Creek. In addition, information about the advisory will be distributed at kiosks at trailheads along the rail trail and at the information center in Park City.

UDEQ, UDOH and Summit County Health Department will continue to monitor arsenic levels in the fish and water. The advisory will be updated as needed based on additional information.

[Click here for more information \(opens in a new window\).](#)

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## **Oxy Fuel No Longer Required in Utah County**

October 28, 2004

### **Contacts:**

Joe Thomas, Mobile Sources Manager, Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4175  
Ran McDonald, Environmental Scientist, Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4071

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – For the first time in 12 years, oxygenated fuel will no longer be required in Utah County during the winter. Utah County meets federal health standards for carbon monoxide, thus eliminating the need for oxygenated fuel.

According to the Utah Division of Air Quality, carbon monoxide levels in Utah County will not exceed the ambient air quality standard for the next ten years. This result can be attributed to better emissions technology that is part of vehicles manufactured after 1996.

Earlier this year, Utah developed a maintenance plan that removed the oxygenated fuel requirement in Utah County and also requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to remove the oxygenated fuel requirement in Utah County. EPA informed the Utah Petroleum Association that elimination of the oxygenate requirement would not adversely affect the environment in Utah County and that there would be no federal action to require refiners to produce oxygenated fuels for Utah County.

The oxygenated fuel requirement in Utah County began in November 1992 as a way to bring the county back into compliance with the federal health standards for carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that forms when the carbon in fuels does not completely burn. Vehicle exhaust contributes roughly 60 percent of all carbon monoxide emissions nationwide, and up to 95 percent in cities. Other sources include fuel combustion in industrial processes and natural sources such as wildfires.

Carbon monoxide concentrations typically are highest during cold weather, because cold temperatures make combustion less complete and cause inversions that trap pollutants low to the ground.

Carbon monoxide enters the bloodstream through the lungs and binds chemically to hemoglobin, the substance in blood that carries oxygen to cells. In this way, carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen reaching the body's organs and tissues.

People with cardiovascular disease, such as angina, are most at risk from carbon monoxide. These individuals may experience chest pain and more cardiovascular symptoms if they are exposed to carbon monoxide, particularly while exercising. In

healthy individuals, exposure to higher levels of carbon monoxide can affect mental alertness and vision.

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## **“Red Light – Green Light” Air Quality Program Begins Monday**

October 29, 2004

Contacts:

Cheryl Heying, Planning Manager, Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4015  
Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 554-4944

(Salt Lake City, Utah) — The Department of Environmental Quality’s “Red Light Green Light” Choose Clean Air program, which curtails wood burning along the Wasatch Front during winter inversions, starts its 12th season Monday, Nov. 1, 2004, and continues until March 1, 2005.

The Bear River Health Department also has its own wood-burning program for Cache County. It was implemented in January 2003 as a proactive measure to reduce air pollution in Cache County and protect the health of residents. The Bear River Health Department’s program for Cache County is similar to the one in effect along the Wasatch Front.

Wood-burning conditions are identified as “RED, YELLOW, GREEN.” The system, used to notify citizens when they can burn, is simple: A red light indicates burning is prohibited, yellow means a voluntary no burn, and green means burning is allowed. Wood- and coal-burning fireplaces and stoves, when used, should be operated properly to reduce pollution.

Residents will also be asked to drive as little as possible during red and yellow days because cars contribute significantly to the area’s air pollution. Industries will be asked to minimize their release of air pollutants and to ensure that air pollution control equipment is functioning properly. More information on actions residents can take to reduce pollution is available on the “Choose Clean Air” web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

Air Quality Division Director Rick Sprott urges citizens to be as committed to reducing pollution this winter as they were this summer. “Clean air is vital to public health and our quality of life and requires that residents proactively do what they can to keep the air they breathe as clean as possible,” he said.

“We encourage people to choose clean-air activities that fit into their lifestyle, because their individual actions really do make a collective difference in keeping our air clean,” Sprott said.

The program reduces particulate air pollution (PM10 and PM2.5) and carbon monoxide in Davis, Salt Lake, Utah and Weber counties. PM10 are particles of any kind that are 10 microns or less in diameter. They are 1/10 of a diameter of human hair. PM2.5 are particles smaller than PM10. Wood burning produces soot and dust that are components of particulate, as are emissions from vehicles and other engines.

Fine particles can become lodged in lung tissue, decreasing lung function. They can increase susceptibility to respiratory infections and can aggravate existing respiratory diseases, such as asthma and chronic bronchitis. The elderly, children and people with existing heart or lung disease are the most sensitive to particulate air pollution.

It is possible to have a “red day” without exceeding the federal health-based standards for PM10, PM2.5 or carbon monoxide because red days are called as pollution begins to approach unhealthy levels.

Fines can be levied against individuals who use a wood-burning fireplace or stove during a red-burn period. A first-time offender is charged up to \$25; a second-time offender pays \$50 to \$150; and a third-time offender faces fines from \$150 to \$299.

Also, because Utah County meets federal health standards for carbon monoxide, it will not be required to have oxygenated fuel beginning Nov. 1.

Pollution conditions are announced daily by newspapers, television and radio stations. Recorded updates can be obtained from the Air Pollution Index Hotline at 975-4009 for Salt Lake and Davis counties and (800) 228-5434 elsewhere, and on the “Choose Clean Air” web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov). Residents can also receive pollution conditions from the Choose Clean Air listserve. To sign up, visit [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

Cache County residents may call (435) 792-6612 for recorded daily updates on the wood-burn conditions in their area. Residents may also report illegal burning on “red days” by calling (435) 792-6611.

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## **Utah Small Businesses Recognized for Reducing Air Pollution**

December 8, 2004

Contacts:

Regg Olsen, Utah Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4165

Russ Larsen, Hughes General Contractors, (801) 292-1411

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – The Utah Air Quality Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP) has recognized the Cache Valley Chamber of Commerce, Star Foundry and Cerro Wire and Cable for their efforts to “put their best foot forward” in preventing or reducing air pollution.

In response to last year’s inversion and air quality concerns in the Cache Valley, local businesses worked together to do what they could to reduce air pollution. The CAP honored the Cache Valley Chamber of Commerce as a way of collectively recognizing those businesses for voluntarily taking action to protect public health and the environment.

Star Foundry, a metal casting business in Salt Lake City, upgraded its fume and dust collection system, switched to a higher grade sand with less dust and began recycling molding sand. Additionally, most of the castings are made from recycled or scrap metal, and the scrap metal is purchased from local recyclers. All of the machine and metallic refuse is sent to metal recycling centers.

Cerro Wire and Cable in Harrisville reduced waste by eliminating carton product packaging and changing to shrink film packaging. The company also eliminated unfriendly environmental heavy metals by changing PVC compounding formulas, redesigned plastic spools to reduce plastic waste and recycled copper and PVC scrap.

“We realize that these efforts are not easy or cheap, especially for small businesses with limited resources,” said CAP Chairman Russ Larsen of Hughes General Contractors. “But these efforts really do pay off in the long run.”

The CAP is a small business advisory panel to the Utah Division of Air Quality. This year is the second for the panel to recognize small businesses for having an environmentally friendly business approach, encouraging practices that reduce or prevent air pollution and being in compliance with air quality laws.

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## **Utah Celebrates 30 Years of Safe Drinking Water**

December 16, 2004

Contact:

Kevin Brown, Director, Division of Drinking Water, (801) 536-4188

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Utah today celebrates the passage of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, which has been protecting drinking water sources and providing safe drinking water to millions of Utahns and visitors to Utah for 30 years.



“The Safe Drinking Water Act has moved the state and nation forward in a remarkable way in improving the quality of drinking water and the health of our citizens,” said Utah Division of Drinking Water Director Kevin Brown. The Utah Division of Drinking Water implements the Safe Drinking Water Act on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“We enjoy one of the safest drinking water supplies in the world,” Brown said. During the 30 years since the passage of the Safe Drinking Water Act, Utah has been able to:

Provide 99.9 percent of Utahns and visitors with safe drinking water from an approved public drinking water system.

Give more than \$100 million in loans and grants to help public drinking water systems meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Certify approximately 2,000 public water system operators in protecting and providing safe drinking water.

Form the Utah Water Quality Alliance, whose members include the larger drinking water suppliers and who provide drinking water that exceeds the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act to 90 percent of the state population.

Ensure that 100 percent of community drinking water systems have a plan in place to protect drinking water sources from contamination.

Help drinking water systems complete security assessments.

In Utah, and across the nation, the number of contaminants regulated by public drinking water systems has increased from a few dozen in 1974 to nearly 100 in 2004, while the number of waterborne disease outbreaks has dropped.

“Thirty years of progress in providing safe drinking water has paid off in terms of a higher quality of life, improved health, economic growth benefits and a safer environment,” Brown said.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act was passed to ensure that citizens of the United States had access to the same relative quality of drinking water across the country. The Safe Drinking Water Act was reauthorized in 1986 and 1996.

For more information about drinking water in your community, please visit [www.drinkingwater.utah.gov](http://www.drinkingwater.utah.gov).